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Building Strong Environmental & Social Management Systems

Environmental and Social Risk Management Workshop for Senior Government Officials

- **Jay Roop**, *Principal Safeguards Specialist (Environment)*, Asian Development Bank
- **Rebekah Ramsay**, *Senior Social Specialist*, World Bank Group



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NEW PROJECT



OUTSIDE WORKERS ARRIVE



WHAT STARTED TO GO WRONG?



ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS



1
Gender & Equality



2
Fair & safe work



3
Pollution & Waste



4
Community health & safety



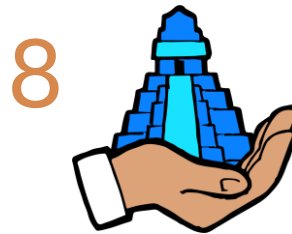
5
Land & Livelihoods



6
Nature & biodiversity



7
Indigenous communities



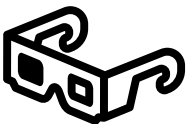
8
Cultural Heritage



9
Climate Change



10
Social Inclusion



Core Messages:

01

**Strong ESMS =
strong delivery
systems**

→ Not safeguards,
but governance

02

**Leadership and
accountability
determine success**

→ Systems fail
without ownership

03

**Consistency builds
trust across
projects and
agencies**

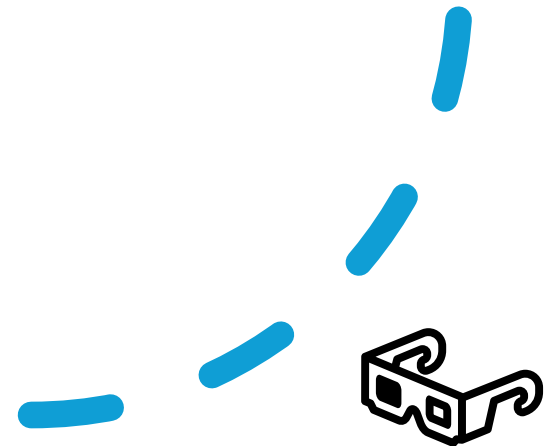
→ Trust = legitimacy =
sustainable delivery



Case Study
(20 mins)

**Strengthening Sustainable
Infrastructure Delivery through
WAF Environmental and Social
Management System**

Mr Seru Soderberg, WAF CEO



Strengthening Sustainable Infrastructure Delivery through WAF Environmental and Social Management System

Mr Seru Soderberg - CEO



Challenges Experienced

Operational Risks

- Environmental compliance gap
- Community & stakeholder grievance
- Limited structured safeguard processes
- Reputational exposure
- Weak monitoring of E&S risks

Project Delivery Risks

- Approval delays due to incomplete E&S processes
- Contractor capability & compliance gap
- Land access and resettlement challenges
- Cost escalation from late risk identification
- Inconsistent application of safeguards



"Without structured safeguards, infrastructure delivery becomes slower, riskier and more expensive."



The Shift

Introducing WAF Environmental & Social Management System

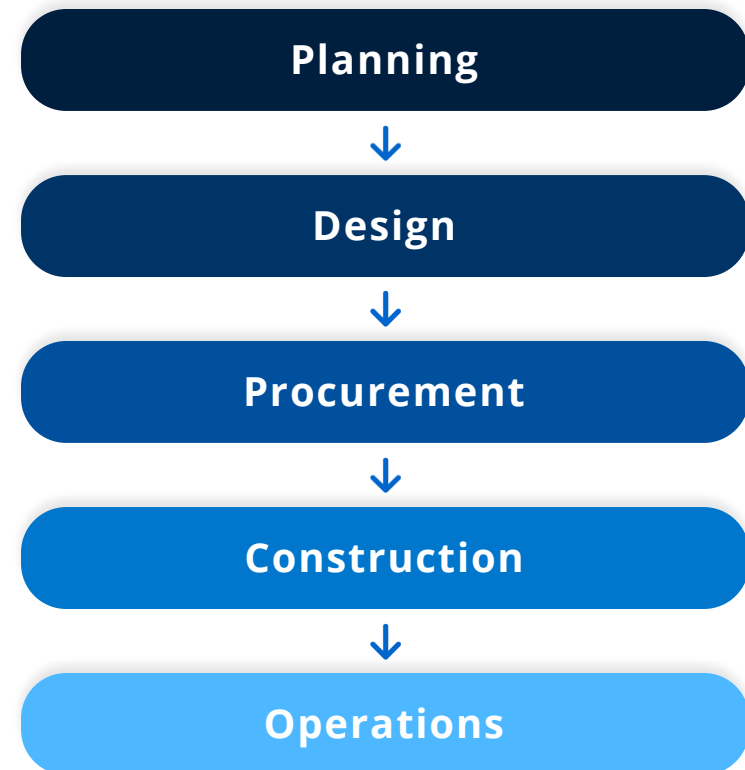
Transforming infrastructure delivery through structured risk management and sustainable practices

