

Simplified Operational Completion Report (OCR)

(To be used for GEF-funded Enabling Activity technically completed by 31/12/2023)

Signatures

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1. Project Identification

GEF ID: 9866
Project Title: Support to Preparation of the Interim National Report on the Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol
Executing Agency: Country National Executing Agencies
UNEP Division: Ecosystems Division
Country/Region: Global (Antigua & Barbuda, Albania, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia (the), Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, India, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Niger, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, Sao Tome & Principe, Samoa, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Togo, Uganda, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Zambia)
Actual Implementation Start Date (MM/YYYY): 09/2017
Actual Completion Date (MM/YYYY): 06/2020
GEF Focal Area: Biodiversity
GEF Grant Amount: USD 1,430,000
Co-financing (if applicable): USD 1,111,321

2. Project Implementation

1. Brief description of activities, and its link to Convention obligations.

The project assisted GEF-eligible Parties to the Nagoya Protocol to prepare, and submit their Interim National Reports (INRs) on measures taken to implement the Protocol, with submission through the Access and Benefit-Sharing Clearing-House (ABSCH), in line with Article 29 and [Decision NP-1/3](#) on monitoring and reporting . Activities were delivered globally under UNEP's Ecosystems Division/GEF Biodiversity Unit, using Small-Scale Funding Agreements (SSFAs) to channel grants and advisory support to National Executing Agencies. The reporting cycle covered September 2017–June 2020, with the project closing per country upon receipt of required terminal documents (Annexes 6B, 7, 8, and 10B) and confirmation of INR publication on the ABSCH.

The GEF Trust Fund contributed US\$ 1,430,000, complemented by government co-financing estimated at US\$ 1,111,321 (in-kind/cash) to support preparation of the interim National Reports

to the eligible parties. The project targeted 65 eligible Parties spanning Africa, Asia-Pacific, GRULAC, and other regions. By closure, 59 Parties had submitted interim reports; 55 country projects were closed after receipt of all terminal deliverables. A small subset remained pending due to publication or SSFA issues; Philippines declined funding citing the internal bureaucratic challenges in accessing the funds as the timelines for reporting was short. Philippines however prepared and submitted the report within the timelines required from its own resources - <https://absch.cbd.int/en/pdf/documents/absNationalReport/ABSCH-NR-PH-240066/1>.

Key Activities

- Identification and Review of Existing ABS Information

Countries reviewed existing legal, policy, and institutional frameworks related to Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) to establish a baseline for reporting and capacity building needs.

- Data Collection and Analysis

National teams gathered relevant ABS data, including measures taken to implement the Nagoya Protocol, and analysed gaps and compliance status.

- Stakeholder Consultations and Meetings

Multi-stakeholder workshops and consultations were organized to validate data, gather inputs, and ensure participatory preparation of Interim National Reports (INRs).

- Preparation and Finalization of Draft Reports

Draft INRs were developed, circulated for comments, and revised based on stakeholder feedback before finalization.

- National Consultation/validation Workshops

Countries held national-level workshops to consolidate stakeholder contributions and validated the final draft reports.

- UNEP Review of Reports and technical advice as and when requested

UNEP provided technical review and advisory support to ensure reports met the required format and quality standards.

- Endorsement and Upload to ABS Clearing-House (ABSCH)

Final reports were uploaded to the ABSCH in compliance with COP-MOP Decision NP-1/3 by the ABSCH National Focal Point of each Party.

Link to Convention obligations (CBD/Nagoya Protocol)

Article 29 (Monitoring and Reporting): Assisted Parties to meet mandatory INR requirements adopted at COP-MOP 1; us the standardized format under Decision NP-1/43 and ABSCH submission procedures.

Article 31 (Assessment and Review): Contributed baseline data for Assessment and review in line with article 31 of the Nagoya Protocol and the consolidated analytical report was presented ahead of COP-MOP 3.

ABSCH (Article 14): Ensured reports and national ABS information were published on the ABSCH for transparency and knowledge sharing.

2. Overview of implementation arrangements

UNEP's GEF Biodiversity Unit implemented the project as GEF Agency, supervising SSFAs, disbursements, and technical assistance. National Executing Agencies prepared INRs through

consultative processes, whilst UNEP and SCBD provided technical guidance on reporting and publication through the ABSCH. The project applied UNEP/GEF monitoring and reporting requirements embedded in SSFAs.

