



**Building socio-ecological resilience to climate
change impacts by ecosystem-based
adaptation approaches at iSimangaliso MPA
Environmental**

Project Safeguard Disclosure Document

WILDTRUST

Table of contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Table of contents | 2 |
| List of Acronyms and Abbreviations | 4 |
| 1 Purpose of this disclosure document | 7 |
| 2 Project Overview | 8 |
| 2.1 Basic project information | 8 |
| 2.1.1 <i>Project location</i> | 8 |
| 2.1.2 <i>The iSimangaliso MPA</i> | 9 |
| 2.1.3 <i>Project objectives, proposed outcomes and key components</i> | 10 |
| 2.1.4 <i>Location of project Activities</i> | 15 |
| 2.1.5 <i>Project timeframe and budget</i> | 15 |
| 2.1.6 <i>Project partners and responsibilities</i> | 16 |
| 3 Project Environmental and Social Risk Management | 18 |
| 3.1 Environmental & Social Management Plan (ESMP) Summary | 19 |
| 3.1.1 <i>Introduction</i> | 19 |
| 3.1.2 <i>Project Description</i> | 20 |
| 3.1.3 <i>Social Context</i> | 23 |
| 3.1.4 <i>National and International Requirements</i> | 24 |
| 3.1.5 <i>Risk Management Strategy</i> | 29 |
| 3.1.6 <i>ESMP Monitoring and Supervision</i> | 35 |
| 3.2 Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) Summary | 35 |
| 3.2.1 <i>Introduction</i> | 35 |
| 3.2.2 <i>Stakeholder Identification and Analysis</i> | 36 |
| 3.2.3 <i>Stakeholder Engagement</i> | 37 |
| 3.2.4 <i>Informed Consultation and Participation</i> | 40 |
| 3.2.5 <i>Disadvantaged or Vulnerable Groups</i> | 40 |
| 3.2.6 <i>Grievance Mechanism Disclosure</i> | 41 |
| 3.2.7 <i>Stakeholder Register</i> | 41 |
| 3.2.8 <i>Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting</i> | 42 |
| 3.3 Grievance Mechanism | 42 |
| 3.4 Process Framework (PF) Summary | 42 |
| 3.4.1 <i>Introduction</i> | 42 |
| 3.4.2 <i>Preliminary Potential Access Restrictions & Related Social Impacts</i> | 43 |

| | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| 3.4.3 | <i>Stakeholder Engagement and Participation</i> | 43 |
| 3.4.4 | <i>Stakeholder Engagement to Date</i> | 47 |
| 3.4.5 | <i>Planned Stakeholder Engagement</i> | 47 |
| 3.4.6 | <i>Institutional and Legal Framework</i> | 48 |
| 3.4.7 | <i>Baseline Data Collection and Analysis</i> | 50 |
| 3.4.8 | <i>Identifying, Assessing and Minimising Impacts</i> | 51 |
| 3.4.9 | <i>Mitigation Measures</i> | 52 |
| 3.4.10 | <i>Implementation Arrangements</i> | 56 |
| 3.4.11 | <i>Monitoring, Evaluation and Updating the Process Framework</i> | 56 |
| 3.5 | Gender Action Plan (GAP) Summary | 57 |
| 3.5.1 | <i>Introduction</i> | 57 |
| 3.5.2 | <i>Guiding Principles</i> | 57 |
| 3.5.3 | <i>Gender Assessment</i> | 58 |
| 3.5.4 | <i>Gender-responsive Stakeholder Engagement Plan</i> | 60 |
| 3.5.5 | <i>Engaging stakeholders effectively</i> | 62 |
| 3.5.6 | <i>Gender-based violence mitigation measures</i> | 63 |
| 3.5.7 | <i>Principles for Engagement</i> | 63 |
| 3.5.8 | <i>Gender Action Plan</i> | 64 |
| 3.5.9 | <i>Gender-Responsive Grievance Mechanism</i> | 65 |
| 4 | Disclosure Process | 66 |
| 5 | Conclusion | 66 |

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| <i>ABCD</i> | <i>Asset Based Community Development</i> |
| <i>ABS</i> | <i>Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization</i> |
| <i>BABS</i> | <i>Bioprospecting, Access and Benefit Sharing</i> |
| <i>Blue Action</i> | <i>Blue Action Fund</i> |
| <i>BMZ</i> | <i>German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development</i> |
| <i>BRUV</i> | <i>Baited Remote Underwater Video</i> |
| <i>CARA</i> | <i>Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act</i> |
| <i>CBD</i> | <i>Convention on Biological Diversity</i> |
| <i>CITES</i> | <i>Convention on International Trade in endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora</i> |
| <i>COGTA</i> | <i>Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs</i> |
| <i>DARD</i> | <i>Department of Agriculture and Rural Development</i> |
| <i>DEA</i> | <i>Department of Environmental Affairs</i> |
| <i>DFFE</i> | <i>National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment</i> |
| <i>DRDLR</i> | <i>Department of Rural Development and Land Reform</i> |
| <i>EAF</i> | <i>Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries</i> |
| <i>EBA</i> | <i>Ecosystem Based Adaptation</i> |
| <i>EDTEA</i> | <i>Department of Economic Development, Tourism, and Environmental Affairs</i> |
| <i>E&S</i> | <i>Environmental and Social</i> |
| <i>EEZ</i> | <i>Exclusive Economic Zone</i> |
| <i>EFZ</i> | <i>Exclusive Fishery Zone</i> |
| <i>EFZ</i> | <i>Estuarine Functional Zones</i> |
| <i>EHSGs</i> | <i>Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines</i> |
| <i>EIA</i> | <i>Environmental Impact Assessment</i> |
| <i>EKZNW</i> | <i>Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife</i> |
| <i>EMP</i> | <i>Estuary Management Plan</i> |
| <i>ERP</i> | <i>Emergency Response Plan</i> |
| <i>ESA</i> | <i>Environmental and Social Assessment</i> |
| <i>ES COP</i> | <i>Environmental and Social Code of Conduct</i> |
| <i>ESIA</i> | <i>Environmental and Social Impact Assessment</i> |
| <i>ESMP</i> | <i>Environmental and Social Management Plan</i> |
| <i>ESMS</i> | <i>Environmental and Social Management System</i> |
| <i>FAO</i> | <i>Food and Agriculture Organization</i> |
| <i>FPIC</i> | <i>Free, Prior and Informed Consent</i> |
| <i>GAP</i> | <i>Gender Action Plan</i> |
| <i>GBV</i> | <i>Gender Based Violence</i> |

| | |
|------------------|---|
| <i>GCF</i> | <i>Green Climate Fund</i> |
| <i>GDPR</i> | <i>General Data Protection Regulation</i> |
| <i>HO</i> | <i>Honorary Officer</i> |
| <i>H&S</i> | <i>Green Climate Fund</i> |
| <i>ICM</i> | <i>Integrated Coastal Management</i> |
| <i>ICP</i> | <i>Informed Consultation and Participation</i> |
| <i>ICZMA</i> | <i>Integrated Coastal Zone Management Act</i> |
| <i>IDP</i> | <i>Integrated Development Plan</i> |
| <i>IGRF</i> | <i>Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act</i> |
| <i>IPs</i> | <i>Indigenous Peoples</i> |
| <i>IPACC</i> | <i>Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee</i> |
| <i>IUCN</i> | <i>International Union for the Conservation of Nature</i> |
| <i>IUU</i> | <i>Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated</i> |
| <i>ILO</i> | <i>International Labour Organisation</i> |
| <i>IMO</i> | <i>International Maritime Organisation</i> |
| <i>IMP</i> | <i>Integrated Management Plan</i> |
| <i>IWP</i> | <i>iSimangaliso Wetland Park</i> |
| <i>IWPA</i> | <i>iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority</i> |
| <i>LE</i> | <i>Law Enforcement</i> |
| <i>LM</i> | <i>Local Municipality</i> |
| <i>LOSC</i> | <i>Law of the Sea Convention</i> |
| <i>LUMS</i> | <i>Land Use Management Scheme</i> |
| <i>KZNNCA</i> | <i>KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Act</i> |
| <i>MARPOL</i> | <i>International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships</i> |
| <i>MLRA</i> | <i>Marine Living Resources Act</i> |
| <i>MP</i> | <i>Management Plan</i> |
| <i>MPAs</i> | <i>Marine Protected Areas</i> |
| <i>M&E</i> | <i>Monitoring and Evaluation</i> |
| <i>NEMA</i> | <i>National Environmental Management Act</i> |
| <i>NEM: BA</i> | <i>National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act</i> |
| <i>NEM: ICMA</i> | <i>National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act</i> |
| <i>NEMP</i> | <i>National Estuarine Management Protocol</i> |
| <i>NEM:PAA</i> | <i>National Environmental Management Protected Areas Act</i> |
| <i>NGO</i> | <i>Non-Governmental Organisation</i> |
| <i>NHRA</i> | <i>National Heritage Resources Act</i> |
| <i>NMU</i> | <i>Nelson Mandela University</i> |
| <i>NR</i> | <i>Natural Resource</i> |
| <i>OHS</i> | <i>Occupational Health and Safety</i> |
| <i>ORRAA</i> | <i>Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance</i> |
| <i>ORI</i> | <i>Oceanographic Research Institute</i> |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| <i>OU</i> | <i>Oceans Unite</i> |
| <i>PAJA</i> | <i>Promotion of Administrative Justice Act</i> |
| <i>PAPs</i> | <i>Project Affected People</i> |
| <i>PF</i> | <i>Process Framework</i> |
| <i>PPP</i> | <i>Public Participation Processes</i> |
| <i>PSSA</i> | <i>Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas</i> |
| <i>ROV</i> | <i>Remotely Operated Vehicle</i> |
| <i>SAAMBR</i> | <i>South African Association for Marine Biological Research</i> |
| <i>SAEON</i> | <i>South African Environment Observation Network</i> |
| <i>SAIAB</i> | <i>South African Institute of Aquatic Biodiversity</i> |
| <i>SAHRA</i> | <i>South African Heritage Research Agency</i> |
| <i>SAPS</i> | <i>South African Police Service</i> |
| <i>SEP</i> | <i>Stakeholder Engagement Plan</i> |
| <i>SEWG</i> | <i>Stakeholder Engagement Working Group</i> |
| <i>SOPs</i> | <i>Standard Operating Procedures</i> |
| <i>SPLUMA</i> | <i>Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act</i> |
| <i>S&T</i> | <i>Stakeholder Engagement Working Group</i> |
| <i>SSF</i> | <i>Small-scale fishers</i> |
| <i>ToR</i> | <i>Terms of Reference</i> |
| <i>UKZN</i> | <i>University of KwaZulu-Natal</i> |
| <i>UNDRIP</i> | <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</i> |
| <i>WB ESF</i> | <i>World Bank Environmental and Social Framework</i> |
| <i>WB ESS</i> | <i>World Bank Environmental and Social Standard</i> |
| <i>WIO</i> | <i>Western Indian Ocean</i> |
| <i>YES</i> | <i>Youth Employment Service</i> |

1 Purpose of this disclosure document

WILDTRUST is in the final stages of a project proposal to the Blue Action Fund for the “Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA)” call for proposals (Green Climate Fund funding). As part of this proposal, we were required to engage independent consultants to conduct an Environmental & Social Assessment (ESA) and develop preliminary Safeguards for the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area (MPA) Ecosystem-Based Management Project. We are also required to publicly disclose our “Safeguard Package” for 30 days before Blue Action Fund’s Supervisory Board can take a final funding decision.

The full Safeguard Package will be disclosed in the English language on Blue Action Fund’s website and will be submitted by Blue Action to the Green Climate Fund. The “Safeguard Package” will include the Environmental & Social Management Plan (ESMP), Process Framework, Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and Grievance Mechanism, and will be available to all interested stakeholders to view on the Blue Action Fund’s website.

In addition, a summary of the project and safeguard information, will be translated into the local language(s), made available to project-affected people and other stakeholders.

This Project Safeguards Disclosure Document serves as this required summary, containing information drawn from the project proposal, the Environmental and Social Assessment (ESA) and associated safeguards prepared by consultants, (ESMP, Stakeholder Engagement Plan , Process Framework and Grievance Mechanism) and will be translated into isiZulu. It will also clarify how the project intends to disclose this information, to demonstrate our efforts to clearly communicate this information through formats and channels that are accessible to stakeholders and project-affected people.

It is important to note that stakeholders with access to the Summary only, can request further/more detailed information as part of the stakeholder engagement process, and this information will be provided in a timely and accessible manner.

2 Project Overview

2.1 Basic project information

2.1.1 Project location

The Project is located in iSimangaliso Wetland Park in the Maputaland-Albany-Pondoland Global Biodiversity Hotspot on the east coast of South Africa in the KwaZulu-Natal Province. The Park falls within the uMkhanyakude District Municipality and borders on the uMfolozi Local Municipality, which forms part of the King Cetshwayo District, to the south (**Figure 1**).

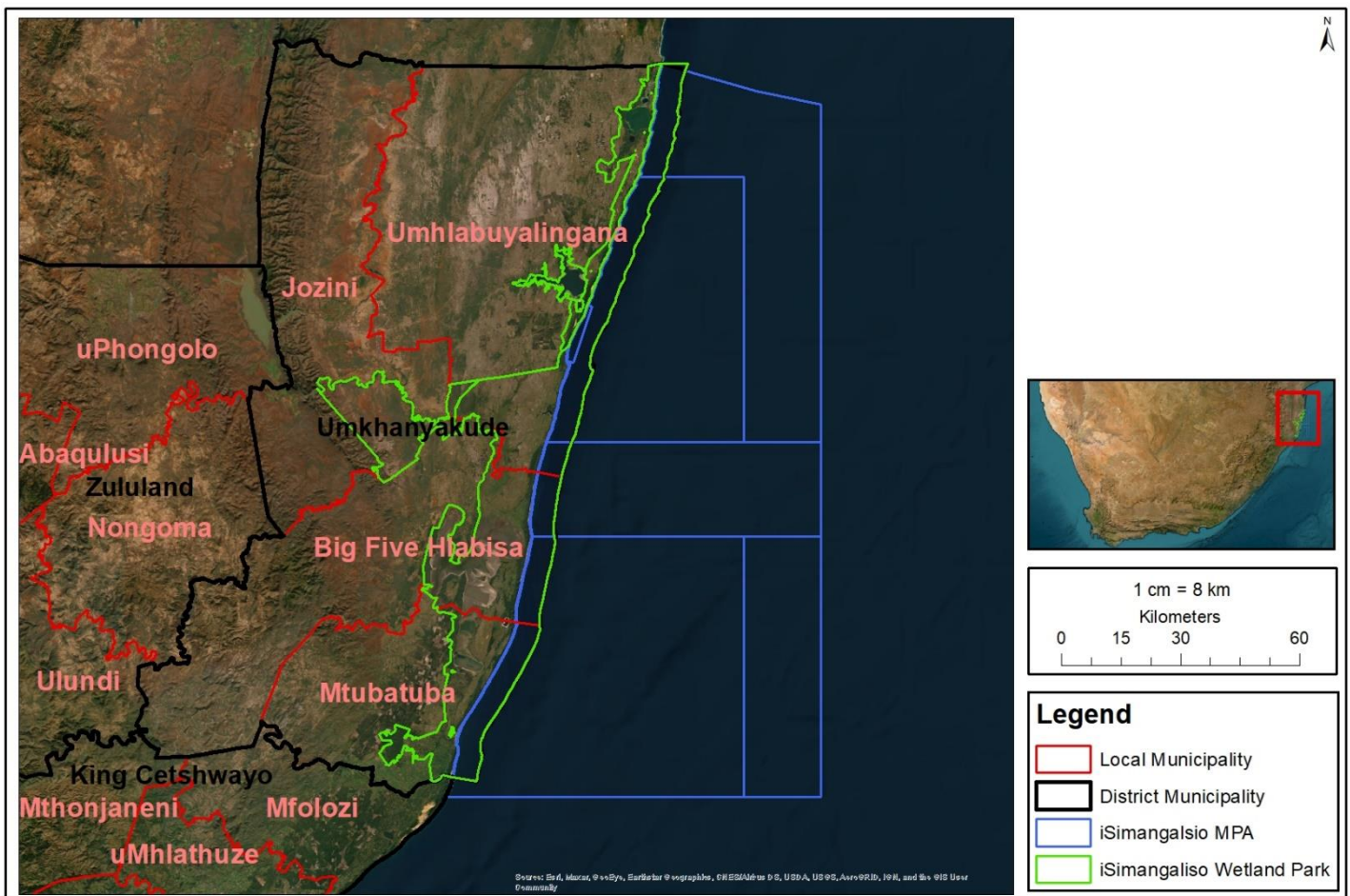


Figure 1: The iSimangaliso Wetland Park and new iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area situated in northern KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