From Reactive Compliance to Structured, System-Wide Risk Management

ESMS enables WAF to systematically:

- ✓ Identify risks early
- ✓ Manage environmental & social impacts
- ✓ Strengthen accountability across projects
- ✓ Ensure consistent compliance

Applied across the full project lifecycle:



Institutionalising ESMS Across WAF



ESMS Framework

Environmental & Social Management System framework **Approved** and operational across WAF.

 **Board Approved**



ESS Policy


Environmental & Social Safeguards Policy **Adopted** and guiding implementation across all units.

 **Policy Adopted**



Organisation Rollout

ESMS rollout **underway** across all strategic business units.

 **Rollout in Progress**



Strategic Milestone: WAF has established a Board approved ESMS Framework, supported by policy and ongoing implementation across the organization.

Embedding ESMS Across WAF Structure and Functions

Each business unit plays a defined role in implementing environmental and social management

Governance Hierarchy



Board
Governance



CEO
Executive



Strategic Business Units
6 Departments



Each business unit plays a defined role in implementing ESMS

From governance to operations, ESMS is embedded across all levels



Environment Safeguard Unit

Drives ESMS implementation, compliance, and performance across WAF



Infrastructure Delivery

Integrates ESMS into planning, design, and project delivery

- Planning & Design



Assets Management

Manages lifecycle risks and sustainability

- Risk Management



Water & Wastewater Operations

Ensures compliance and protects communities

- Compliance



Procurement & Contract Mgt

Drives contractor compliance and accountability

- Contractor Management



Human Resources & OHS

Builds capacity and ensures labour standards

- Labour Standards



Lands & Stakeholder Engagement

Manages land access and stakeholder engagement

- Community & Stakeholder Engagement

How ESMS Delivers Better Infrastructure Outcomes

Environmental Outcomes

- ✔ Improved compliance across operations & projects
- ✔ Reduced environmental pollution
- ✔ Improved water & wastewater management
- ✔ Protection of catchments and water sources
- ✔ Climate resilience integrated into infrastructure

Project Delivery Outcomes

- ⦿ Early risk identification
→ Reduces delays
- ⦿ Proper land due diligence
→ Reduces disputes
- ⦿ Clear approvals pathway
→ Enable faster implementation
- ⦿ Better contractor oversight
→ Improves quality



Working with WAF Under ESMS



What Contractors Gain

- ✓ **Clear compliance expectations** ~ aligned with Environment Management (Amendment) Act 2025 & other relevant legislations

Well-defined environmental and social standards

- ✓ **Standardised requirements** ~ consistent with Department of Environment environmental approvals & regulatory processes

Consistent ESMS protocols across all contracts

- ✓ **Faster grievances & issue resolution** ~ supports community engagement under Environment Management (Amendment) Act 2025 & safeguard practices

Streamlined communication and problem-solving through Grievances Redress Mechanism

- ✓ **Reduced project uncertainty** ~ early screening ensures compliance with permit and approval requirements in Fiji

Clear guidelines minimize delays and cost overruns



What WAF Expects

- ✓ **Compliance with ESMS requirements** ~ full compliance with Environment Management (Amendment) Act 2025 and related regulations

Full adherence to environmental and social system

- ✓ **Environmental and social accountability** ~ aligned with EMA 2005 and social obligations

Taking responsibility for project impacts

- ✓ **Strong site management practices** ~ aligned with Health & Safety at Work Act 1996 & environmental compliance requirements

Professional construction and operational standards

- ✓ **Transparency and reporting** ~ supports regulatory reporting & monitoring under EMA 2005 and other regulatory requirements

Regular updates and proper documentation

Alignment with Development Partners

Fully Aligned With

ADB Environmental & Social Framework

Asian Development Bank standards

World Bank Environmental & Social Framework & IFC Performance Standards

Global best practices

Strengthens

MDB Confidence

Enhanced credibility with banks

Financing Readiness

Better access to international funding

“ESMS positions WAF as a trusted delivery partner.”