Implementation Agency

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) acted as the GEF Implementing Agency through its Ecosystems Division – GEF Biodiversity Unit. UNEP was responsible for overall project supervision in compliance with GEF and UNEP policies, and coordination with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD). The key functions included:

- Reviewing project progress against objectives and work plans.
- Liaising with relevant bodies for technical and policy guidance.
- Advising on resource mobilization.
- Ensuring timely and adequate flow of funds to participating countries.

Executing Agencies

The GEF Eligible parties executed the project through their Competent National Authorities (CNAs) in each of the 65 eligible Parties served as National Executing Agencies. NCAs executed project activities through under Small-Scale Funding Agreements (SSFAs) signed with UNEP. Their responsibilities included:

- Organizing national consultative processes.
- Collecting and analysing ABS-related data.
- Preparing and endorsing the Interim National Report (INR).
- Uploading the INR to the ABS Clearing-House (ABSCH) in line with COP-MOP Decision NP-1/3.

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD):

They provided technical assistance and guidance on reporting formats and ABSCH submission procedures and consolidated INRs for global assessment under Article 31 of the Nagoya Protocol. The report analyser was made available in addition to FAQs and [ABS resources](#) on the ABSCH to assist parties.

Project Management Unit

Located within UNEP's Ecosystems Division, the PMU ensured:

- Technical oversight and quality assurance of INRs.
- Guidance on linkages with other UNEP/GEF ABS and biodiversity and related mainstreaming projects.
- Monitoring and evaluation in line with UNEP and GEF standards.

3. Delivery of outputs

1. Main output delivered (e.g., link to national reports, strategies).

The delivery of outputs focused on assisting Parties to meet their reporting obligations under the Nagoya Protocol by producing and submitting Interim National Reports (INRs) through the Access and Benefit-Sharing Clearing-House (ABSCH) in a consultative manner as a party driven process based on COP-MOP guidance. These outputs were designed to provide baseline data for global assessment and review under Article 31, strengthen national capacity for monitoring and reporting, and facilitate knowledge sharing among Parties. The outputs also served as a foundation for identifying gaps, informing policy integration, and supporting future capacity-building initiatives.

Key Outputs:

- Interim National Reports (INRs): Countries produced and submitted INRs on implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, with publication on the ABS Clearing-House (<https://absch.cbd.int>). As of the final reporting period, 59 Parties out of the 65 GEF Eligible parties had submitted INRs, and 55 country projects had achieved terminal closure following submission of all required annexes. The interim national reports can be found at <https://absch.cbd.int/en/search?schema=absNationalReport>
- 65 targeted national INR processes initiated: National focal points and competent authorities established multi-stakeholder processes to compile data and draft reports. Published INRs on ABSCH: INRs uploaded/published on ABSCH by most participating Parties, forming the global dataset for Article 31 assessment and review. The first assessment and review report can be found at See <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/15ec/ada6/2e4895fca3076383e4b74164/sbi-02-03-en.pdf>; <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/767b/a3b0/e4934613a1a3fd1116b1c89a/sbi-02-inf-03-en.pdf> and the statistical overview of the interim national reports <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/d474/9227/bbd0b9ae98a935a740ade88a/sbi-02-inf-04-en.pdf>. This process contributed substantially to the First Assessment and Review of the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol
- Terminal documentation for closure: Receipt and verification of Annexes 6B, 7, 8, 10B enabled financial and administrative closure for 55 country projects.
- Stakeholder engagement records: Workshop reports and consultation minutes (e.g., Malawi's national consultative meeting) documented stakeholder inputs and identified gaps for future reporting and capacity building initiatives.

2. Submission to Convention or integration into policy.

Submission to Convention:

- All Interim National Reports (INRs) prepared under the project were submitted through the Access and Benefit-Sharing Clearing-House (ABSCH) in accordance with COP-MOP Decision NP-1/3.
- Reports were uploaded in the six official UN languages and published by the National ABSCH Focal Point on behalf of the party as mandated by the procedures on submission of Party information
- These submissions provided baseline data for the global assessment and review under Article 31 of the Nagoya Protocol, enabling the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) to consolidate information for COP-MOP deliberations.

