

Q&A Inspection Panel Toolkit

Why is the new Environmental Social Framework (ESF) important for achieving the World Bank Group's twin goals?

The World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved the Environmental Social Framework (ESF) in August 2016 to serve as a crucial tool for achieving the institution's twin goals of ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity around the world. The new ESF brings the Bank Group's environmental and social protections into closer harmony with those of other development institutions. It also makes important advances in transparency, non-discrimination, social inclusion, public participation and accountability – including expanded roles for grievance redress mechanisms.

The new ESF builds on the Bank Group's more than 20-year history of policies that serve to identify, avoid and minimize harms to people and the environment. The ESF boosts protections for communities and the environment and will drive sustainable development through capacity- and institution-building and country ownership.

What is the role of the Bank Group's Inspection Panel?

The Inspection Panel (IPN) is an independent accountability mechanism for people who believe that they have been, or are likely to be, adversely affected by a Bank Group-funded project. The Board of Executive Directors created the IPN in 1993 to ensure that people have access to an independent body to express their concerns and seek recourse. For 25 years, the IPN has been a leader in its field, and has been instrumental in helping to bring projects into compliance with Bank Group policies.

Are any changes planned?

Given the value of the Inspection Panel for the Board and the World Bank Group, the Committee on Development Effectiveness (CODE) is reviewing whether the IPN requires any updates to make it even better, more effective, transparent and state-of-the-art, and continue to operate effectively under the new ESF which takes effect later this year.

As part of this effort, an external assessment of the IPN Toolkit (i.e., functions) was commissioned to inform CODE's review.

That external assessment has been completed and did not make specific recommendations. Potential options have instead been outlined to inform the discussion of whether changes should be made to the Inspection Panel's Toolkit. A working group is presently deliberating and analyzing the options outlined, along with other technical assessments, on their costs, impacts, challenges and benefits. The working group is expected to make recommendations to CODE by October 2018.

When will the findings be made public?

During the deliberative process, specific information cannot be shared. Once finalized, the review will be publicly disclosed in accordance with the Bank Group's Access to Information Policy.