GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

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General Project Information

Project Title	
Restoration and sustainable forest management of the Algerian Aleppo pine forest, ecosystem	
Region Algeria	GEF Project ID 11179
Country(ies) Algeria	Type of Project FSP
GEF Agency(ies): UNDP	GEF Agency ID 9690
Executing Partner Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development/ General Directorate of Forestry UNDP	Executing Partner Type Government GEF Agency
GEF Focal Area (s) Multi Focal Area	Submission Date 4/12/2023
Project Sector (CCM Only) AFOLU	

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Climate Change, Biodiversity, Land Degradation, Influencing models, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Demonstrate innovative approache, Stakeholders, Local Communities, Private Sector, Gender Equality, Gender results areas, Gender Mainstreaming, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Learning, Capacity Development, Food Security, Land Degradation Neutrality, Land Productivity, Land Cover and Land cover change, Income Generating Activities, Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques, Sustainable Land Management, Sustainable Fire Management, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands, Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Livelihoods, Ecosystem Approach, Forest, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Community Based Natural Resource Mngt, Climate Change Adaptation, Communications, Climate Change Mitigation, Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use, Community-based adaptation, Climate resilience, Ecosystem-based Adaptation, Livelihoods, Drylands, Sustainable Forest, Forest and Landscape Restoration, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Civil Society, Non-Governmental Organization, Community Based Organization, Academia, Behavior change, Awareness Raising, Capital providers, SMEs, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Indigenous Peoples, Type of Engagement, Information Dissemination, Consultation, Partnership, Participation, Access to benefits and services, Access and control over natural resources, Participation and leadership, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Beneficiaries, Women groups, Innovation

Type of Trust Fund GET	Project Duration (Months) 60
GEF Project Grant: (a) 3,502,968.00	GEF Project Non-Grant: (b) 0.00
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c)	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant (d)

332,782.00	0.00
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d) 3,835,750.00	Total Co-financing 24,000,000.00
PPG Amount: (e) 150,000.00	PPG Agency Fee(s): (f) 14,250.00
PPG total amount: (e+f) 164,250.00	Total GEF Resources: (a+b+c+d+e+f) 4,000,000.00
Project Tags CBIT: No NGI: No SGP: No Innovation: No	

Project Summary

Provide a brief summary description of the project, including: (i) what is the problem and issues to be addressed? (ii) what are the project objectives, and if the project is intended to be transformative, how will this be achieved? iii), how will this be achieved (approach to deliver on objectives), and (iv) what are the GEBs and/or adaptation benefits, and other key expected results. The purpose of the summary is to provide a short, coherent summary for readers. The explanation and justification of the project should be in section B "project description".(max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

Northern Algeria's forests, particularly in the High Steppe region, are grappling with climate impacts, land degradation, and biodiversity loss partly caused by human activity, exacerbated by droughts, fires, and pest diseases. These challenges are intensified by years of under-investment, particularly in knowledge and evidence-based management and decision-making, and limited participation of forest users in shaping the forest management regime. This has led to escalating trends in forest degradation and loss. The project aims to promote inclusive conservation, restoration, and sustainable management of the Algerian Aleppo pine forest ecosystem. It targets the conservation and restoration of 76,500 hectares of this ecosystem and the implementation of sustainable forest management practices over 265,534 hectares. Key strategies include strengthening forest regulatory and management frameworks, improving knowledge management and capacity-building, and piloting innovative financing solutions to attract private investment. These strategies will integrate best-practice tools for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) approaches and enhance the generation of forest ecosystem goods and services.

The project will benefit the 850,000 individuals living in vulnerable conditions in the region, 50% of whom are women facing heightened vulnerabilities. It will also generate global environmental benefits by aligning with GEF-8 Focal Area objectives on Land Degradation, Biodiversity, and Climate Change Mitigation by targeting GEF Core Indicators 3, 4, 6, and 11. In addition, the project will contribute to the goals of the CBD and the Kunming-Montreal GBF targets 2, 10, 11 and 19; support achieving SDGs 13 and 15; national LDN target 2 and 4.