- The process ensured transparency and compliance with international obligations on monitoring and reporting.

Integration into Policy:

- The INR preparation process informed national policy discussions by identifying gaps in legal, technical and administrative frameworks for Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS).
- Several countries used findings from the INR to:
 - Highlight the need for ABS integration into sectoral strategies (e.g., agriculture, forestry, research, traditional medicine etc.).
 - Address traditional knowledge considerations and benefit-sharing mechanisms.
 - Strengthen institutional coordination for future reporting cycles.
- The reports served as reference points for updating National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and aligning ABS measures with broader biodiversity and sustainable development goals and the ABS strategy under the Nagoya Protocol

4. Project Outcome

Where applicable any project outcomes, as achieved short- or medium-term effects of outputs (*including unintended positive and negative outcomes*)

The project outcomes reflect the short- and medium-term effects achieved through the delivery of key outputs, particularly the preparation and submission of Interim National Reports (INRs) under the Nagoya Protocol. These outcomes demonstrate how the reporting process strengthened national compliance with treaty obligations, enhanced institutional capacity, and promoted stakeholder engagement. In addition to intended results, the section also considers unintended positive contributions, such as improved cross-sector collaboration, and challenges that influenced implementation dynamics.

Key Outcomes Achieved:

- Improved compliance with Article 29: A substantial majority of eligible Parties prepared and submitted INRs on time or within the project period, thereby meeting monitoring/reporting obligations.
- Operationalized national reporting processes: Countries established inter-institutional working arrangements and stakeholder mechanisms for ABS reporting that can be reused in future cycles.
- Enhanced awareness and capacity: The INR process raised awareness of ABS measures and the status of Party implementation of the Nagoya Protocol across government, academia, private sector, and community organizations, with documented experiences (e.g., Malawi's task team and consultative workshops).
- Baseline evidence for assessment and review: Published INRs created a global evidence base for SCBD's analysis under Article 31 and for Parties to identify gaps and capacity needs.

Unintended Positive Outcomes:

- Peer learning and cross-sector dialogue: Several Parties reported that INR preparation fostered cross-sector collaboration and helped institutions clarify roles in ABS implementation beyond reporting.
- Identification of policy integration opportunities: Stakeholders proposed additions for future reporting (e.g., links between ABS and incentives for conservation; integration with sector policies; explicit treatment of traditional knowledge).

Unintended Negative Outcomes:

- Resource constraints in some LDCs: Limited budgets hindered broader consultations (e.g., Liberia held fewer workshops than planned and relied more on desk review due to funding limitations).
- Administrative hurdles: A small number of cases lacked valid SSFAs despite INR publication (e.g., Kenya, , South Africa), delaying formal closure; some countries had valid SSFAs but had not yet published (Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Vanuatu).
- One country declined funding: The Philippines formally declined UNEP funding support (28 November 2017), affecting participation through the project mechanism. The Party however met its reporting obligation and published its interim national report.

5. Stakeholders' involvement

Extent of stakeholder engagement and capacity developed

Stakeholders Engagement

The project promoted broad stakeholder engagement at national level, including government ministries and agencies, academia and research institutions, civil society, indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), standards institutions, and private sector entities. Guidance emphasized participatory and transparent reporting, with attention to traditional knowledge and gender representation where applicable. Their role was to provide sector-specific information, traditional knowledge, and feedback during the national consultative and validation workshops

Capacity Development

The project contributed significantly to strengthening national capacities for implementing the Nagoya Protocol's reporting obligations. Through the preparation of Interim National Reports (INRs), countries enhanced their technical and institutional ability to collect, analyze, and organize Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) data. The process involved consultative workshops, stakeholder mapping, and task team formation, which improved coordination among government agencies, academia, civil society, and private sector actors. In several cases, such as Malawi, the reporting exercise served as an opportunity to raise awareness of ABS issues and clarify institutional roles, while also identifying gaps in legal frameworks and policy integration. Despite these gains, many Parties highlighted the need for sustained capacity-building support, particularly in legal drafting, data management, and stakeholder engagement, to ensure future reporting cycles are timely and comprehensive

Examples of engagement and capacity development:

- Malawi: Coordinated by Environmental Affairs Department; conducted stakeholder mapping, formed a task team, reviewed legal instruments, and convened a national consultative meeting with ~45 participants from government, civil society, academia, private sector, and community organizations; the process raised awareness and clarified institutional roles for ABS.
- Guinea-Bissau (stakeholder testimony): The ABS focal person noted strengthened individual and institutional understanding of Nagoya Protocol implementation needs through the INR exercise.
- Media engagement insight: Some Parties identified the media as a key actor for communicating ABS to stakeholders, highlighting future outreach needs.

