

Environment Safeguards

The RACP falls in the environmental screening category B as per OP 4.01. An Environmental Assessment (EA) study has been undertaken by GoR. The project will support investments in:-

- A. Collection, delivery and distribution of water for agriculture and livestock purposes in surface water irrigated canal command areas, ground water sources and rainfed areas.
- B. On-farm water use efficiency.
- C. Soil moisture and fertility improvements.
- D. Sustainable intensification and diversification of farm production.
- E. Integrated crop and livestock farming systems.
- F. Value chains through sorting, grading, storage, processing and rural haats aiming to establish longer term partnerships and market linkages between farmer groups and agribusiness enterprises.

This project is about promoting sustainable climate resilient agriculture and sustainable water source augmentation and efficient use. Therefore, technically, the project should take up measures to halt and if possible reverse environmental degradation. The potential environmental issues are of a cumulative nature and include soil degradation, over-extraction of groundwater, reduced downstream flows, build-up of pest resistance, and pollution of the eco-system with agro-chemicals, pesticide-related safety issues and erosion of biodiversity. Accordingly as a matter of caution, the Project triggers the following Bank safeguard policies: Environmental Assessment (OP 4.01) and Pest Management (OP 4.09). The key strategy for Pest Management is to introduce Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which is a mainstream project activity in this project.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) of the proposed project has been undertaken, and an Environmental Management Framework (EMF) prepared, to ensure compliance with the applicable regulations and triggered safeguards policies. The EMF sets out the procedures that will be applied to the schemes to be taken up by farmer groups and their federations as

part of the Cluster Agricultural Competitiveness Plans (CACP) making use of investments provided to them under Components 1 and 2 of the project. The EMF comprises a set of procedures for granting environmental approval including:-

- (i) Screening through a Regulatory Requirements List to provide approval to activities that don't contravene the relevant national and state regulations and the triggered Bank safeguard policies
- (ii) (ii) Criteria for classification of investments on the basis of the perceived intensity of environmental impact of the schemes being low-medium or high;
- (iii) (iii) Environmental Guidelines (EGs) for Crop Intensification, Water Resources Development and Management, Livestock Development and Management and Post-Harvest Storage and Processing key project investments; and
- (iv) (iv) EMP Checklists to ensure that specific entities are responsible for implementing/incorporating the EGs at specific stages of the project cycle as an environment mitigation plan for the key project activities.