2.1.2 The iSimangaliso MPA

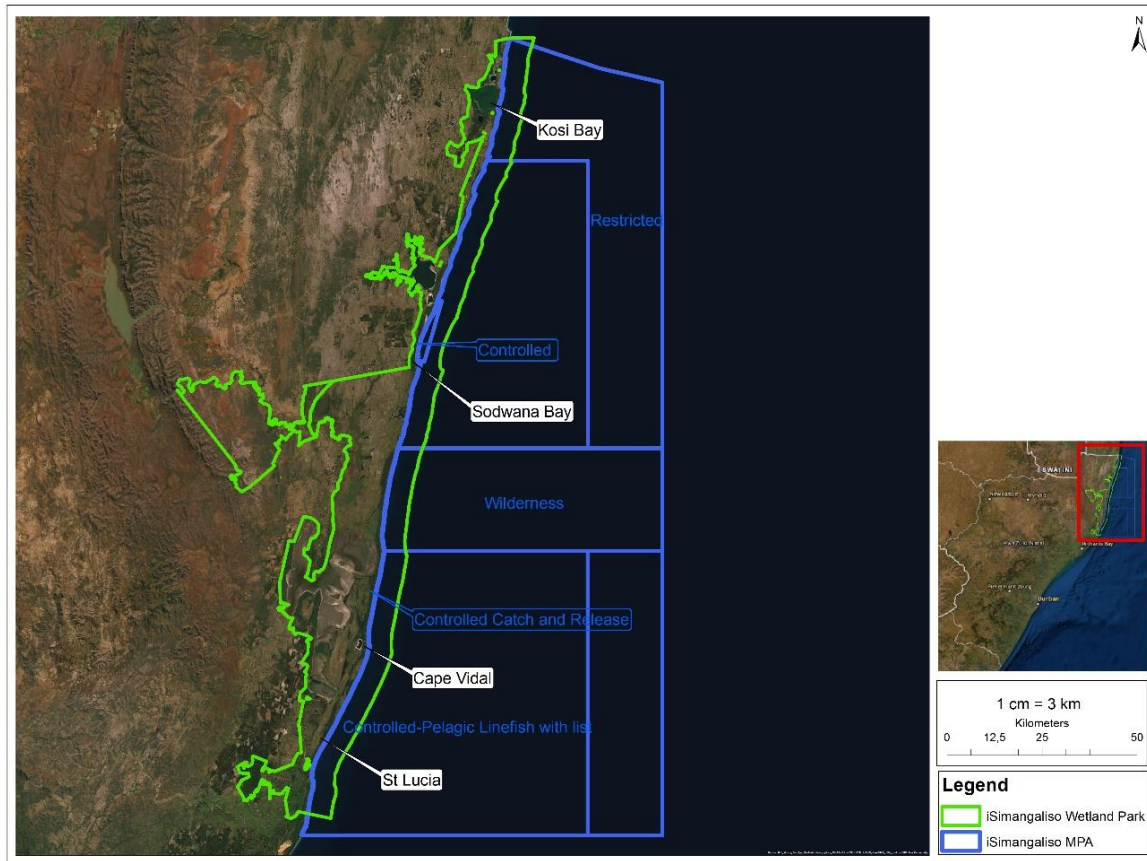


Figure 2: The iSimangaliso Wetland Park and iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area situated in northern KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

Box 1: The iSimangaliso MPA & Associated Zonation

iSimangaliso MPA is 10,700 km² in extent (1,070,000 ha) and is South Africa's largest MPA. It was proclaimed in 2019 and is a combination of the former (now de-proclaimed) St Lucia and Maputaland MPAs (formally proclaimed in 2000), combined with an expanded offshore area. The MPA, as with all other South African MPAs, is proclaimed under Section 22A of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (NEMPA, Act 57 of 2003).

The inshore area consists of eight Inshore Controlled Zones, five Inshore Controlled Catch and Release Zones, and eight Inshore Restricted Zones. The offshore area consists of two offshore Controlled Pelagic Linefish Zones, two offshore Restricted Zones, and the Sodwana Diving Restricted Zone. A Wilderness Zone extends from the inshore area to the furthest offshore extent of the MPA in the central section of the MPA. As per the iSimangaliso Management Plan, these zonation restrictions are intended

to co-ordinate conservation, tourism, and commercial, small-scale/artisanal and recreational resource use activities to ensure that they can continue with a minimum of conflict and without compromising the MPA's objectives.

2.1.3 Project objectives, proposed outcomes and key components

The overall objective for the Project is to build socio-ecological resilience to climate change for the iSimangaliso MPA, and its connected estuarine systems, and the dependent communities that live in and around the iSimangaliso Wetland Park World Heritage Site. In order to achieve this objective, the proposed outcomes will focus on four principal components, namely strengthened management, rehabilitation, improved livelihoods, EbA capacity building and knowledge sharing. It is envisaged that the proposed project outcomes will include:

1. **Strengthened management and protection of ecosystems** important for climate adaptation and mitigation in the iSimangaliso MPA and three associated estuarine systems of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, including offshore coral reefs and kelp beds, estuarine mangroves, reed beds and swamp-forest in estuarine-associated floodplain areas, and forested coastal dune cordons.
2. **Rehabilitation and improvement of the ecosystem health** of coastal ecosystems relevant for climate change adaptation and mitigation, including mangroves, reed beds and swamp-forest in estuarine-associated floodplain areas and forested coastal dune cordons.
3. **Improved livelihoods and food security for vulnerable communities** associated with the iSimangaliso MPA and connected estuarine systems through community involvement in sustainable resource management (co-management) and identification and implementation of alternative livelihood opportunities.
4. **Improved knowledge and capacity for ecosystem-based adaptation approaches** for enhancing socio-ecological resilience in and around a financially sustainable MPA, providing a regionally relevant case study that informs policy and action elsewhere.

A summary of the project activities is provided in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Summary of Primary Project Objectives and Key Activities

| Primary Objectives | | Key Activities | |
|--------------------|--|--|---|
| 1 | IMPROVED RESOURCES, INSTRUMENTS AND CAPACITIES FOR MPA MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE USE | Indicator 1.1 Improved Stakeholder Engagement | |
| | | 1.1.1 | Create and support implementation of platform for dialogue and trust between IWP and rural community stakeholders |
| | | 1.1.2 | Improve MPA & Estuarine stakeholder engagement (SE) |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | 1.1.3 | MPA, Estuary and Catchment Stakeholder Forum meetings |
| | 1.1.4 | Rural Community Knowledge Building Workshops |
| | Indicator 1.2 MPA Management Effectiveness | |
| | 1.2.1 | Management Effectiveness assessment processes for adaptive management |
| | 1.2.2 | Marine and estuarine enforcement and monitoring support |
| | Indicator 1.3 MPA Management Staff Capacity-building | |
| | 1.3.1 | Refresher legal compliance training |
| | 1.3.2 | Refresher species identification training |
| | 1.3.3 | EbA focussed MPA and Estuarine Managers Course |
| | 1.3.4 | Essential skills training |
| | 1.3.5 | Vessel safety and confidence |
| | 1.3.6 | Train and employ local skippers from the communities and provide mentorship for sustainability |
| | Indicator 1.4 Park Boundary Demarcation | |
| | 1.4.1 | Park Boundary Clarification for MPA communities |
| | 1.4.2 | Boundary demarcation area maps and information dissemination |
| | Indicator 1.5 Community Co-management and Monitoring | |
| | 1.5.1 | Co-management for small-scale fishing |
| | 1.5.2 | Implement community small-scale fishery monitoring programmes |
| | 1.5.3 | Community Turtle monitoring programme |
| | Indicator 1.6 Sustainable MPA Financing | |
| | 1.6.1 | Establish a team to implement and guide Sustainable Financing strategies development |
| | 1.6.2 | Carbon asset identification |
| | Indicator 1.7 Improved Ocean literacy and sustainable fisheries knowledge | |
| | 1.7.1 | MPA Benefits Awareness Campaign |
| | 1.7.2 | Community Ocean Literacy and sustainable fisheries knowledge-building |

| | | |
|----------|---|---|
| | | Indicator 1.8 Improved Ocean literacy and sustainable fisheries knowledge |
| | 1.8.1 | Environmental & Social Management System (ESMS) developed, implemented, and monitored |
| | 1.8.2 | ESMS Legal Review and Gap Analysis developed and communicated |
| 2 | STRENGTHENED ADAPTIVE CAPACITY AND REDUCED EXPOSURE TO CLIMATE RISKS | Indicator 2.1 Climate-change Risk Assessment |
| | 2.1.1 | Climate Vulnerability Assessment |
| | 2.1.2 | Socio-economic and project baseline surveys and assessments (climate-risk inclusions) |
| | 2.1.3 | Ecosystem baseline survey and assessment |
| | | Indicator 2.2 Climate-change Risk Monitoring, Reporting and Knowledge-building |
| | 2.2.1 | Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Knowledge Building Workshops |
| | 2.2.2 | Installation of Climate Monitoring Equipment |
| | 2.2.3 | Ocean Stewards |
| | 2.2.4 | Community-based drought, flood and storm tracking and information system |
| 3 | DEGRADED COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS, WHICH ARE PARTICULARLY RELEVANT FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION, REHABILITATED AND/OR PROTECTED | Indicator 3.1 Climate-change Risk Assessment |
| | 3.1.1 | Surveys of mangrove vegetation |
| | 3.1.2 | Community involvement in mangrove protection |
| | | Indicator 3.2 Riparian vegetation restoration and protection |
| | 3.2.1 | Surveys of riparian vegetation |
| | 3.2.2 | Restoration of riparian zone to a natural state |
| | 3.2.3 | Community involvement in riparian zone restoration |
| | | Indicator 3.3 Dune vegetation protection and rehabilitation |
| | 3.3.1 | Surveys of coastal dune cordon vegetation |
| | 3.3.2 | Rehabilitate the beach and dune vegetation to a natural state |
| | 3.3.3 | Community involvement in beach and dune vegetation restoration |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| 4 | SEQUESTERED CARBON OR REDUCED EMISSIONS | Indicator 4.1 Coral reef and kelp-bed protection | |
| | | 4.1.1 | Coral Reef Ecosystem surveys and bleaching monitoring |
| | | 4.1.2 | Community involvement in coral reef protection |
| | | Indicator 4.2 Coral Reef Fish Protection | |
| | | 4.2.1 | Coral Reef Fish Surveys |
| | | 4.2.2 | Fisher and dive operator awareness workshops |
| | | Indicator 4.3 Carbon sequestered in functional ecosystems maintained | |
| | | 4.3.1 | Estimation of carbon sequestered in climate relevant ecosystems |
| | | 5 | CLIMATE RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS PROMOTED |
| 5.1.1 | Development of co-created livelihoods beneficiation processes | | |
| 5.1.2 | Small Business incubation | | |
| 5.1.3 | Employment, training, and career development opportunities | | |
| 5.1.4 | Leveraging the Community Levy Funds for Vulnerable Groups | | |
| 5.1.5 | Vulnerable youth support for tertiary education | | |
| Indicator 5.2 Community Climate Resource Centre Establishment | | | |
| 5.2.1 | Community Climate Adaptation Resource Centres Established | | |
| 5.2.2 | Involvement of communities in sustainable management of Resource centres and associated activities | | |
| 5.2.3 | Training and awareness at Community Resource Centres | | |
| 5.2.4 | Child Support | | |
| 5.2.5 | Libraries | | |
| 5.2.6 | Computer skills and online courses | | |
| Indicator 5.3 Climate Smart Practices Implementation | | | |
| 5.3.1 | Collation of Local Knowledge around existing climate-smart practices | | |

| | | | |
|----------|---|--|--|
| | | 5.3.2 | Establishment of climate-smart homestead-based solutions |
| | | Indicator 5.4 Climate-Smart Agriculture | |
| | | 5.4.1 | Intensive small-scale farmer training and support |
| | | 5.4.2 | Train the trainer |
| | | 5.4.3 | Household training and mentorship |
| | | 5.4.4 | Climate-smart agriculture technique demonstrations |
| | | 5.4.5 | Facilities to support climate-smart agriculture |
| | | 5.4.6 | Vulnerable household kitchen garden support |
| | | Indicator 5.5 Tourism livelihood opportunities | |
| | | 5.5.1 | Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Assessments |
| | | 5.5.2 | Tourism product development |
| | | 5.5.3 | Crafter support |
| | | 5.5.4 | Craft marketplaces at Hubs |
| | | Indicator 5.6 Support for Women | |
| | | 5.6.1 | Development of a Gender Action Plan for the project |
| | | 5.6.2 | Leadership training |
| | | 5.6.3 | Peer support groups |
| | | 5.6.4 | Gender and GBV Awareness Training |
| | | 5.6.5 | Gender Assessments |
| | | 5.6.6 | Young single mother support |
| 6 | ENHANCED KNOWLEDGE, EXPERTISE AND CAPACITY OF RELEVANT NATIONAL AGENCIES TO USE EBA APPROACHES FOR CLIMATE-RESILIENT | Indicator 6.1 EbA Approaches Knowledge-Building | |
| | | 6.1.1 | Participation in Regional WIO Workshop |
| | | 6.1.2 | Exchange Visits between EbA projects |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| | COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT | 6.1.3 | Contribute to online Webinar Series |
| | | 6.1.4 | International and regional symposia attendance |
| | | Indicator 6.2 Publications and Media | |
| | | 6.2.1 | Community Radio |
| | | 6.2.2 | Social Media |
| | | 6.2.3 | Articles |
| | | 6.2.4 | Media Hosting |
| | | 6.2.5 | Coastal EbA Case-study Publication and Video |
| 7 | STRENGTHENED INSTITUTIONAL AND REGULATORY SYSTEMS FOR CLIMATE-RESPONSIVE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT | Indicator 7.1 Policy and Legal Instruments | |
| | | 7.1.1 | Contribute to guideline document |
| | | 7.1.2 | Climate resilience governance forum |
| | | 7.1.3 | Carbon feasibility study, including legal review and assessment |
| | | 7.1.4 | Comprehensive history, legal and policy review of small-scale fisheries |
| | | Indicator 7.2 Institutional and regulatory systems | |
| | | 7.2.1 | Climate Resilience Governance Forum |
| | | 7.2.2 | Carbon Market Trading Incentives |
| | | 7.2.3 | Small-scale Fisheries Reference Group |
| | | 7.2.4 | Small-scale Fishers' National Meetings Attendance |

2.1.4 Location of project Activities

The Project will be executed across the expanse of the MPA and along the coastline. See Figures 3a and 3b of this document for community project activation sites.

2.1.5 Project timeframe and budget

The timeframe for the project is 4 years with a proposed start date on 1st July 2023 and end date of 30th June 2027. The proposed budget total for the project is €6.5 million.

2.1.6 Project partners and responsibilities

WILDTRUST is the lead implementing partner for this project and will report directly to the Blue Action Fund, the executing agency. Blue Action Fund receive funds from Government funding partners - Germany, through the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in cooperation with KfW Development Bank; Sweden, through the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs; France, through the Agence Française de Développement (AFD); and the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

The table below summarises the project partners and collaborators involved and their planned contributions to the project which are integral to the project's success (**Table 2**). **Table 3** details the collaborating governance partners (government agencies / traditional structures) who will be consulted and supported through processes and workshops provided by the project.