Why ESMS matters for government

ESMS protects delivery, compliance and public trust

Systems are also cost effective





The reality: fragmented systems

Where have you seen coordination challenges between:

- *your agency and another government agency*
- *Your agency and the contractors*
- *Your agency and community*
- *Within your agency*

What a strong ESMS looks like

Clear rules. Clear roles. Consistent practice.



ESMS FRAMEWORK

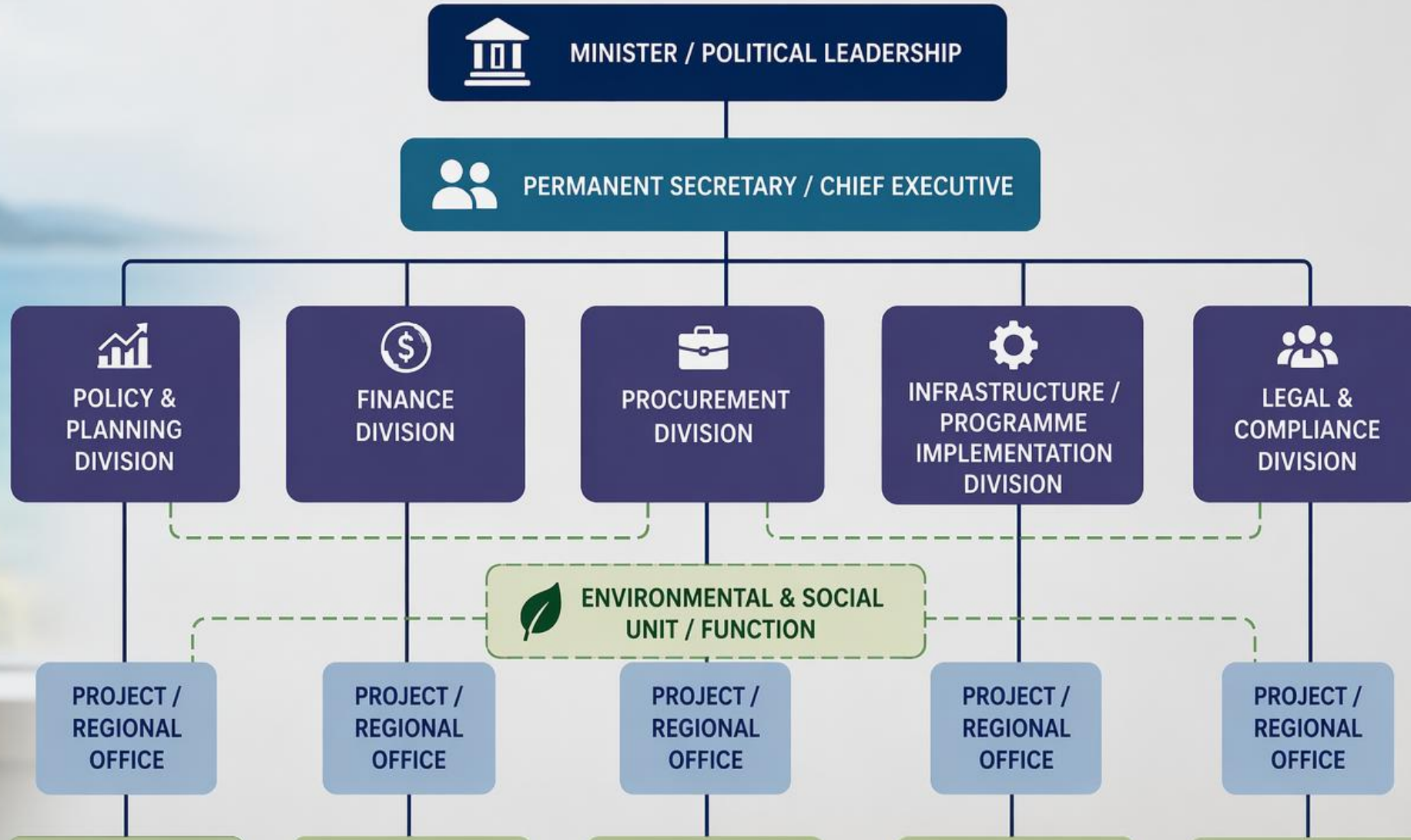
- Policy
- Procedures
- Responsibilities

✓ CONSISTENT
✓ TE





What's your role?



Summary: Elements of a strong ESMS

Leadership sets direction

Risks are identified early

Roles are clear

Actions are taken

Stakeholders are engaged

Issues are resolved

Performance is tracked and improved

Think: what is one thing YOU can do to strengthen your system?



Conclusion

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Vinaka

THANK YOU



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