6. Financial Summary

Source		(USD)		
GEF Grant		1,430,000		
Final Date of Disbursement		16.12.2019		
Cumulative Disbursement ¹² (as of final date of disbursement)		1,287,750.61		
Co-financing ³ , if applicable				
Name of Co-financier	Actual Grant at TE (USD)	Actual In-kind at TE (USD)	Total Co-financing (USD)	
National Executing Agencies		USD 1,025,111	USD 1,025,111	
Totals				
Expenditure by Sponsored Classes (Total project budget, cumulative expenditure to date)				
Sponsored Class / Budget Lines	Estimated cost at design	Actual Expenditure	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)	Available balance
National Executing Agencies	USD 1,140,000	USD 1,098,750.61	0.96	USD 41,249.39
Technical Support + PMC	USD 290,000	USD 102,127.22	0.35	USD 187,872.78

6. Lessons Learned

Summarize key insights or recommendations for future Enabling Activities.

Experiences across participating Parties provided practical insights on organizing national reporting under the Nagoya Protocol, managing resource and capacity constraints, and strengthening multi-stakeholder collaboration, with implications for future enabling activities and reporting cycles

¹ For Multi-Country EAs, provide a **compiled financial summary of resource utilization** along with a table providing links to the individual reports submitted to the relevant convention secretariat

² For Multi-Trust Fund (MTF) projects, list disbursement separately for each Fund.

³ Only for Enabling Activities which have a confirmed co-financing at CEO Approval/Endorsement Provide a table with **Actual Sources of Co-financing, if available.**

Structured stakeholder processes are essential: Mapping stakeholders, forming a task team, and conducting targeted consultations improved report quality and institutional buy-in; Malawi's approach illustrated effective sequencing from desk review to national consultation

Early attention to legal/policy baselines: Comprehensive desk reviews of ABS-related laws and policies helped identify gaps and inform both INR content and future reforms; countries with limited national instruments (e.g., Liberia) faced challenges in evidence gathering.

Plan and budget for inclusive consultations: Adequate resources are required to convene multi-regional and national workshops; funding shortfalls constrained participation and the breadth of inputs in some LDCs.

ABSCH technical readiness and guidance: Clear, step-by-step guidance and offline options supported compliance with Decision NP-1/3; early familiarization with ABSCH workflows reduced bottlenecks at submission.

Integrate cross-cutting themes: Future reporting should more explicitly address how ABS acts as an incentive for conservation and sustainable use, links to sectoral policies, traditional knowledge, and output (not only process) indicators.

Administrative alignment (SSFA and closure): Timely execution of SSFAs and clear terminal documentation requirements (Annexes 6B, 7, 8, 10B) facilitated closure; absence of SSFAs in a few cases complicated financial completion despite INR publication.

Sustainability considerations: Developing countries, Economies in transition and LDCs indicated continued need for capacity and financial support to maintain reporting and implementation momentum; future enabling activities should incorporate sustained technical assistance and financing pathways.

Conclusion

The project successfully fulfilled its primary objective of supporting GEF-eligible Parties in meeting their reporting obligations under Article 29 of the Nagoya Protocol. Through UNEP's coordination and technical assistance, most participating countries prepared and submitted Interim National Reports (INRs) to the ABS Clearing-House, thereby contributing essential baseline data for global assessment and review under Article 31. The process strengthened national capacities, fostered multi-stakeholder engagement, and highlighted gaps for future interventions, particularly in legal frameworks, data availability, and resource mobilization.

While the majority of projects achieved closure, challenges such as limited financial resources and administrative delays in some countries underscored the need for sustained support. Lessons learned emphasize the importance of structured stakeholder processes, adequate funding for consultations, and early technical guidance to ensure timely and comprehensive reporting. Overall, the project provided a critical foundation for improving compliance, enhancing transparency, and informing future capacity-building initiatives under the Nagoya Protocol.