Table 2: Partners, Sub-Grantee and Implementing Partners

| ROLE | ORGANISATION | Contribution to project |
|----------------|---|---|
| Grantee | WILDTRUST (WILDLANDS & WILDOCEANS) | Lead implementing organisation: Full project co-ordination, legal and fiduciary compliance, reporting, monitoring & evaluation, quality assurance, environmental & social impact compliance. |
| Sub-grantee | South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON) | Biophysical long-scale monitoring of oceanography, climate, water flows, etc: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catchment, riverine inputs to MPA (EFTEON) • Marine and estuarine (SMACRI) |
| Sub-grantee | Indalo Inclusive | Enterprise development |
| Sub-grantee | Mahlathini Development Foundation | Livelihood intervention support – climate smart agriculture |
| Sub-grantee | Africa Ignite! | Livelihood intervention - tourism |
| Sub-grantee | Townsville University | Climate Vulnerability Assessment (social and ecological) in inception phase |
| Sub-contractor | South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB) – | Provision of offshore research platforms and fish specialist advice and survey and monitoring |
| Sub-contractor | University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) | Social studies and baselines Ocean Stewards |

| | | |
|----------------|---|---|
| Sub-contractor | Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA) | Sustainable financing linked to risk reduction – insurance and investment |
| Sub-contractor | Nelson Mandela University (NMU) | Co-developed Marine Managers Course, including topics such as human rights, GBV, legislation, stakeholder engagement. Through their collaboration with the One Ocean Hub. |

Table 3: Collaborating Governance Partners

| ORGANISATION | CONTRIBUTION TO PROJECT |
|--|--|
| iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority | Oversight and management of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (both marine and terrestrial), including ecotourism development, community support and operations management. |
| Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (Ezemvelo) | Conservation management of MPA's in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, including iSimangaliso MPA and involving research, planning, monitoring and compliance |
| KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic Development, Tourism, and Environmental Affairs (EDTEA) | Coastal Zone Management, policy, engagement with other government stakeholders in the coastal zone, Adopt an Estuary programme at one of the estuaries |
| National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment (DFFE) | Marine biodiversity and marine protected areas regulations, declarations, and management implementation. DDG of Oceans and Coasts which is responsible for marine protected area planning and management. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small-scale fisheries • Climate Change Adaptation Directorate (Branch: Climate Change, Air Quality and Sustainable Development) • Biodiversity Risk Management Directorate |
| Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development | Extension services co-operation to create synergies and collaborate on interventions |
| South African National Biodiversity Institute | National Delegated Authority of the Green Climate Change Fund (GCF) - South Africa's Accredited Direct Access Entity for the GCF |
| Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) | The provincial department plays a key role in ensuring cooperation between local government and traditional authorities and is also responsible for provincial spatial planning and supporting the development of IDPs and local spatial planning. |

| | |
|--|--|
| | To be consulted in relation to the community resource centre development and community relations. |
| Local and District municipalities: uMkhanyakude District; King Cetshwayo District | Local and District Municipalities are responsible for development planning and control, coastal access provision, local coastal and Estuary management, environmental protection and management, and responding locally to climate change. To be included in relation to resource centre development and other relevant project developments |
| Department of Water and Sanitation | Monitoring of the potential major threats to the estuary health. The impact of poor water and sanitation services on catchment and rivers is significant and will impact on the MPA which requires consultation with DWS. |
| Department of Agriculture and Rural development | Climate-smart agricultural development: All legal requirements for agricultural development must be met, through this department, notably in relation to land clearing and cultivation. Development component of the project: could potentially support skills development & provide extension support. |
| Traditional Authorities: <i>Amakhosi and iziNduna of</i> Tembe Tribal Council and kwaSokhulu Tribal Council | Traditional authorities play an important role in governing land and socio-ecological relationships in the region from a community perspective; they are the first entry point to communities and will be invited to participate in all relevant participatory processes related to the project. |

3 Project Environmental and Social Risk Management

Both Blue Action Fund and the grantee are responsible for assessing and managing the project impacts – direct and indirect – caused by activities that are either financed or technically supported by the project. This includes impacts (positive and negative) caused by activities or actors that are financially or technically supported by the project, even when these activities or actors fall outside of the mandate of Blue Action Fund and the grantee.

It is the responsibility of WILDTRUST to diligently follow the Blue Action Fund Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) procedures (that apply to grantees), including

- Environmental and Social Assessment (ESA)
- Manage the implementation of their approved Project Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)
- And associated Safeguard Instruments throughout project implementation;
 - Grievance Mechanism (GM)
 - Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

- Process Framework (PF)
- Gender Action Plan (GAP)

The summaries of the project safeguards have been provided below.

3.1 Environmental & Social Management Plan (ESMP) Summary

3.1.1 Introduction

The Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) outlines the environmental and social management commitments that WILDTRUST will implement to manage potential negative impacts and enhance potential positive impacts of the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area Ecosystem-based Adaptation Project. This includes ensuring that the project operates in compliance with South Africa's legal requirements, Blue Action Fund's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) standards, policy and procedures, and international good practice. The preparation of the ESMP was informed by the findings of an independent Environmental and Social Assessment conducted as part of the project proposal submitted to Blue Action Fund.

This ESMP acts as an umbrella Safeguard Instrument and introduces a set of specific Safeguards that will be applied in the project¹, including the following:

- a) Stakeholder Engagement Plan,
- b) Grievance Mechanism,
- c) Process Framework, and
- d) Gender Action Plan.

The management measures contained within these safeguards have been integrated into the project design, and appropriately resourced in the project implementation plan. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) section of this ESMP will be used on to inform annual reporting on the implementation all project safeguards. The ESMP will also be regularly reviewed and updated throughout the lifetime of the project in response to changes to the project description, changes in the WILDTRUST's organisational structure, changes in legislation, guidelines and practices subscribed to, and in project design and local context.

The ESMP is structured into five sections:

1. Project Description
2. Social Context
3. National and International Requirements
4. Risk Management Strategy

¹ The Safeguards are available as stand-alone documents for review purposes.

5. ESMP Monitoring and Supervision

3.1.2 Project Description

The Project is located in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park World Heritage Site on the east coast of South Africa, which falls within the Maputaland-Albany-Pondoland Global Biodiversity Hotspot. The Park contains nationally and globally significant biodiversity and is recognised as a significant sea turtle breeding area. The Park includes the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area (MPA), which is 10,700 km² in extent and is South Africa's largest Marine Protected Area. This MPA was proclaimed in 2019 and is a combination of the former (now de-proclaimed) St Lucia and Maputaland Marine Protected Areas (originally proclaimed in 2000), combined with an expanded offshore area.

The project area covers the extent of the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area and extends up to 10km inland, with activities focused on the restoration and rehabilitation of mangroves, and beach and dune vegetation, and livelihoods and community stakeholder engagement support. The project builds on the WILDTRUST's Oceans Alive project, also funded by the Blue Action Fund, which was implemented from July 2019 to June 2022. The project has achieved several objectives, including providing a youth-focused work experience and training program, establishing three Community Resource Hubs, conducting various offshore surveys to improve biodiversity knowledge and understanding, and supporting effective management of the iSimangaliso MPA. The project has also helped to create job opportunities and increase the employment rate in iSimangaliso, benefiting the local community members. Additionally, the project has developed and implemented an awareness program focused on developing the local communities' marine conservation and ecosystem adaptation awareness.

The area surrounding the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is primarily rural, with small, dispersed settlements and limited economic activity. The region is characterized by high poverty and unemployment levels, with most of the local population relying on subsistence farming and fishing for their livelihoods. The Park serves as an important source of tourism for the region, generating economic activity and providing work in eco-tourism activities, Park management and supporting industries. The land use around the park is primarily for agriculture, including sugarcane and cattle farming, as well as some forestry and conservation areas. The area is also an important cultural and historical site, with many communities that have lived there for generations (both inside and outside the park).

The overall objective for the Project is to build socio-ecological resilience to climate change for the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area, its connected estuarine systems, and the dependent communities that live in and around the iSimangaliso Wetland Park World Heritage Site. To achieve this objective, the project will focus on:

- Strengthening the management and protection of ecosystems that are important for building climate resilience,

- Rehabilitating and improving coastal and marine ecosystem health,
- Improving livelihoods and food security for vulnerable communities, and
- Improving knowledge and capacity for ecosystem-based adaptation approaches.

WILDTRUST is the lead implementing partner for this project and will report directly to the Blue Action Fund. The timeframe for the project is 4 years with a proposed start date on 1st July 2023.

Figures 3a and 3b show the location and direct influence of the project.

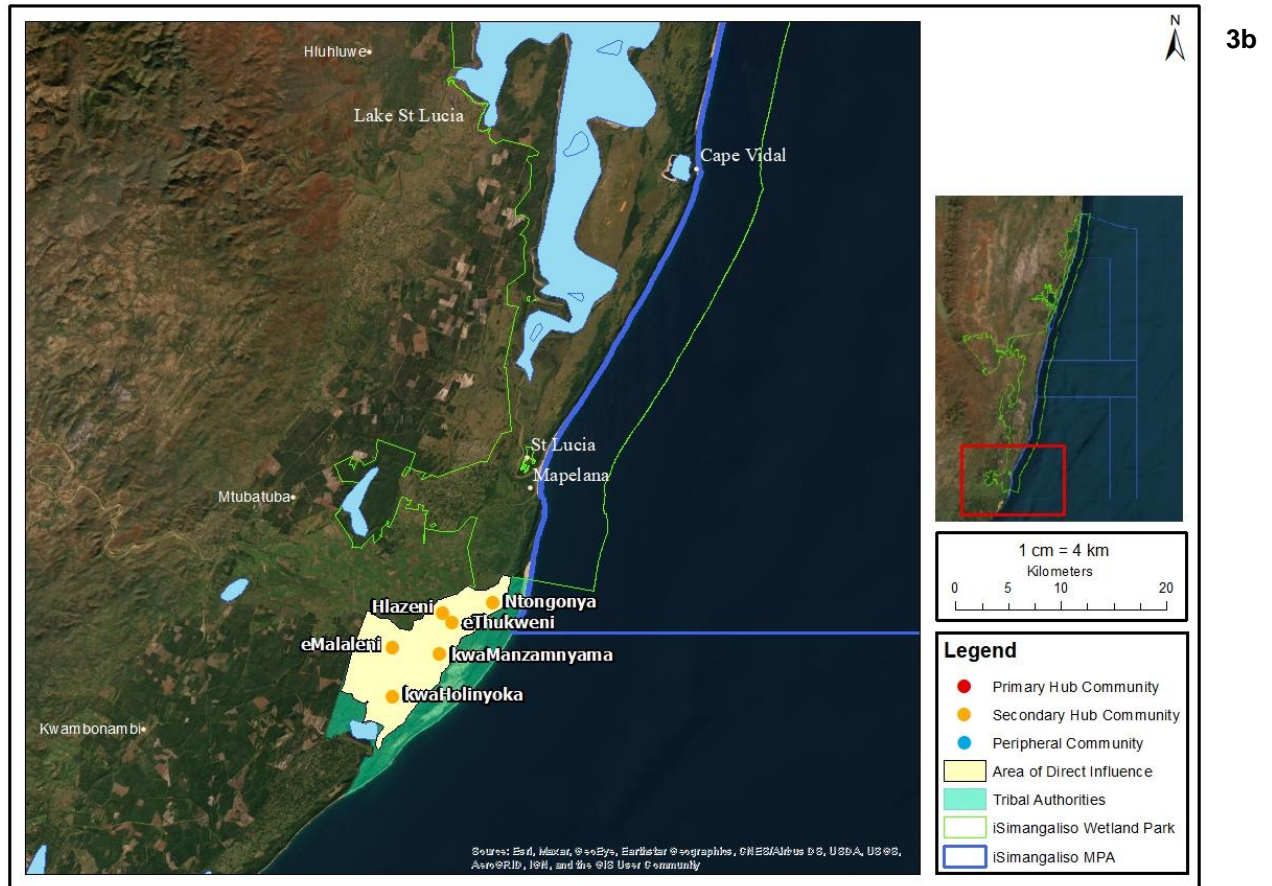
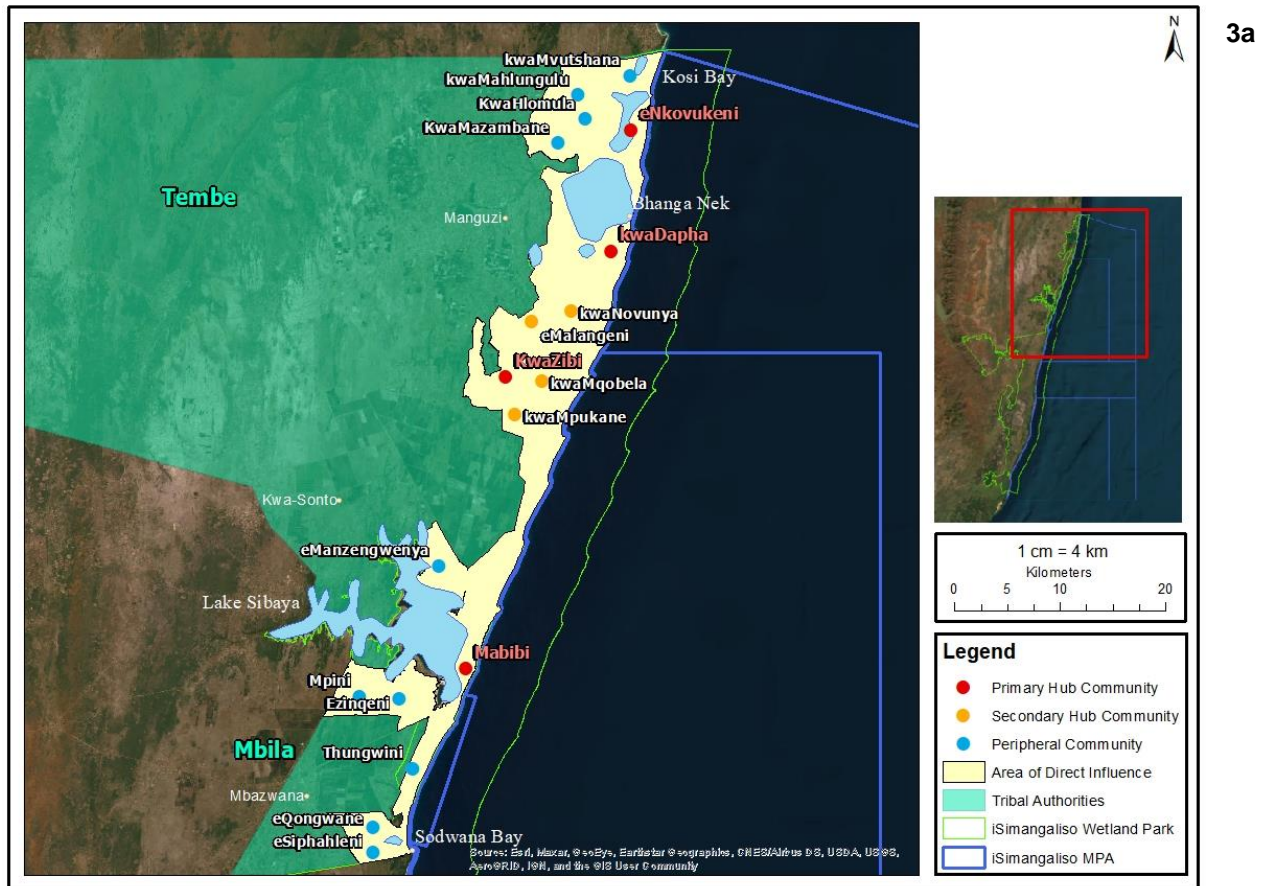


Figure 3a and 3b: Map showing the location of the Project

3.1.3 Social Context

Large areas of land adjacent to and included in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park fall under a dual governance system, which includes local and district municipalities, with their associated mandates, and traditional councils. Traditional councils and traditional authorities are the dominant form of governance at a local scale and are therefore a key stakeholder in the success of the Project.

The area is ranked as one of the poorest and most deprived regions of South Africa. Over 80% of households live below the poverty line and between 17% and 22% of the economically active portion of the local population is employed. Of the district's citizens who are 20 years and older, 57.3% have matric and 3.5% have higher education. Much of the area is characterised by remote, but densely settled and poorly serviced communities. For example, less than 20% of the population has access to flush toilets in areas within and surrounding the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. Local communities adopt complex livelihood strategies, underpinned by networks of migrant labour wage remittances, state welfare support in the form of pensions, child grants and disability grants, and subsistence agriculture and forestry.

There are a wide range of stakeholders in the project area, including local communities (see **Box 2**), private sector actors, civil society organisations and NGOs, and government departments and agencies. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) prepared for the project contains more details on these groups.

Box 2: Rural communities supported by the Project

Primary and Secondary Hub Communities

- Tembe Traditional Authority:
 - eNkovukeni, kwaDapha, eMalangeni, kwaNovunya, kwaZibi, kwaMqobela, kwaMpukane, Mabibi
- Sokhulu Traditional Authority:
 - eHlawini, eHlanzeni, kwaNtongonya, eThukweni, eMalaleni, kwaManzamnyama, kwaHolinyoka

Peripheral Communities

- Tembe Traditional Authority:
 - kwaMvutshane, kwaMahlungulu, kwaHlomula, kwaMazambane, eManzengwenya
- Mbila Traditional Authority:
 - Ezinqeni, eMpini, eQongwane, eSiphahleni, Thungwini

The Project design has taken account of disadvantaged or vulnerable groups who may be disproportionately affected by project-related risks and adverse impacts, while also being limited in their ability to take advantage of project benefits. These groups include ethnic, religious, cultural, linguistic minorities, traditional rural groups, female-headed households, children and youngsters, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and the poor. Vulnerability in this context refers to people who are likely to be affected by the project, sensitive to these effects, and have low adaptive capacity. The following vulnerable groups were specifically identified in the Environmental and Social Assessment undertaken during the project design process: subsistence fishers, small-scale fishers, people living in extreme poverty, women, youth, and people with disabilities.

