Review and Update of the World Bank’s Environmental and Social Safeguard Policies
Consultation Meeting
New Delhi, India
April 6, 2013
Feedback Summary

A supplemental civil society meeting was held on April 6, 2013 in New Delhi, India. After a presentation by the World Bank Safeguards Review Team on the background, intended scope and process for the review, the floor was open for participants’ comments and recommendations.

Sustainable Development

• Bank should support CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) initiatives that are now mandated by companies under Indian legislation
• How can the use of these funds be scaled up to use them effectively to support sustainable development
• A big concern is impacts on tribal populations from mining, coal and cement operations – they are under very high stress and this is leading to social problems and conflict
• Major impacts are occurring to groundwater aquifers, need more capacity, especially geologists and hydro geologists
• More work is needed for watershed conservation – water and land both need to be managed
• Use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is sometimes limited because of security concerns – especially in border areas
• 50% of the rural water infrastructure in India is not functional
• Water security is a serious issue- special study being done at the state level

Disability

• Disability is everywhere and the Bank needs to mainstream this issue into its approach to development
• Bank needs to support the inclusion of disabled persons into its policies and projects
• A large amount of public programs need to be made accessible and a non-discriminatory approach should be supported
• Disabled persons need to benefit from accessibility standards – there should be a universal design and accessibility standard
• Many speak of “green procurement” now need “universal design procurement” to support accessibility and non-discrimination
• International Disability Alliance is playing a major role
• Capacity development is needed to address disability issues – people are not aware of what is required and how it can be implemented – this is not being taught in schools of architecture and not required by Government counterparts
• Monitoring and evaluation need to have indicators on disability
• Do not need a separate system for the disabled – they need to be part of an inclusive system which allows disable persons to benefit
• Bridges across roads need to be designed to assist access by the disabled
• The Indian disability law is not being properly implemented
• More work needs to be done on disability in India

_Human and Wildlife Conflict_

• Massive loss of habitat over the last 10 years is having a major impact on wildlife habitat and ecosystems
• Loss of forest cover continues each year and urban development is accelerating
• No one is looking at measures to strengthen access for wildlife – do designs work or not?
• Need guidelines to evaluate parameters leading to human and wildlife conflict and design standards to address this issue
• Recommends a conference on “green infrastructure”

_Biodiversity and Ecosystems_

• A national working group on Biodiversity and Ecosystems is looking at the value and cost of loss of biodiversity – need to link biodiversity with ecosystems
• Large number of small dams (less than 25 meters) is having an impact in India on ecosystems
• In India there are over 450 areas of significance to birds which are used as indicators for ecosystem status – 40% of these are protected
• Need much more work on establishment of protected areas including wetlands
• More engagement is needed with local communities to create awareness of the importance of biodiversity
• Ecosystem services is a new approach that should be more widely used
• Management of biodiversity and ecosystems would benefit from expanded use of GIS
• Need to look beyond protected areas and move to landscape management