The Blue Action Fund requires projects seeking funding to obtain Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) from Indigenous Peoples and sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities if there are potentially significant adverse impacts on these groups from the proposed project. The definition of Indigenous Peoples / Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities aligns with definitions published by international organizations. The San and Khoekhoe groups meet the definition of Indigenous Peoples in Southern Africa but are not present in the proposed project area. However, the project-affected communities have a clear history of economic and social marginalisation and are highly socio-economically vulnerable, therefore ensuring that the Project does not exacerbate this marginalization and contributes positively to reducing vulnerability are critical considerations. This includes ensuring inclusive consultations with stakeholders and safeguarding vulnerable communities.

3.1.4 National and International Requirements

WILDTRUST is committed to full compliance with South Africa's legal requirements, Blue Action Fund's Environmental and Social Management System standards, policy and procedures, and international good practice, notably the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework.

3.1.4.1 Park Governance

Management of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park World Heritage Site (which includes the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area) has been delegated to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority (IWPA) as per section 38(1) of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (Act 57 of 2003). IWPA is responsible for the operations of the Park and must ensure the environmental and cultural protection, and that the values of the World Heritage Convention are respected including managing tourism, creating jobs and implementing the Park Integrated Management Plan (IMP). Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (EKZNW) is contracted by IWPA to undertake day to day conservation management, policing and enforcement of the regulations. The KZN Tourism Authority is contracted to assist the IWPA with tourism marketing. In addition, IWPA has a mandate to enter into co-operative governance agreements

other institutions across all spheres of government, including local government, to fulfil its core functions. The rights and duties of IWPA, EKZNW and the KZN Tourism Authority, with respect to the management and development of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park are regulated through legislation and have been further elaborated through a management agreement signed in August 2001 by these parties.

3.1.4.2 National Regulations

The marine environment is the responsibility of National Government (Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment), which controls access to and use of associated resources. International laws and agreements as well as National Acts and Policies underpin the proclamation of Marine Protected Areas and direct the associated planning and operational management activities. Environmental governance in the coastal zone is much more complex, with multiple laws and actors at different scales responsible for managing natural, built and human environments. There at least 16 different national and provincial statutes that mandate different national, provincial and local government entities to perform specific regulatory and / or management functions in estuary zones. In addition to national and provincial statutes, local government is responsible for preparing Integrated Development Plans, Spatial Development Frameworks and Local Area Plans (and associated policies and by-laws) that regulate development in and adjacent to coastal areas in response to identified environmental threats and priorities.

The project will adhere to both national legislation and international safeguards, detailed below.

National Legislation

The following list comprises the legislation most relevant and important for this project:

- South African Constitution (1996); Bill of Rights
- South African National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) (NEMA)
- National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act 10 of 2004) (NEMBA)
- National Environmental Management: Marine Protected Area's Act (Act 57 of 2003) (NEMPA)
- Integrated Coastal Management Act 24 of 2008 (ICA)
- Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (Act 3 of 2000) (PAJA)
- Promotion of Access to Information Act (Act of 2 of 2000) (PAIA)
- Threatened and Protected Species Regulations is a chapter (Chapter 4) within NEMBA
- Marine Living Resources Act (Act 18 of 1998)
- South African National Water Act (1998)

Figure 4 presents a summary of the ‘layers’ of legislation that impose various regulatory and management requirements in estuaries and other parts of the coastal zone. The diagram shows at least 16 different national and provincial statutes that mandate different national, provincial and local government entities to perform specific regulatory and/or management functions in estuary zones. In addition to national and provincial statutes, local government is responsible for preparing Integrated Development Plans, Spatial Development Frameworks and Local Area Plans (and associated policies and by-laws) that regulate development in and adjacent to coastal areas in response to identified environmental threats and priorities.

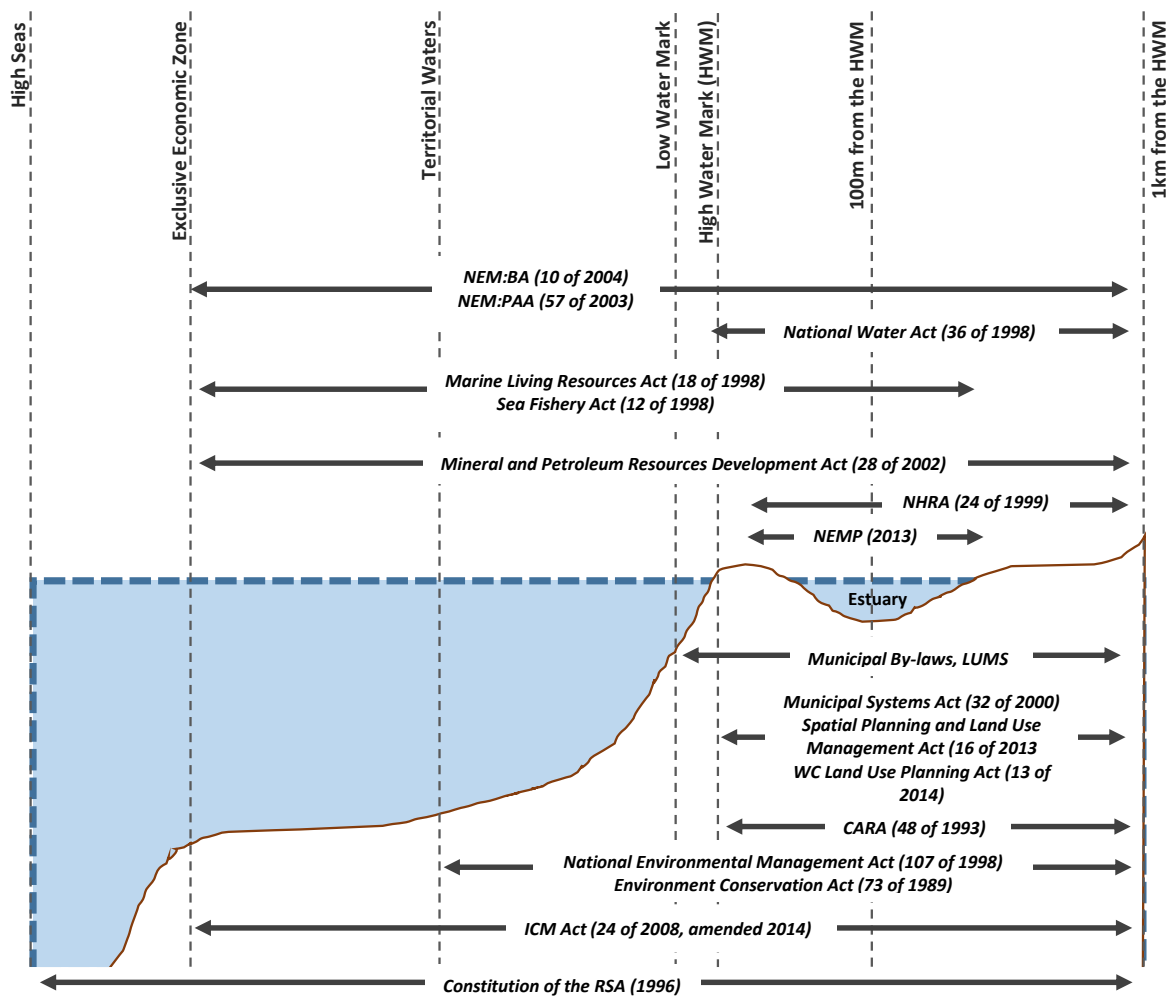


Figure 4: Summary of Legislative Jurisdiction in the Coastal Zone (from Western Cape Government, 2019, originally adapted from Goble et al. 2014)

3.1.4.3 Global Regulations

There are several applicable global legal instruments bind South Africa to protect and manage the sea and its marine resources (including fisheries), given the internationally connected nature of the world’s oceans. Key amongst these are: the United Nations Law of the Sea, International Convention for the

Prevention of Pollution from Ships (1973), the Convention on Biological Diversity, World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation (2002), Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels, FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing, Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels, Port State Measures Agreement, African Integrated Maritime Strategy, and Convention on International Trade in endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

3.1.4.4 International Requirements

The Blue Action Fund requires all of its projects to be compliant with the Standards & Guidelines detailed in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Blue Action Fund ESMS Standards & Guidelines

| Title | Date | Standard/ Guideline |
|---|---------|---------------------|
| The World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). ESS1- 10. | 2017 | Standard |
| ILO Core Labor Standards ¹ | Various | Standard |
| KfW Sustainability Guideline - Assessment of Environmental, Social, and Climate Performance: Principles and Process ² | 2021 | Guideline |
| The World Bank Group's Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS) Guidelines, including General EHS Guidelines and Industry Specific Guidelines, as applicable. | 2007 | Guidelines |
| BMZ's Guidelines on Incorporating Human Rights Standards and Principles, Including Gender, in Programme Proposals for Bilateral German Technical and Financial Cooperation. | 2013 | Guidelines |
| "Workers' Accommodation: Processes and Standards: A Guidance Note by IFC and the EBRD" | 2009 | Guidelines |
| FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT). | 2012 | Guidelines |
| FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF). | 1995 | Guidelines |
| FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (VGSSF). | 2015 | Guidelines |
| UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials | 1979 | Guidelines |
| Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials | 1990 | Guidelines |
| The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights | 2000 | Guidelines |

Notes:

- The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (2000) has been added to the list as Good International Industry Practice (GIIP) for aspects relating to law enforcement, and the Voluntary Principles are commonly referred to as GIIP.
- The UN Basic Principles and Guidelines on Development-based Evictions and Displacement (namely §§ 42, 49, 52, 54 and 60) is referred to in the KfW Sustainability Guidelines (2021), but as Blue Action Fund does not support projects with potential for physical displacement (see Exclusion List, Chapter 2 of the ESMS), these guidelines are not included here.

These Standards are aimed at providing guidance on how to identify risks and impacts and are designed to help avoid, mitigate and manage risks and impacts as a way of doing projects in a sustainable way. To make these Standards relevant and practical for conservation projects, Blue Action Fund has developed safeguarding Principles and Requirements based on the WB ESF (Annex B of the Blue Action Fund ESMS² Manual), which include:

- **Principle 1:** Environmental and social assessment and risk management
- **Principle 2:** Stakeholder engagement
- **Principle 3:** Health, safety and security of communities and project personnel
- **Principle 4:** Protection, conservation and sustainable management of the environment, biodiversity and natural resources
- **Principle 5:** Livelihoods and access restrictions
- **Principle 6:** Gender equity and vulnerable groups
- **Principle 7:** Cultural heritage
- **Principle 8:** Indigenous Peoples
- **Principle 9:** Grievance management
- **Principle 10:** Human rights

The Project is also governed by international standards such as the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework, including the Environmental and Social Standards, and Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines. These Standards are aimed at providing guidance on how to identify risks and impacts, and are designed to help to help avoid, mitigate, and manage risks and impacts as a way of doing projects in a sustainable way. To make these Standards relevant and practical for conservation projects, Blue Action Fund has developed safeguarding Principles which will be adhered to in the Project (see Table 6).

3.1.5 Risk Management Strategy

The Project is associated with a range of risks and impacts that require management as part of the Project. The strategy for managing risks will be updated regularly throughout the lifetime of the project.

Table 5: Risks, Impacts and associated Management Measures

| Principles | Applicability & Significance | Main risks and impacts and how they will be addressed, including any Safeguard Instruments | Management measures |
|--|------------------------------|---|--|
| Principle 1: E&S assessment and risk management | Yes, low risk | Project has successfully identified several potential environmental and social risks and impacts on a high-level. To further improve the assessment, the project inception phase will include a legal review and gap analysis between relevant South African Law and international Blue Action Fund-aligned safeguarding principles, review EKZW's law enforcement Standard Operating Procedures, and a security risk assessment. The project will monitor risks and impacts via the ESMP and associated safeguards: Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Grievance Mechanism, Process Framework, and Gender Action Plan. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Monitoring and evaluation of the project ESMP 2) Annual re-screening of risks and impacts 3) Outcomes of Environmental & Social Assessment, Baselines and Safeguards shared with key stakeholders 4) WILDTRUST to strategically engage the media, arrange site visits and encouraging accurate / balanced reporting of events |
| Principle 2: Stakeholder engagement | Yes, moderate risk | The project is in a complex social and political landscape. Risks in relation to stakeholder consultation & engagement have been identified and a project Stakeholder Engagement Plan formulated. Risks are associated with the historic tensions between the Park Authorities and communities, a history of poor stakeholder engagement, and legacy land tenure issues. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Facilitate dialogue between IWPA and community stakeholders for a shared vision, common agenda, and joint action partnership 2) Promote and support inclusive public participation / engagement approaches, including the formulation of community engagement principles to ensure the voices of youth, women, and any identified vulnerable affected user groups are heard 3) WILDTRUST demonstrates best-practice stakeholder engagement approaches through Project 4) Ensure accessibility of information through translating materials (and at meetings) 5) Co-creation of consultation & participation processes with stakeholders, especially fishers and vulnerable groups, to ensure community are satisfied with the level and type of engagement with the project 6) Consultations with beneficiary communities to develop local-level beneficent strategies that ensure people benefit without causing conflict |

| Principles | Applicability & Significance | Main risks and impacts and how they will be addressed, including any Safeguard Instruments | Management measures |
|--|------------------------------|---|---|
| | | | 7) Development of culturally relevant, user-friendly communications material to clarify roles and responsibilities inside the Park |
| Principle 3: Health, safety and security of communities and project personnel | Yes, moderate risk | Risks identified to project staff, including WILDTRUST employees, sub-contractors and park management staff and community members, due to use of vehicles and boats, dangerous animals, hub construction and potential confrontations with people in the project focus areas. Crime also poses a threat to project staff. Risks related to law enforcement include the potential for escalated community-MPA tensions and potential for conflict between law enforcement personnel and communities. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) GAP analysis assesses EKZMW's Law Enforcement policies, and recommendations made to EKZMW and any necessary training provided 2) All Occupational Health & Safety in accordance with national legislation and all staff trained accordingly 3) Strong engagement with community partners to ensure trust and fair beneficiation to avoid any potential conflict 4) Environmental and Social Code of Practice (ESCOP) and EIA completed for resource Centre construction 5) Review EKZMW law enforcement Standard Operating Procedures 6) Legal compliance training for MPA staff |
| Principle 4: Resource efficiency and biodiversity | Yes, low risk | Potential risks from climate-smart agriculture, resource centres, restoration and rehabilitation activities, unintentionally increasing peoples' exposure to food insecurity and other climate change related risks. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ongoing research to provide good science for management decision making 2) Ensure that proposed riparian restoration complements and does not overlap with or duplicate similar LandCare funded activities in the protected area 3) Consider river catchments when formulating management interventions – requiring accountability and co-operation across relevant government departments 4) Inclusion of local knowledge and respect for indigenous knowledge systems and practices in estuarine and riparian restoration 5) Governance and management of estuaries to include meaningful participation (including stewardship) of local communities 6) Review of Park Land Use Plans, in collaboration with park ecologists and communities before any agricultural activities commence inside the Park 7) EIA's conducted before hub development and sites selected by communities |

| Principles | Applicability & Significance | Main risks and impacts and how they will be addressed, including any Safeguard Instruments | Management measures |
|--|------------------------------|---|--|
| Principle 5: Livelihoods and access restrictions | Yes, substantial risk | Potential for impacts to commercial and recreational fishers from legal access restriction enforcement, and impacts on coastal community's resource use activities, in a context where some restrictions on access already exist due to the existing Marine Protected Area, Nature Reserves and other land uses. A Preliminary Process Framework has been designed to guide the Project Inception period, including socioeconomic baselines and support to IWPA's stakeholder engagement process. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Focused engagement with fishers and support for co-operatives (incorporated into the Oceans 5, Small-Scale Fishers project) 2) Alignment with IWPA Beneficiation Strategy 3) Ensure livelihoods interventions do not over-utilise restricted natural resources 4) Ensure Park management plans account for climate change and population growth effect on livelihoods and natural resource dependency |
| Principle 6: Gender equity and vulnerable groups | Yes, moderate risk | Potential for unequal benefit sharing among men and women, causing psychological stress or conflict; potential for women and vulnerable groups to be excluded from engagement around Marine Protected Area planning and decision making, and potential for women and vulnerable groups to be more adversely affected by increased enforcement of legal restrictions on natural resource access. Measures included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Preliminary Process Framework to ensure inclusion during impact assessments and planning of project activities/ mitigation measures. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Development of a Gender Action Plan 2) Activities focused on skills development and empowerment of women, to support their ability to engage in leadership platforms, and contribute to decision making 3) Development of inclusive community engagement principles and participatory recommendations for women's engagement in MPA decision making and gender disaggregated monitoring and evaluation 4) Women-focused media publications to demonstrate female leadership in the marine space 5) Include a co-created identification process for vulnerable households to receive benefits 6) Map community committee's and structures in each community to meaningfully engage with these structures, particularly those that represent the wellbeing and rights of vulnerable groups |
| Principle 7: Cultural Heritage | No, low risk | Enforcement of access and use restrictions may impact cultural uses, such as medicinal plant or product harvesting, and for recreation. Development of Community Hubs is deemed to have a negligible potential negative impact on cultural | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Adopt a cultural sensitivity approach, ensuring that cultural uses are recognised in protected area plan, management approaches and livelihoods interventions 2) Mapping and sharing of local knowledge and areas amongst fishers and managers to gain a 2-eye knowing approach |

| Principles | Applicability & Significance | Main risks and impacts and how they will be addressed, including any Safeguard Instruments | Management measures |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|
| | | heritage and does not require a Chance Find Procedure. | |
| Principle 8: Indigenous Peoples | No, low risk | Not applicable. The project does not consider that the coastal communities in iSimangaliso meet the international definition of Indigenous Peoples. However, given some overlap with the categorisation of Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities, careful attention has been given to the stakeholder engagement and human rights principles for these groups. | 1) Project must ensure that it does not exacerbate local peoples' marginalisation |
| Principle 9: Grievance Management | Yes, low risk | Existing unresolved grievances between stakeholders and Park Authorities could threaten project outcomes, including grievances around access restrictions, boundaries of the park, law enforcement, land claims, and stakeholder engagement. A project-level Grievance Mechanism has been designed. The project will work with IWPA to develop an MPA level Grievance Mechanism to receive and resolve those grievances that are within IWPA's mandate. | 1) Development of Project Grievance Mechanism safeguard 2) Project to employ consultants to assist in addressing past grievances by enabling a structured, well facilitated process of airing the grievances and concerns, with the intention of identifying the basis for reconciliation and cooperative working |
| Principle 10: Human Rights | Yes, substantial risk | Risks include injury or death caused to Park law enforcement officials funded by the Project in the line of duty, and risk of harm to community members or poachers. Risk of perpetuating possible/perceived human rights issues in relation to customary fishing rights and increasing economic displacement caused by improved enforcement of legislated restrictions. An additional security risk assessment is being conducted and further details will be | 1) Security Risk Assessment will be conducted prior to the execution of any management effectiveness activities. 2) Legal review and capacity building for marine/estuarine enforcement staff in human rights and conflict de-escalation 3) Gender Awareness & gender-based violence training for all funded staff including marine and estuarine enforcement officers and monitors 4) Support effective co-management / community stewardship structures that give local communities and other stakeholder groups a voice in decision-making and planning and incentivises them to manage natural resources sustainably. |

| Principles | Applicability & Significance | Main risks and impacts and how they will be addressed, including any Safeguard Instruments | Management measures |
|------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| | | provided in the projects Process Framework. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5) Support for Small Scale Fisher Cooperatives and capacity building for community and fisher engagements 6) Review policies and procedures to account for crime and vehicle hijacking in Northern KZN and staff capacity building around hijacking and violent crime 7) Legal training for communities and fishers |

3.1.6 ESMP Monitoring and Supervision

WILDTRUST will manage the implementation of the Blue Action Fund Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS), Project Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), and associated Safeguard Instruments throughout Project lifetime. WILDTRUST is responsible for implementing the monitoring programmes required to verify that the management measures are achieving their expected results. Moreover, WILDTRUST is responsible for conducting public consultation activities necessary to support the implementation of the Safeguard Instruments and to disclose relevant project information to different stakeholders.

WILDTRUST has developed a training, capacity building and awareness programme for all employees and contractors on how to implement the Blue Action Fund ESMS, Project ESMP and Safeguard Instruments related to this ESMP. In addition, all new employees and contractors will attend a compulsory induction session that will include health and safety, environmental and community awareness. Written and verbal communication methods will also be used to raise awareness on a range of occupational and community health, safety, and security issues.

To determine the effectiveness of the ESMP and to ensure that the management measures contained therein are being implemented, internal monitoring and evaluation exercises are and will continue to be carried out. Evaluations will be carried out by WILDTRUST on an annual basis. Also, ESMS reporting will be done as part of the Annual Reporting.

The ESMP is routinely updated as the project progresses. In the case of any unforeseen circumstances or planned changes to the scope, design, implementation, or operation of the Project that could cause an adverse change in the environmental or social risks or impacts of the project, the ESMP will be put under immediate review.

3.2 Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) Summary

3.2.1 Introduction

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan outlines how the WILDTRUST engaged with stakeholders during the conceptual design of the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area (MPA) Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) Project. It also sets out the proposed engagement process that will be followed during the detailed planning and implementation phases of the project to ensure that stakeholders' views and concerns are heard and taken into account.

Stakeholders are individuals or groups who are affected by the project and may have an interest or influence in/on the project. The degree and type of engagement required for each stakeholder depends on their level of interest and influence in the project, and how the project impacts them. Stakeholder engagement is an ongoing process that builds a positive relationship between the project and its stakeholders. Blue Action Fund (as the project funder) and WILDTRUST (as the project proponent) are committed to complying with national and international stakeholder engagement and disclosure requirements. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan is a public document that will be revised and updated as stakeholder engagement activities continue.

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan is structured into five sections, including:

1. Stakeholder identification and analysis,
2. Stakeholder engagement,
3. Grievance procedures,
4. Stakeholder register, and
5. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

3.2.2 Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

Stakeholder identification and analysis is important in project design to identify key actors, their interests, and potential impacts on the project. The first step is identifying stakeholders who may be affected by or have an interest in the project, including those who may have the potential to influence project outcomes. Stakeholders are identified through various means, including meetings, referrals, and community focus groups, and their information is recorded in an electronic Stakeholder Database. Stakeholder identification is an ongoing process that is regularly reviewed and updated during project implementation.

Stakeholder analysis is the process of examining identified stakeholders using three criteria: (1) their potential impact on the project, or the impact of the project on them, (2) their type and extent of interest in the project, and (3) their potential to influence the project and other stakeholders. The results of this analysis inform the stakeholder engagement strategy for the project.

The types of stakeholder engagement required are based on the potential impact of the project on the stakeholder, and their level of interest and influence on the project. The categories of engagement can include:

- (1) Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC),
- (2) Informed Consultation and Participation,
- (3) Consultation, and
- (4) Information sharing.

FPIC is required where Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities are substantially affected by the project. As part of the Environmental and Social

Assessment for the project, the WILDTRUST evaluated if the local people potentially affected by the project were considered to fall within this definition. External consultants completed the review, and the results are recorded in the project's Environmental and Social Management Plan. The WILDTRUST used the results to inform the stakeholder engagement approach and the design of project activities. They are committed to an informed consultation and participation process involving representative bodies and organizations of the affected communities, providing them with sufficient time for decision-making, and allowing for effective participation in the design of project activities or mitigation measures. Information sharing is the minimum level of engagement required for all other stakeholders. These categories form the basis for the stakeholder engagement strategy and are in line with Blue Action Fund Standards.

3.2.3 Stakeholder Engagement

3.2.3.1 Engagement and Disclosure already undertaken

Various stakeholder engagement activities have already been undertaken by WILDTRUST during the planning stages of the project. These build on the ongoing engagements which have been taking place over the past four years through the Oceans Alive project, also funded by Blue Action Fund and implemented by WILDTRUST. WILDTRUST has therefore been working in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park for some time, and has conducted meetings with Traditional Authorities, community members, and small-scale fishers to introduce the project and gather feedback on the proposed project.

The stakeholder analysis prioritised two groups for further engagement in the short-term: (1) key stakeholders involved in the governance and management of the park, and (2) local leadership and communities in the project implementation areas. Expert consultants hired by WILDTRUST to undertake an objective Environmental and Social Assessment of the proposed project conducted individual interviews with key stakeholders and facilitated focus group discussions with project partner communities in the Tembe and Sokhulu Traditional Authority areas between September 2022 and January 2023.

3.2.3.2 Planned Stakeholder Engagement and Disclosure

Table 6: WILDTRUST has planned several types of engagements with stakeholders during the project.

| Engagement Type | Purpose / Goal of the Engagement |
|---|--|
| Partnership-building and Dialogue Process | Facilitated support for trust-building and positive engagement for common shared outcomes amongst traditional leadership and communities and the Park authorities (iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife). |

| Engagement Type | Purpose / Goal of the Engagement |
|---|---|
| Trust in Action Dialogue Workshops | A space for dialogue around key issues to build a foundation of trust in action, on which a stronger relationship can be built and shared common outcomes and how action towards these can be arrived at. |
| MPA, Estuary and Catchment Stakeholder Forum | All matters related to MPA, including stakeholder and law enforcement issues. Discussion and feedback on social and ecological data collection objectives, methodologies and feedback on results. This forum will allow stakeholders to engage regularly with Park management and address and share information and inputs to the management planning process, and introduce EbA approaches and benefits. |
| Park boundary clarification field visits and workshops | Facilitate field site visits and workshops to develop shared and common understanding between the Park Authority and communities of the park boundaries, and erect relevant language and culture-sensitive signage and demarcation methods (markers) to clarify these on the ground. |
| Boundary Demarcation Area Maps | Develop local area maps (for each 5 Primary Community areas, surrounding Secondary Community areas, and for the Peripheral Communities), with Park boundaries, traditional authority boundaries and municipal boundaries, landcover, vegetation and habitats shown, including information on park rules and rationales, to distribute to affected stakeholders and generate posters for display at prominent places and in Community Resource Hubs |
| Co-management Committees | <p>Co-management of marine subsistence resource use (non-commercial small-scale fisheries for food security), including the establishment of co-management zones within the iSimangaliso MPA and adjacent buffer zones, implemented with a focus on piloting this during this project (using the provisions in the Protected Areas Act) in kwaSokhuku, kwaMabibi, kwaDapha, eNkovukeni.</p> <p>This will include 3 functioning Co-management committees, composed of fisher representatives, MPA managers and supported by NGOs and/or researchers and focal group/workshops with fishers in each of the pilot communities to gather traditional and indigenous local knowledge and practices with regards to harvesting areas and species.</p> |
| Socio-economic and project baseline surveys and assessments | This will serve as a baseline and project closure assessment of the understanding of climate risks and existing mitigation measures. This will inform mitigation planning for the revision of the ESMP, MPA stakeholder consultation and engagement process, selection of areas where climate-smart agriculture is required and will not have any negative social and environmental impacts. |
| Co-created livelihoods beneficiation Meetings and Workshops | To develop clear livelihoods beneficiation and communication strategies that (1) are targeted at the most vulnerable community members, and (2) are deemed fair and appropriately apportioned community beneficiaries, and (3) support and build on IWPA's beneficiation strategy. |
| Co-created livelihoods beneficiation Meetings and Workshops | To align approaches to beneficiation where there is opportunity to enhance livelihoods and benefits for communities through collaboration. |
| Local Knowledge-sharing Gatherings | Community gatherings, storytelling, and performances to better understand traditional and existing agricultural and other livelihood practices at hubs. Participatory methods such as Timeline which can elicit rich indigenous knowledge and historical background which renders old participants in the group invaluable to discussions will be explored as part of the methodologies. |

| Engagement Type | Purpose / Goal of the Engagement |
|---|--|
| Regional WIO Workshop | Regional 3-day online workshop covering key Marine EbA themes and case studies identified during the Project and relevant to the latest Marine EbA Priorities. The workshop will include a balance of presentations of lessons learned from this project, and others across the region, with multiple breakaway discussion groups where participants can discuss these themes and the emergent topics identified by participants. |
| Exchange Visits between EbA projects | Exchange visits between MPA managers and national agencies involved in this Blue Action EbA with other relevant projects in South Africa and Mozambique |
| International and regional symposia attendance | Members of the Project team will attend and present project results and lessons at national, regional, and international Symposia |
| High-level Strategy and Policy Planning Workshops | Contributing to higher importance of EbA approaches for climate resilient management |
| iSimangaliso Climate Resilience Governance Liaison Forum | Forum to integrate across stakeholders and government agencies to identify and solve challenges. Informed by the Socio-ecological Systems Model for Climate Resilience developed under Output 4, and creating a platform for different government departments, NGOs, traditional authorities, and representatives of stakeholder groups to come together to discuss and coordinate activities and interventions. Terms of reference will be developed on inauguration but envisaged to include food security, land use, education, water, basic service provision (water, electricity), sustainable development, health, and conservation. |
| Small-scale Fisheries Reference Group | Provide a platform for comment on the ToR of the review as well as the product that results, and to enable constructive informed discussions amongst players and in engagements with government |
| Small-scale Fishers' National Meetings Attendance | Provide support for small-scale fishers from iSimangaliso MPA to attend national MPA workshops/forums which provide MPA decision-makers and managers and fishers opportunity to engage, understand and address challenges. |
| Project Team Meetings | To ensure the workplan is followed |
| Full partner meetings | To ensure the workplan is followed, collaborative and informed decisions can be made and the programme is moving forward consistently |
| Climate mitigation and adaptation knowledge-building workshops | Information sharing and knowledge-building workshops to promote the understanding of EbA approaches and support the Project in the implementation of EbA approaches - build capacity and knowledge to empower engagement. |
| Women's group training and peer support groups | Facilitate set up of support groups/networks, that meets quarterly at the five (5) Community Climate Adaptation Resource Centres. Topics will include anything of importance to women with a focus on known issues such as GBV, teenage pregnancy, health, empowerment, stokvels, and business support. Where possible other community support programmes will be invited to participate and provide guidance and support. |
| Community involvement in identification of criteria (including where the recruitment pool | Inclusion of Traditional Authority leadership and the Councillors in design process for employment opportunities that will become available for the youth and communities. |

| Engagement Type | Purpose / Goal of the Engagement |
|--|---|
| stems from within project feasibility) for employment opportunities | |
| Facilitate Awareness-raising (Media articles and publications) | Use media communications to build awareness of EbA approaches and MPA benefits, including lessons learned during project period with a focus on inclusive access to media. One media trip per year to educate the media about the challenges in the park and promote balanced media publications and elicit their support for holistic solutions for people and nature in the area. |
| Workshops, webinar series and publication of EbA MPA lessons learned | Feedback to stakeholders on lessons learned. |

3.2.4 Informed Consultation and Participation

An Informed Consultation and Participation (ICP) process is suitable for projects that could have significant adverse impacts on local communities or other stakeholders (called Project Affected People). Stakeholders identified as requiring Informed Consultation and Participation in the project include: Traditional leadership, communities within the direct influence of the project, communities under the partial / indirect influence of the project, vulnerable or marginalised groups, subsistence fishers, and small-scale fishers (co-operatives).

The consultation process will be two-way and commensurate with project risks and adverse impacts, and involve the disclosure of transparent information in a culturally appropriate format. Inclusive engagement will focus on those directly affected and be free of manipulation or intimidation, with the goal of incorporating the views of affected stakeholders into the project's decision-making process. The process will also document measures taken to minimize risks and adverse effects on affected communities and give information to those affected about how their concerns have been considered.

3.2.5 Disadvantaged or Vulnerable Groups

Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups have been identified and require a specific engagement approach in the project, taking into account constraints and barriers to participation. The specific vulnerable groups associated with the project include subsistence fishers, small-scale fishers, people living in extreme poverty, women, youth, and people with disabilities. The engagement with these groups will be tailored to the potential level of risks/impacts associated with the project, and efforts will be made to ensure that their concerns are heard, taking into account individuals' and communities' specificities and delivered in an appropriate form, manner, and language.

WILDTRUST recognises the importance of not overcompensating and unintentionally marginalising certain groups, such as men and adults over 35 years of age, when prioritising vulnerable groups like women, youth, and people with disabilities. The Environmental and Social Assessment completed for the project revealed that preventing men from fishing or collecting resources leaves them vulnerable and impacts their ability to support their families. The WILDTRUST is aware of the marginalization of groups over 35 by the previous Oceans Alive project due to the significant weighting towards youth jobs. The project will therefore adopt a participatory approach where communities can collectively decide the way in which beneficiation should happen within frameworks of social justice and equality. The details of this will be detailed in the Project Inception Phase.

3.2.6 Grievance Mechanism Disclosure

The Grievance Mechanism, which is a separate document included in the Environmental and Social Management Plan, will be disclosed as follows:

Table 7: Project GM Disclosure Methods

| Disclosure Method | Stakeholders |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Presentation | Key project stakeholders: Traditional Counsels and Project Affected communities, Small-scale fishers, iSimangaliso Park Management Authorities (IWPA and EKZNW), DFFE, Municipality |
| 2. Briefing | Project Staff, YES Interns, and Project Partners (UKZN, University of Zululand, South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity - SAIAB, Ocean Risk Resilience Action - ORRAA) and Sub – grantees (Mahlathini Development Foundation, SAEON, Africa Ignite and Indalo Inclusive) |
| 3. Email | All other Stakeholders |

3.2.7 Stakeholder Register

Issues raised during the consultation process are recorded in the Project’s Stakeholder Register. This is a database that will be updated during the full life of the project to as a record of stakeholder engagements, including specifics of the engagement activities, any issues raised by stakeholders requiring follow-up, follow-up actions, and the status of these actions. Where many stakeholders raise similar issues, these can be grouped as “issues” and responses to them will be tracked together in a separate section of the register.

3.2.8 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting of stakeholder engagement activities will help WILDTRUST track issues/ concerns, to provide an understanding of trends which will help pre-empt risk management activities. Additionally, by monitoring and evaluating the project's performance regarding stakeholder engagement, project approaches can be evaluated and improved where necessary.

The project team will update the stakeholder register and planned engagement at least once a year. Key indicators that will be used to monitor the stakeholder engagement programme, include:

- List of stakeholder events/ activities carried out during the reporting period and the stakeholders targeted;
- Number of participants at each event/ activity (disaggregated by gender);
- Percentage of Informed Consultation Process or FPIC engagement activities undertaken;
- Percentage of follow-up actions addressed/ completed and percentage still open;
- Proportion of year's planned stakeholder engagement completed during the reporting period.

This list will be reviewed and augmented during the Inception Phase of the Project.

3.3 Grievance Mechanism

Please see full Grievance Mechanism attached in Annex 1.

3.4 Process Framework (PF) Summary

3.4.1 Introduction

This Preliminary Process Framework has been developed for the WILDTRUST's iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area (MPA) Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) Project. It is one of several Safeguards that have been developed under the umbrella of the Project Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). Its' purpose is to direct the participatory process whereby affected populations can meaningfully participate in project design, identification of impacts, development of adequate mitigation measures, and ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of measures.

The Process Framework is a specific requirement of the Blue Action Fund's Safeguarding Principles and Requirements and is needed because the project includes activities which may result in enhanced enforcement of access restrictions (through existing protected area zoning and regulations) in the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area. Given the complex issues that intersect in the project area,

including legacy issues, conflict mediation is required between some stakeholder groups as part of the project. This, and the recognition that livelihood-focused interventions need to be carefully framed to help mitigate the impact of enhanced access restriction enforcement, the Process Framework is considered a key safeguard to ensure that negative social and economic impacts are managed in the Project.

The structure of this Preliminary Process Framework includes the following:

1. Introduction
2. Stakeholder Engagement and Participation
3. Institutional and Legal Framework
4. Project Area Baseline Data Collection & Analysis
5. Identifying, Assessing and Minimising Impacts
6. Mitigation Measures
7. Implementation Arrangements
8. Monitoring and Evaluation
9. Change Management

3.4.2 Preliminary Potential Access Restrictions & Related Social Impacts

There are several project activities that could potentially bring about involuntary natural resource access restrictions for project affected peoples. These include:

- 1) ***Marine Protected Area Management Effectiveness***: Improved MPA managements effectiveness through implementation of measures stipulated in MPA Management Plan
- 2) ***Marine Protected Area Management Staff Capacity Building***: Improved human capacity for management of the MPA and associated estuaries
- 3) ***Park Boundary Demarcation***: Legal Demarcation of boundaries of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is clarified, understood, and communicated to affected communities
- 4) ***Community Co-management and Monitoring***: Cost-effective monitoring, control, and enforcement techniques to prevent illegal fishing/use of unsustainable practices are successfully adopted.

3.4.3 Stakeholder Engagement and Participation

3.4.3.1 Stakeholder Engagement Objectives and Principles

It is important to manage stakeholder expectations to avoid potential frustrations during the project implementation. The Project objectives for stakeholder engagement include: (i) identifying and analysing stakeholders, (ii) obtaining input from a broad spectrum of stakeholders, (iii) providing

stakeholders with clear and timely information, (iv) providing opportunity for stakeholders to engage, (v) building stakeholder capacity, (vi) working directly with stakeholders, and (vii) providing stakeholders with timely feedback. The overall goal is to build strong relationships and mutual understanding between the project and its stakeholders, particularly the project-affected people, while ensuring that expectations are realistic and informed.

The Project has adopted eight key principles for best practice stakeholder engagement, aimed at promoting optimal outcomes for nature and people. These principles include providing supportive and transparent leadership, fostering a safe and trusting environment for input, early community involvement with clear expectations, sharing decision-making and governance control, acknowledging power imbalances, investing in stakeholders lacking skills, creating tangible wins and continuous feedback, and considering both community and organisational motivations. Implementing these principles will ensure inclusion, mainstreaming of community considerations, respecting human rights, and ensure participation and consent through open and transparent engagement mechanisms, trust, mutual commitment, and inclusive participation methods.

3.4.3.2 Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

WILDTRUST and consultants who conducted the Environmental and Social Assessment during the Project design phase undertook a stakeholder identification exercise that identified the following groups, which have been included in the Project Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

- ***Collaborating Authorities and Partners:*** National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment, iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority (IWPA), Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (EKZNW)
- ***Project Livelihood Sub-grantees:*** Mahlathini Development Foundation, Africa Ignite!, and Indalo Inclusive
- ***Sub-grantees:*** South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON)
- ***Local & other Authorities:*** Traditional Leadership (Amakhosi and iziNduna in Tembe Traditional Council, Mbila Traditional Council and Sokhulu Traditional Council), National COGTA, South African Heritage Research Agency (SAHRA), AMAFA Institute, KZN EDTEA, KZN DARD, Tourism KZN, District Municipalities (uMkhanyakude and King Cetshwayo District Municipalities) uMhlosinga Development Agency, Local Municipalities (uMhlabuyalingana, Jozini, Big 5 Hlabisa, Mtubatuba, uMfolozi)
- ***Law Enforcement and Security:*** Local magistrates, SAPS Marine Unit, SA Navy
- ***Research and Monitoring Organisations:*** University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA), South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB), South African Association for Marine Biological Research (SAAMBR).

- **Rural communities:** Communities within the direct (and partial/indirect) influence of the project and outside the sphere of influence, vulnerable/ marginalized groups (women, youth and people with disabilities; and subsistence and Small-Scale Fishers.
- **Recreational Users of iSimangaliso MPA:** Recreational Fishers/ Boating Clubs, Tourists, Scuba-Diving individuals
- **Commercial users of iSimangaliso MPA:** Tourism operators inside MPA, Commercial line fishing Operations (offshore) – illegal, SCUBA Diving Concessionaires, Boat charters, Small Scale Fishers (co-operatives)
- **Civil Society Organisations, Local NGOs and Business Interests:** Media, Private Property Owners/ Developers, Commercialisation investors, Ratepayers/ residents, Conservation NGOs, Ecological / Human Rights Activist Groups, Friends of Small-Scale Fishers.

A detailed Stakeholder Analysis is included in the Project Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). This assesses the Project impact on each stakeholder, identifies their level of interest and influence on the Project, and includes an analysis of the role of the stakeholder in the project and in relation to access restrictions. A diagrammatic representation of this analysis is indicated in **Figure 5** below.

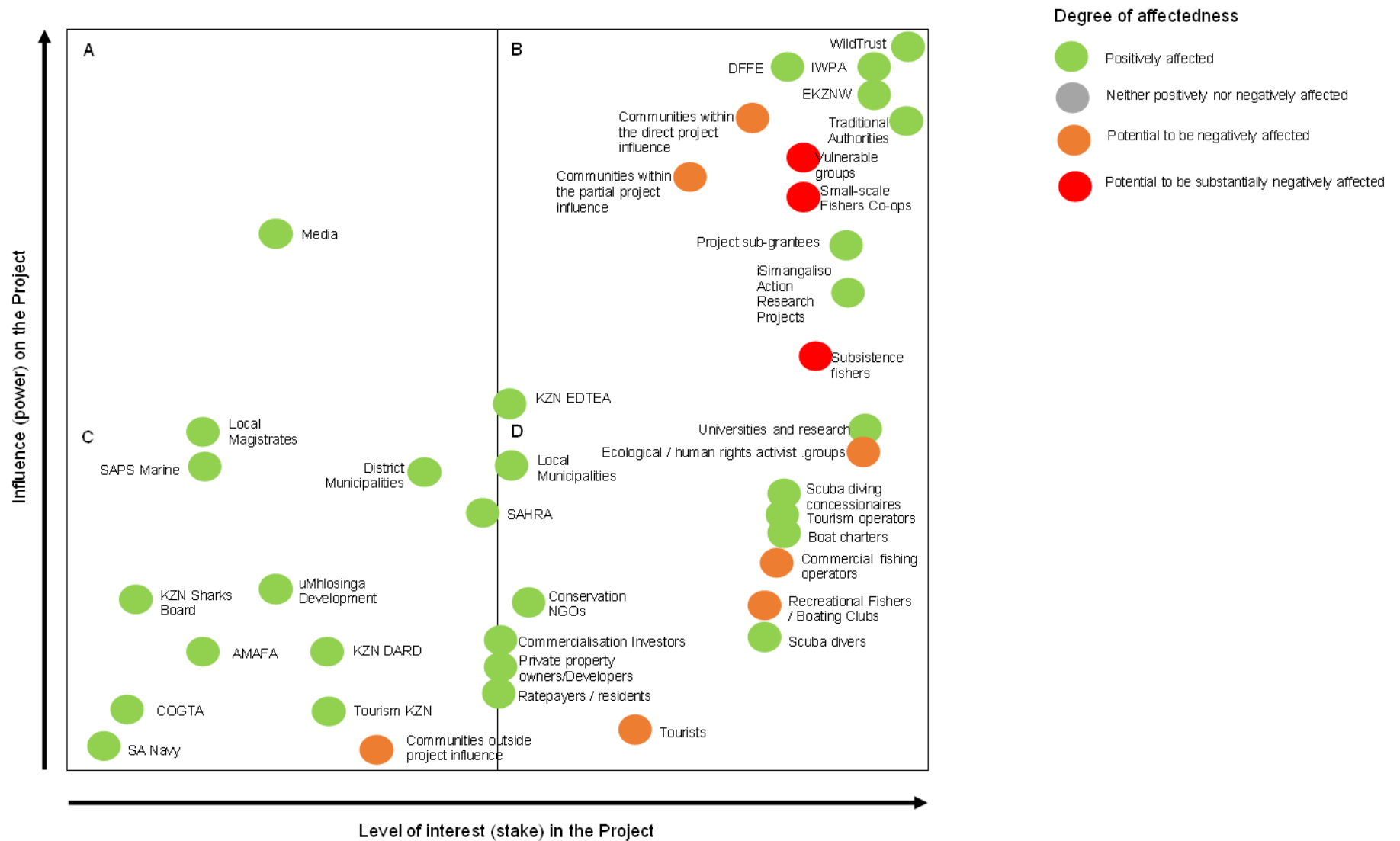


Figure 5: iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area Ecosystem-based Adaptation Project Stakeholder Analysis

3.4.4 Stakeholder Engagement to Date

Various stakeholder engagement activities have already been undertaken by WILDTRUST during the planning stages of the Project (this is detailed in the Project Stakeholder Engagement Plan).

These engagements highlighted multiple legacy issues in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, including a history of apartheid and dispossession, land evictions, perceptions of a "fences and fines" approach to conservation, and a lack of delivery of benefits to local communities. Limited communication and engagement with communities in the past has negatively impacted the relationship between the park and communities, though efforts to improve this relationship are underway. Some community members view Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as being under the influence of "whites" and associated with the legacy of apartheid and control over land and livelihoods. However, the study also revealed that there are positive perceptions of MPAs among some communities, including their role in conserving nature, protecting animals and the marine environment, and creating economic benefits such as job opportunities and economic growth through tourism.

3.4.5 Planned Stakeholder Engagement

WILDTRUST has planned several types of engagements with stakeholders during the Project, which are detailed in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, and which are designed to enhance accessibility and context-relevance of the engagement process for different groups. These methods include online and in-person meetings, workshops, focus group meetings, webinars, written publications (appropriately translated), a facilitated partnership building and dialogue series of engagements, facilitation of reference groups to support research processes, perception surveys, media information days, and radio, print and social media releases / publications.

Prior to Project inception, WILDTRUST will facilitate disclosure of the Project Safeguards, continue to engage with key stakeholders around the proposed Project, and conduct stakeholder engagement to inform a targeted Security Risk Assessment.

During Project inception, information on the Project will be released through various public media platforms. Introductory meetings will be held with key Project partners, community leadership and government agencies, and with vulnerable groups potentially affected by the Project, such as Small Scale Fishers.

During the implementation phase, a comprehensive programme of meaningful stakeholder engagement will be facilitated in accordance with the Project Stakeholder Engagement Plan. These engagements will be focused on participatory planning with key stakeholders to ensure they have adequate opportunity to input into and influence the project design and adaptive management decision-making. Development of Estuarine Management Plans as part of the Project process will be a specific

area of consultation, to ensure that stakeholders are effectively engaged in the preparation of these plans.

All stakeholder engagement activities will be registered in a Project Stakeholder Engagement Register.

3.4.5.1 Grievance Mechanism

A project level Grievance Mechanism has been prepared and included as Safeguard within the Project Environmental and Social Management Plan. Furthermore, the Project will work with the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority (IWPA) to develop a Marine Protected Area-level Grievance Mechanism to receive and resolve those grievances that are within IWPA and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife's mandates.

3.4.6 Institutional and Legal Framework

3.4.6.1 Institutional Framework

Management of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park World Heritage Site and Marine Protected Area has been delegated to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority (IWPA) as per section 38(1) of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (Act 57 of 2003) by the National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment. IWPA is responsible for the operations of the Park and must ensure environmental and cultural protection, and that the values of the World Heritage Convention are respected including managing tourism, creating jobs and implementing the Park's Management Plan. Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (EKZNW) is mandated through the World Heritage Regulations as the conservation management agent for the iSimangaliso Wetland Park and is contracted by ISWP with respect to the MPA to manage law enforcement, management of plant and animal species and populations, management of ecosystems and habitats, fire management, water pollution control, and soil erosion control. The KZN Tourism Authority assists the IWPA with tourism marketing. IWPA has a mandate to enter into co-operative governance agreements with other institutions across all spheres of government, including local government, to fulfil its core functions. The rights and duties of IWPA, EKZNW and the KZN Tourism Authority in the management and development of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park are regulated through legislation and have been defined through a management agreement signed in August 2001 by these three parties.

South Africa is governed by wall-to-wall district municipalities, which form the 'local' authority of the three spheres of government: national, provincial and local government. District municipalities are comprised of local municipalities, which govern and fulfil their mandates at the closest interface with citizens and hence are important to the WILDTRUST project.

The Ingonyama Trust holds 32% of land in KwaZulu-Natal, which vests in the Ingonyama, King MisuZulu, as a trustee on behalf of the members of the Zulu nation. The areas where community livelihood activities will be implemented in the Project are located predominantly on Ingonyama Trust Land. In these areas, the amakosi and izinduna are responsible for land allocation, and social cohesion, addressing social conflict and ensuring the development of their people, and are therefore key stakeholders in the Project.

3.4.6.2 Legal Framework

The marine environment is the responsibility of National Government (Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment), which controls access to and use of associated resources. International laws and agreements as well as National Acts and Policies underpin the proclamation of Marine Protected Areas and direct the associated planning and operational management activities. In addition to national and provincial statutes, local government is responsible for preparing Integrated Development Plans, Spatial Development Frameworks and Local Area Plans (and associated policies and by-laws) that regulate development in and adjacent to coastal areas in response to identified environmental threats and priorities.

There are several applicable global legal instruments bind South Africa to protect and manage the sea and its marine resources (including fisheries), given the internationally connected nature of the world's oceans. Key amongst these are: the United Nations Law of the Sea, International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (1973), the Convention on Biological Diversity, World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation (2002), Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels, FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing, Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels, Port State Measures Agreement, African Integrated Maritime Strategy, and Convention on International Trade in endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The Project is also governed by international standards such as the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework, including the Environmental and Social Standards, and Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines. These Standards are aimed at providing guidance on how to identify risks and impacts, and are designed to help to help avoid, mitigate, and manage risks and impacts as a way of doing projects in a sustainable way. To make these Standards relevant and practical for conservation projects, Blue Action Fund has developed safeguarding Principles which will be adhered to in the Project, which include:

- **Principle 1:** Environmental and social assessment and risk management
- **Principle 2:** Stakeholder engagement
- **Principle 3:** Health, safety and security of communities and project personnel
- **Principle 4:** Protection, conservation and sustainable management of the environment, biodiversity and natural resources

- **Principle 5:** Livelihoods and access restrictions
- **Principle 6:** Gender equity and vulnerable groups
- **Principle 7:** Cultural heritage
- **Principle 8:** Indigenous Peoples
- **Principle 9:** Grievance management
- **Principle 10:** Human rights

Adherence to these Principles requires that adequate public consultation and disclosure is carried out by the Project so that Project Affected Communities are fully informed about the project and their views and concerns are considered.

WILDTRUST has conducted a preliminary review of the South African legislation relating to the Project and has identified several gaps that need to be addressed. These include: (i) the absence of a legal requirement for socio-economic baselines to be conducted as part of Marine Protected Area (MPA) establishment, and (ii) the lack of entitlement to compensation for affected persons due to access restrictions resulting from MPA establishment. However, the Project has already completed social baselines across the project community implementation sites. Regarding the second gap, Project livelihood restoration efforts will be carefully planned in collaboration with the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority to ensure equitable outcomes for communities within the MPA.

3.4.7 Baseline Data Collection and Analysis

Baseline data collection and analysis allows for the identification, analysis and management of impacts associated with enhanced enforcement of existing Marine Protected Area access restrictions that may result from the Project. The first step has been to review existing available information Oceans Alive project social baseline study (primary data), additional social research completed to inform the Oceans Alive Process Framework (primary data), Environmental and Social Assessment conducted in the development of the Full Proposal for Project (primary data), Project maps relating to surrounding communities (generated by the project), Draft Management Plan for iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area, and Published Regulations for iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area.

The data review highlighted that while existing legislation dictates the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area zonations and access restrictions, the extent to which these are enforced, and the range and concentration of law enforcement and monitoring across the different regions in the park is not known. Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife has limited resources and a large stretch of coastline to monitor, so it will be important to better understand the extent of existing resource use / access monitoring and enforcement efforts, and whether approaches to law enforcement differ depending on the area, and type of illegal activity. Further insight is also needed on the actual economic displacement caused / potentially caused by the increased / more effective enforcement made possible by the Project. In the Inception Phase of

the project, further focus groups, in-depth interviews and qualitative surveys need to be held with subsistence fishers, Small Scale Fishers and law enforcement personnel / management.

An identified gap is the type of analysis used for the data collected so far. There is a need to develop a more quantitative approach to evaluating the data when seeking to understand the impact of access restrictions, rather than just basing the analysis on qualitative information. This will form part of the Project's socio-economic and baseline surveys and assessments that will be conducted in Years 1 (inception) and Year 4 (close-out) of the Project.

3.4.8 Identifying, Assessing and Minimising Impacts

The type and **significance** of possible impacts to stakeholders from enhanced enforcement of access restrictions have been identified through the various stakeholder engagements undertaken to date.

The Environmental and Social Assessment conducted during Project planning has already identified several issues related to access restrictions and human rights in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. These build on the insights gathered from the social baseline conducted for the Oceans Alive Project. Access restrictions are reported to have increased the economic pressures on communities, dependency on the park for livelihoods, and potential economic displacement. Enforcement of access restrictions may unintentionally increase people's exposure to food insecurity and other climate change-related risks. In addition, customary rights issues have not been adequately addressed, and current enforcement measures are perceived as heavy-handed, and lacking consideration for poverty and unemployment levels. Some community members, particularly women, report feeling threatened by enforcement staff, which poses risks to both park officials and community members. These issues highlight the need for careful consideration of access restrictions and enforcement measures in relation to economic, social, and human rights concerns in the protected area.

The significance of potential negative impacts to **community stakeholders, including small-scale and subsistence fishers**, include:

- **Substantial impacts:** Threat to people's food security and livelihoods through increased patrols, and the exacerbation of people's already substantial fears of further restriction to their livelihoods. Increase in conflict between communities and conservation authorities, legacy issues associated with exclusion of communities from opportunities to meaningfully participate in protected area planning and decision-making (this includes lack of inclusive approach to engaging communities, lack of clarity amongst communities regarding the division of responsibilities between different government departments / agencies, perpetuating perceptions of exclusion that compounds the erosion of trust between park authorities and communities), and inequitable benefit sharing with vulnerable groups, particularly women, who

are disproportionately affected by access restrictions and are marginalised in planning and decision making processes;

- **Moderate significance impacts:** Livelihood impacts to those arrested for using marine resources illegally, insufficient or ineffective stakeholder engagement (which could lead to increased conflict between communities and conservation authorities), additional livelihood impacts on groups with specific restrictions e.g. bag limits reduced, and restrictions to cultural uses natural resources in the Marine Protected Area.
- **Low significance impacts:** Increase in conflict (and possibly serious incidents) between law enforcement officers and turtle poachers (low significance due to low likelihood of this occurring).

Potential negative impacts to **recreational and commercial users** of the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area include possible loss of tourist operators' revenue, increased discontent among recreational users, displacement of fishing pressure, conflict between users and the conservation authorities due to the Project's increased enforcement of regulations and restrictions, and exclusion of commercial and recreation stakeholders from meaningful opportunities to participate in protected area planning and decision-making (associated with Marine Protected Area and Estuary Management planning). While several negative impacts have been identified, none of these are considered major or severe. Negative impacts are considered moderate or low in significance, and mostly mitigable.

3.4.9 Mitigation Measures

The Project has been designed to avoid or minimise the impact of enhanced access restrictions and/or displacement wherever possible, and to mitigate unavoidable negative impacts. **Table 9** details the eligibility and entitlements in place for access restriction and loss that may be contributed to by the Project.

Table 8: Entitlement Matrix

| No. | Restriction or Loss | Impact | Eligibility | Entitlements |
|-----|--|--|--|--|
| 1 | <i>Permanent access restriction to harvesting fish, invertebrates and bait resources in wilderness and restricted use zones in Marine Protected Area</i> | Loss of access to areas for harvesting fish and marine resources | Small scale subsistence fishers / Households from project affected communities. Recreational fishers | <i>Communities:</i> Ongoing access to the controlled zones in the Marine Protected Area where fishing and resource harvesting is permitted. <i>Communities:</i> Access to Community Hub Resource Centre. <i>Small scale subsistence fishers / Households from project affected</i> |

| No. | Restriction or Loss | Impact | Eligibility | Entitlements |
|----------|---|---|---|---|
| | <p>Changes in the Management Authority's capacity to enforce access restrictions in these areas will change current use patterns by subsistence and recreational users.</p> | | <p>Illegal commercial fishers</p> | <p><i>communities:</i> Eligibility to participate in co-management initiatives, livelihood improvement, enterprise development, work experience and training programmes, and awareness and education interventions.</p> <p><i>Recreational fishers:</i> Awareness raising and enhanced demarcation of restricted areas to support compliance with zonation and associated restrictions.</p> <p><i>Illegal commercial fishers:</i> Enhanced demarcation of Marine Protected Area and zones to support compliance with Marine Protected Area restrictions.</p> |
| <p>2</p> | <p><i>Permanent restrictions to non-extractive activities and behaviour patterns by commercial and leisure operators in the Marine Protected Area.</i></p> <p>Changes in the Management Authority's capacity to enforce access and use restrictions in these areas will restrict activities and behaviour to within Marine Protected Area</p> | <p>Restriction to non-extractive activities in all zones in the Marine Protected Area</p> | <p>Commercial operators (concessioned and non-concessioned) operators and leisure users</p> | <p><i>Concessioned commercial operators:</i> Effective awareness raising and communication by Authorities (iSimangaliso Authority and EKZNW) about zonation and in-shore and offshore restrictions, and associated requirements in terms of their commercial operations.</p> <p><i>Non-concessioned commercial operators:</i> Effective awareness raising and communication by Authorities (iSimangaliso Authority and EKZNW) about zonation and in-shore and offshore restrictions, and associated requirements in terms of their commercial operations.</p> |

| No. | Restriction or Loss | Impact | Eligibility | Entitlements |
|----------|---|---|---|---|
| | regulations by all non-extractive users. | | | <i>Leisure users (e.g. whale watching, leisure craft, etc.):</i> Clear demarcation of zones in Marine Protected Area and awareness raising about associated in-shore and offshore restrictions. |
| 3 | <p><i>Permanent access restriction to mangrove forests, dune vegetation and riparian vegetation in floodplains (reed beds and swamp forest) in the IWP.</i></p> <p>Rehabilitation and protection interventions by the management authority will change current use patterns by subsistence resource users</p> | Reduced access to resources by subsistence users who depend on these resources to contribute to food security and livelihoods. | Households from project affected communities. | <p><i>Communities:</i> Ongoing access to areas where resource harvesting is permitted.</p> <p><i>Communities:</i> Access to Community Hub Resource Centre.</p> <p><i>Households from project affected communities:</i> Eligibility to participate in livelihood improvement, climate-smart agriculture; enterprise development, work experience and training programmes, and awareness and education interventions.</p> |
| 4 | <i>Short term exposure to food insecurity and other climate change related risks due to unintentional investment in maladaptive agricultural and livelihood interventions.</i> | Reduced food security for households who currently depend on subsistence agriculture and resource use to meet food security and livelihoods | Households from project affected communities. | <p><i>Communities:</i> Access to Community Hub Resource Centre.</p> <p><i>Households from project affected communities:</i> Eligibility to participate in livelihood improvement, climate-smart agriculture; enterprise development, work experience and training programmes, and awareness and education interventions.</p> |

| No. | Restriction or Loss | Impact | Eligibility | Entitlements |
|-----|---|--|--|--|
| 5 | <p><i>Exclusion from meaningful opportunities to participate in protected area planning and decision-making (e.g., delineation of park boundaries and preparation of Estuarine Management Plans).</i></p> <p>The legacy of inadequate engagement by government and park authorities has left stakeholders feeling excluded and disempowered from meaningfully participating in the process of developing and updating management plans.</p> | <p>Exacerbating perceptions of exclusion and dispossession of land and access and use of protected area compounds the erosion of trust between park authorities and stakeholders and undermines cooperation and support for the management of the protected areas.</p> | <p>Small scale subsistence fishers / Households from project affected communities. Recreational and commercial users</p> | <p><i>All stakeholders:</i> Opportunities for co-creation approach to protected area management planning and development, through appropriate consultation and engagement.</p> |

A range of Project activities have been included as management measures to mitigate risks identified relating to access restrictions, including livelihood improvement focused programs. Key amongst these is:

1. Facilitate a dialogue and trust building process between iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority and rural community stakeholders to facilitate development of a shared vision, common agenda, and joint action partnership.
2. Support the establishment and annual meetings of an inclusive iSimangaliso Stakeholder Forum (including civil society stakeholders, and relevant authorities, i.e. iSimangaliso, Ezemvelo, EDTEA, DWS, DFFE, Health, Rural Development, Traditional Authorities).
3. Facilitate improved participation of rural community stakeholders in Marine Protected Area and Estuary management planning and management, including through co-management

approaches and platforms. Employ and train community members in Park law enforcement functions (including boat skippers).

4. Enhance community understanding and awareness of access restrictions, sustainable resource use approaches and adaptation to climate change through workshops, social media campaigns, and through involving communities in Park monitoring activities (e.g. turtle breeding).
5. Train Marine Protected Area Enforcement Officers and Estuarine Managers on partnerships and stakeholder engagement skills, conflict resolution and human rights considerations, gender awareness and gender-based violence avoidance.
6. Support community skills development and enterprises (including climate smart farming) through providing information (e.g. weather and disaster early warning systems), mentorship and business incubation support, training courses, support for funding access, and study bursaries for high vulnerable youth.

3.4.10 Implementation Arrangements

Project governance structures are designed to facilitate the multi-level collaboration needed to enable a more systemic approach to governance of the Marine Protected Area. WILDTRUST will be responsible for implementation of all livelihood interventions, the Environmental and Social Management System and associated Safeguards, and all other proposed Project activities. WILDTRUST will provide support and guidance to all Project partners on implementing the necessary Safeguards.

3.4.11 Monitoring, Evaluation and Updating the Process Framework

Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of this Process Framework will be undertaken on an on-going basis, and will utilise the following indicators to determine effectiveness of the measures included in this document:

1. Resolution of grievances and access restriction related grievances:
 - a. Number of grievances received and recorded in grievance register (eligible and eligible)
 - b. Number of grievances resolved and unresolved
 - c. Mitigation measures effective to address access restricted related grievances
2. Tracking implementation of mitigation measures:
 - a. Tracking progress that mitigation measures are implemented as per schedule.
3. Tracking of stakeholder engagement activities (mechanisms):
 - a. Track if the stakeholder engagement activities take place and recorded in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

4. Tracking progress of participatory processes such as Marine Protected Area management plan consultation:
 - a. Track if consultations took place timeously and all affected stakeholders were able to be included in consultations and input.
5. Changes in baseline information overtime affected communities:
 - a. Evaluation of socioeconomic conditions, livelihood conditions and perceptions of affected communities in project area.

The development of the Process Framework should be an iterative 'process', and therefore several iterations will be developed. The Interim Process Framework will be updated in the Inception Phase of the project to incorporate the socio-economic baseline data gathered during this phase, and additional research data in relation to identified gaps. The Final Process Framework will be developed once all the proposed management measures have been disclosed and discussed with key stakeholders, and their views incorporated, and the outcomes of the Security Risk Assessment have also been incorporated before the end of Year 1.

3.5 Gender Action Plan (GAP) Summary

3.5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this Gender Action Plan is to act as a mainstreaming mechanism for ensuring gender-inclusive design and implementation throughout the WILDTRUST iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area Ecosystem-based Adaptation Project. It identifies priority activities and focus areas for responding to gender-specific issues and risks and aims to enhance gender equity throughout the Project's lifecycle. It is intended to serve as a roadmap for strengthening project outcomes while contributing to gender equality and women's empowerment.

3.5.2 Guiding Principles

Gender refers to the social and cultural expectations of how individuals should behave based on their biological sex. It is distinct from biological sex, as gender roles and behaviours evolve over time and vary across cultures. Gender encompasses both women and men, as well as third gender/non-binary individuals, and includes economic, political, and socio-cultural aspects. While gender roles may have originated from biological differences, they can vary widely within and across cultures.

Gender equality refers to the belief that rights and opportunities of individuals are not and should not be dependent on one's gender. Gender equality is both a human rights issue and a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.

Women's empowerment concerns women gaining power and control over their own lives. It involves awareness-raising, building self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions which reinforce and

perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality. Empowerment may be political, economic, socio-cultural, or physical (or a combination of these).

Political empowerment. All persons involved, including women, are participating in decision-making, including organizing themselves in groups, such as fishers' groups, water management groups, waste management groups, etc.

Economic empowerment. Both women and men have right to paid employment, equal wages, and the right to decide about the spending of one's income.

Socio-cultural empowerment. Relates to an individual's self-confidence and ability to develop a sense of autonomy. It gives individuals the power and confidence to change social relationships, harmful cultural norms, and the institutions and discourses that have systematically marginalised them.

Physical empowerment. To have a say over one's body, relates to the right to physical health and wellbeing and have access to water, food and healthcare.

3.5.3 Gender Assessment

3.5.3.1 Data Sources

Data was drawn from multiple sources for the development of this gender action plan, including both primary and secondary data. Primary data included a social baseline developed for WILDTRUST/Blue Action Fund Oceans Alive Project, which was collected from 202 households in 9 communities; and the Environmental and Social Assessment conducted during the planning of the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area Ecosystem-based Adaption project. Secondary data was sourced from the Blue Action Fund Gender Guide (2020).

3.5.3.2 South African Context

The assessment found that South Africa, as one of four Western Indian Ocean countries funded by the Blue Action Fund, is the most developed and performs relatively better on gender equality indices. The country has strong commitments to gender equality, women's empowerment, and their participation in decision-making processes through international conventions, platforms, and national policies. The National Constitution and various pieces of environmental legislation emphasize the importance of people in environmental management and equitable access to natural resources. However, rural women, who are heavily dependent on natural resources and affected by poverty, often face limited access to these resources due to factors such as low literacy levels, traditional gender norms, and discriminatory customary law.

3.5.3.3 Project socio-economic, legal and political context

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park is located within the uMkhanyakude District Municipality, which is ranked as the second poorest and most deprived municipality in the country. Most households in the

district live below the poverty line, with low levels of formal employment and limited access to basic services. The population in the district has low education levels and high HIV/AIDS prevalence.

Many communities around the Park rely on complex livelihood strategies, including migrant labour wage remittances, state welfare support, and subsistence agriculture. The social impacts of migrancy remain strong – many households are female-headed, or headed by orphaned children. The predominant land uses within the municipalities surrounding the Park include agriculture, mining and commercial timber plantations, conservation/eco-tourism and settlement. Densifying settlements in areas under Traditional Authority governance can be seen along the edges of the park, because of the way in which land is allocated through the Ingonyama Trust and Traditional Authorities – largely male-dominated structures.

3.5.3.4 Gender roles and responsibilities, knowledge and skills

Generally, men play a greater role than women in the exploitation of natural resources for commercial purposes, since women also dedicate time to domestic activities (i.e., cooking, water and fuelwood collection, childcare, etc.). Often, women have responsibilities related to the management of natural resources, but not rights over them.

On average, women make up 54% of the local population in the Project area. However, from birth up to 19 years old (end of schooling life) the ratio of male: female is approximately the same; whereas from 20 years onwards there are consistently less males than females – this is related to more males than females venturing away from their households after schooling is completed and once adulthood is reached to seek employment opportunities or study.

3.5.3.5 Access to (use rights) and control (decision-making rights) of resources and livelihood assets

Due to economic, social, institutional and legal factors, the right to access and control natural resources, such as land, water and forests, is different for men and women. Globally, women have experienced greater restrictions, particularly with respect to independent ownership and access to land. This may partially explain why the majority of the world's poor are women who depend on natural resources for subsistence.

Education levels within the uMkhanyakude District are generally low, with a significant portion of the population having no formal education or only primary education. Economic constraints and poor-quality education often hinder higher education attainment. Low literacy levels contribute to the low participation of women in decision-making regarding resources and livelihood assets. However, efforts have been made to empower women and increase their participation in decision-making structures within their communities, although cultural and societal shifts take time.

3.5.3.6 Knowledge gaps

Women's and men's knowledge about the use of natural resources can also differ. For example, some women have become guardians of biodiversity by using their knowledge to utilize a wide variety of harvesting practices. This knowledge has been passed on from mothers to daughters for generations. Differences in knowledge between women and men also depend on their particular social class, age and ethnic groups.

3.5.3.7 Summary of key risks

Women have high levels of responsibility in the household, with approximately 50% of households being female headed. Despite this, 20% of women have restricted access to productive land and financial resources, and only 54% of women are participants in the labour force (compared to 66% of men). 33% of women also experience discrimination in the family, and 21% experience restricted civil liberties. Incidents of gender-based violence are relatively high in South Africa. Women in the Project area are likely to be on the more severe end of these statistics, given their rural living conditions.

The key risks to women which need to be considered in the Project include:

- Limited involvement in decision-making regarding the Marine Protected Area.
- Cultural discrimination in economic and entrepreneurial endeavours.
- Increased conflict generated by greater empowerment or opportunity being given to women because men feel opportunities are being ringfenced.
- Historic inequality and low employment levels among women results in reduced capacity for involvement in the economy, and lower confidence levels.
- Gender-based violence may result because men do not want women involved in the Project.
- Household responsibilities limit the capacity for involvement in the Project and in decision-making associated with the Marine Protected Area.
- Failure to make systematic changes to include women in Marine Protected Area decision-making.
- Increase in workload for women involved in the Project.
- Women are mostly affected when harvesting marine resources leading to the confiscation or destruction of their harvesting tools.
- Unequal benefit sharing among men and women, which could result in psychological stress or conflict.

3.5.4 Gender-responsive Stakeholder Engagement Plan

3.5.4.1 Purpose

A gender-responsive Stakeholder Engagement Plan should include both women and men, with close consideration for the traditional/cultural context of the Project area to ensure that gender-disaggregated feedback is captured and included in the Project implementation, design and or management of other risks. Participation of all project stakeholders, regardless of position, is important as it considers people's social and economic needs, creates ownership and promotes accountability.

A gender-responsive stakeholder engagement means having meaningful consultation such that those who are going to be most affected (by a decision; or activity) have a right to be involved in the decision-making process and should also have the right information to participate in a meaningful way and be aware of how their input affects the decision.

3.5.4.2 Identifying Stakeholders

Stakeholders within the Project area have been identified and included in a Stakeholder Engagement Plan register. Stakeholders were grouped for analysis as follows:

- **Collaborating Authorities and Partners:** National Department for Forestry, Fisheries and Environment, iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority (IWPA), Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (EKZNW).
- **Project Livelihood Sub-grantees:** Mahlathini Development Foundation, Africa Ignite! and Indalo Inclusive.
- **Sub-grantees:** South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON).
- **Local & other Authorities:** Traditional Leadership (Amakhosi and iziNduna), National COGTA, South African Heritage Research Agency (SAHRA), AMAFA Institute, KZN EDTEA, KZN DARD, Tourism KZN, District Municipalities (uMkhanyakude and King Cetshwayo District Municipalities) uMhlosinga Development Agency, Local Municipalities (uMhlabuyalingana, Jozini, Big 5 Hlabisa, Mtubatuba, uMfolozi).
- **Law Enforcement and Security:** Local magistrates, SAPS Marine Unit, SA Navy.
- **Research and Monitoring Organisations:** University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA), South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB), South African Association for Marine Biological Research (SAAMBR).
- **Rural communities:** Communities within the direct (and partial/indirect) influence of the project and outside the sphere of influence, vulnerable/ marginalized groups (women, youth and people with disabilities; and subsistence and small-scale fishers.
- **Recreational Users of iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area:** Recreational Fishers/ Boating Clubs, Tourists, Scuba- Diving individuals.
- **Commercial users of iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area:** Tourism operators inside Marine Protected Area, Commercial line fishing Operations (offshore) – illegal, SCUBA Diving Concessionaires, Boat charters, Small scale fishers (co- operatives).

- **Civil Society Organisations, Local NGOs and Business Interests:** Media, Private Property Owners/ Developers, Commercialisation investors, Ratepayers/ residents, Conservation NGOs, Ecological / Human Rights Activist Groups, Friends of Small-scale Fishers.

3.5.5 Engaging stakeholders effectively

How stakeholders are engaged is vital to the success of the Project and to ensuring gender equity in project activities. This includes managing the potential barriers to women’s participation in project engagements. **Table 10** identifies these barriers to stakeholder engagement and the relevant measures employed by the Project to best manage them.

Table 9: Identified Barriers to Stakeholder Engagement and relevant measures employed by the Project.

| Barriers | Measures to remove barriers/ ensure engagement effectiveness |
|---|--|
| Low literacy levels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of local language in documents and during the engagement. • Frame engagement/content/questions in a way that stakeholders can understand - taking into consideration the literacy levels and education levels of the stakeholders. • Where possible, provide foundational workshops for individuals who have less background/experience on the subject so that everyone can be prepared and knowledgeable. |
| Inadequate access to information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create communication materials in languages (or with images) that everyone can understand. Tailor messages for different groups through the most appropriate communication channels (e.g., radio, written, informal, community meeting, etc.) depending on how each gets their information. |
| Not able to participate effectively or freely | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct separate activities with women and men (with same sex facilitators) so that participants feel comfortable. • Promote equal opportunities for both men and women. • Encourage the facilitator to seek out opinions and contributions from quieter groups/individuals. • Provide all relevant information in a friendly manner to stakeholders/participants. • Explicit invitations to participate and showing that the facilitator values the contributions of all voices and hopes to see a diversity of community members. • Ensure that activity discourse is conducted in the local language. • Work with local leaders and male project participants to explain the importance of women’s participation and identify culturally appropriate ways to encourage their participation. |
| Take note of the differentiated priorities and needs of females, males, and youth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand cultural norms work with households to identify appropriate ways to allow for both women’s and men’s participation |
| Mobility/distance to the location of the engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move activities closer to communities where you want to engage with people. • Provide transportation to activities. |

| | |
|--|---|
| Not being involved in decision- making and lack of representation in community leadership structures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackle social and or economic needs, gender stereotypes/issues faced in the Project area or amongst stakeholder groups. • Formation of women/men groups as means of engagement. |
| Conflicting priorities/ timing of engagements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare assistance at the time of the engagement (women). • Note differentiated priorities and needs of females, males, and youth. • Find out what day/season women and men are available and schedule accordingly. • Engage with women and men separately where needed. |

The project design will address barriers to participation, particularly related to gender dynamics and social inclusion, by providing gender training for staff members and project partners who interact with the community. The project will allocate a budget for gender activities and training to empower women, men, and youth to participate in decision-making platforms and project interventions. The project will also consult with various stakeholder groups, including local women's organizations, traditional authorities, youth groups, governmental entities, and conservation/development NGOs to ensure best practices for social inclusion of all groups within the project area.

Across all Stakeholder Engagement activities (as set out in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan), appropriate gender responsive measures will be employed to ensure barriers to engagement are removed, and that engagement is effective and equitable for all groups.

3.5.6 Gender-based violence mitigation measures

To promote social cohesion and prevent gender-based violence against women, the project will implement several measures. These measures include incorporating gender-responsive analyses and assessments into discussions, ensuring fair representation of all stakeholders including women, men, youth, and vulnerable groups, considering gender dynamics in all engagement activities, identifying benefit-sharing for livelihood initiatives across all groups, sharing WILDTRUST's Community Engagement Principles with the project team, and establishing culturally appropriate ways to incorporate women's input into Traditional Authority's decision-making related to the project, as designed and supported by the community.

3.5.7 Principles for Engagement

The following principles for engagement have been identified:

1. Consider experiences of both women and men (equally);
2. Visibility of diversity in roles for both women and men;
3. Gender-sensitive use of language;
4. Equal treatment of both women and men;

5. Acknowledge existing conflict and be sensitive to them;
6. Engagements should be based on mutual understanding, respect, and trust;
7. Ensure engagement activities are undertaken in a manner that is inclusive, culturally appropriate, and tailored to PAPs literacy levels, and gender-specific needs so that project information is accessible to stakeholders in understandable formats;
8. Ensure that engagement is accessible in terms of stakeholders' abilities to physically get to selected meeting venues;
9. Ensure all engagement activities are free of intimidation or coercion, and all participants are aware of their rights under national law and international standards.

3.5.8 Gender Action Plan

The Gender Action Plan includes specific actions needed to strengthen women's participation in decision-making and management across all Project activities. These actions are centred on removing barriers to effective engagement and ensuring well-designed and gender-responsive participatory approaches in Project activity design, planning, implementation and monitoring / adaptive management over time. Building capacity around the need for, benefits of, and mechanisms for gender-responsive approaches, including gender based violence, is also integrated across all relevant Project activities, targeting a wide range of stakeholder groups and all Project partners. Qualitative and quantitative gender-responsive indicators for proposed interventions have been identified to ensure accountability and commitment to gender targets. A Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan is established to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment and social equity strategies and planned activities are achieving the desired outcomes.

The indicators that will be used to monitor, evaluate and report the gender-responsiveness of the Project over its full life cycle are summarised below:

1. Number of conservation authority and project staff who received training in community engagement principles and participatory recommendations.
2. Number of women and men in attendance at workshops/trainings/discussions (50% female participation), with the majority (>75%) reporting that their concerns were adequately considered.
3. Report on the no. of women that participate in decision - making processes/ bodies after relevant workshops.
4. Percentage of women and men participating in coastal resource management decision making bodies.
5. Report on the no. of women that participate in decision - making processes/ bodies after relevant workshops.
6. Percentage of women and men reporting their ideas, needs and opinions are/were reflected in MPA and EMP Management Plans.
7. Level of women's and men's awareness regarding MPA/fishery rules and regulations.

8. Number of individuals participating in sensitisation workshops and changes in beliefs/behaviours surrounding gender equality and masculinity/femininity.
9. Number of data collection tools incorporating gender-responsive analysis into the Baseline Study survey and focus groups.
10. Number of interviews / focus groups held focused on gender-related issues.
11. Number of individuals participating in sensitisation around gender-based violence.
12. Number of women (>50%) and men consulted and engaged in sustainable finance solutions.
13. The majority (>75%) individuals involved reporting satisfaction and benefit from sustainable finance solutions.
14. Number women recruited for restoration jobs, including supervisory positions.
15. Number women and men perceiving that economic opportunities available in conservation management are fair and equitable.
16. Number of individuals participating in gender-awareness training.
17. No incidents of violence against women and >90% women reporting they felt safe at work.
18. Number of women, number of men engaged in livelihood activities.
19. Number of women, number of men consulted and subsequently trained in supplemental or alternative livelihoods, with the majority (>75%) reporting satisfaction and benefit from these livelihoods.
20. Number of women, number of men engaged in ecosystem-based adaptation learning platforms.
21. Percentage of Project-related media publications / engagements promoting the role of women in marine conservation.
22. Number of women, number of men participating in workshops to inform the development of the guideline document.

3.5.9 Gender-Responsive Grievance Mechanism

The Grievance Mechanism for the Project has been updated to include the reporting process for gender-based violence incidents, defining gender-based violence and listing six main types of gender-based violence. The document also explains terms such as "sexual exploitation and abuse" and "sexual harassment". A specialized process for handling sensitive grievances in a confidential, secure, and non-discriminatory manner is outlined. The complainant is encouraged to resolve issues informally with the perpetrator, but if that's not possible, a formal grievance process can be followed. The Project Team will investigate reports confidentially and determine appropriate action. WILDTRUST reserves the right to direct grievances to specialized services or legal channels. Support and assistance, including legal, psychological, and medical, will be provided to the complainant throughout the procedure. If project staff or contractors are found involved in sexual exploitation or abuse, their contractual relationship may be suspended or terminated. Failure to report or condone sexual offenses is punishable by law. Protection will be provided to those who report proven cases of sexual exploitation or abuse. The

procedure should ensure complainants' safety and confidentiality. Response and prevention actions should balance legality with a survivor-centred approach, respecting the survivor's choices, needs, rights, and dignity in the complaint management process.

4 Disclosure Process

Disclosure of ESMS documentation will include the following:

- 1) Disclosure of ESMP and associated safeguards (in English only) on the Blue Action Fund Website: <https://www.blueactionfund.org/>
- 2) Translation of this Safeguard Disclosure Document, along with Annex 1 – the Grievance Mechanism, into isiZulu.
- 3) Communication of this Safeguard Disclosure sheet via:
 - a. Up-loading both the English and Zulu versions of this document onto the WILDTRUST website for one full month (starting 8th May 2023):
<https://wildtrust.co.za/governance/>
 - b. Email to all stakeholders who we have email addresses for and to follow up with any additional stakeholders brought to our attention during the disclosure period.
 - c. Contact made with both of the community leaders (“AmaKhosi”) connected to / affected by this project, with a request for how they would like the materials delivered and/or displayed to ensure broad community access, with an emphasis on reaching vulnerable groups identified in the E&S Development Tool.
Community meetings at each of the partner project sites.

5 Conclusion

By introducing effective management for this MPA and associated estuaries and initiating nature-based solutions to deal with the challenges faced by this complex socio-ecological system, this project could play a significant role in restoring this important area to a productive and regenerative state, in which people and nature can endure and thrive into the future.

The WILDTRUST remains dedicated to implementing this project in the most ethical, just and fair way possible, mitigating potential harm to people or nature while promoting benefits for both. If there are any areas where stakeholders feel we are not meeting our commitments or have questions or suggestions for improvement, these concerns or contributions are welcomed and can be sent to the ESMS Manager at ESMS@wildtrust.co.za.