Indicative Project Overview

Project Objective

To promote conservation, restoration, and sustainable management and use of the Algerian Aleppo pine forest in northern Algeria through integrated inclusive nature-based solutions to climate change.

Project Components

Component 1. Policy, regulatory and institutional capacity strengthening to enable inclusive forest conservation, sustainable management and forest landscape restoration.

Component Type	Trust Fund

Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
907,820.00	7,637,808.00

Outcome:

Outcome 1.1

Improved enabling environment in place for gender-inclusive

conservation and sustainable management and use of the Algerian Aleppo pine forest to contribute to national targets for climate action (NDCs), LDN and biodiversity conservation (NBSAPs)

Indicators/Targets:

Number of gender-responsive forest management plans for Algerian Aleppo Pine Forest updated and approved for implementation

Number of gender-responsive decision-support tools for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) developed and implemented

Output:

Output 1.1.1.

Review-and revise/ update forest by-laws to enhance inclusive and gender-responsive and participatory forest conservation, sustainable management and restoration

Output 1.1.2.

Develop/update forest management plans to integrate best-practice SFM principles and approaches, inclusive, participatory, and gender-responsive measures to enhance effective policy implementation and law enforcement

Output 1.1.3.

Develop and deploy gender-responsive best practice decision-support systems and tools for sustainable forest management (SFM) and forest landscape restoration

Component 1. Policy, regulatory and institutional capacity strengthening to enable inclusive forest conservation, sustainable management and forest landscape restoration

Component Type	Trust Fund
Investment	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)

Outcome:

Outcome 1.2. Strengthened institutional and technical capacities, knowledge and skills in place to facilitate inclusive, gender-responsive, and science-based forest management and forest landscape restoration

Indicators/targets

At least 200 forest professionals trained on SFM and FLR practices and approaches and applying them in forest administration and management (at least 30% women)

Outcome 1.3 Strengthened participatory forest conservation and management capacities in place at local and community levels to promote inclusive and gender-responsive conservation, sustainable use and restoration of forest landscapes

Indicators/targets:

Number of gender-responsive community based technical guidelines for SFM and FLR developed and under implementation

Number of men and women community members trained/targeted by capacity building programs on SFM and FLR (At least 50% women)

Increase in capacity of community members on SFM and FLR (as measured through UNDP capacity scorecard or similar tool)

Number of community-based organisations trained on tools and approaches for SFM and FLR (At least 50% women & women-led organizations)

Output:

Output 1.2.1.

Conduct a training and technical capacity needs assessment at national and sub-national levels for SFM and FLR, ensuring gender considerations are integrated into the assessment process.

Output 1.2.2.

Develop and deliver targeted gender-sensitive training programmes to equip technical personnel at national and sub-national levels with up-to-date knowledge and skills for SFM and FLR, including for participatory planning, monitoring and reporting

Output 1.3.1.

Develop gender-responsive technical guidelines for community-based forest conservation and management to facilitate participatory management of forests and community-led forest landscape restoration

Output 1.3.2.

Train local civil society organizations/forest associations (i.e., Forest User Groups) on gender-sensitive forest management and equip them with skills and knowledge to coordinate implementation of forest management plans at community levels

Component 2. Conservation, sustainable management and forest landscape restoration across the Algerian Aleppo Pine forest landscapes

Component Type	Trust Fund
Investment	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
2,240,000.00	11,580,000.00

Outcome:

Outcome 2.1

Deforestation and degradation addressed through gender-responsive Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR)

Indicators/targets:

Area of forest and forest land restored (target -76,500ha) GEF Core Indicator 3.2

Green House Gas Emissions Mitigated in the AFOLU sector (8,382,098 Tons CO2e) GEF Core Indicator 6.1

Number of direct beneficiaries 50,000; Number of indirect beneficiaries 250,000 (50% are women) GEF Core Indicator 11

Outcome 2.2 Conservation and sustainable forest management and use practices mainstreamed into production landscapes across the Aleppo Pine ecosystem

Indicators/targets:

Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems (target – 265,534 *ha) GEF Core Indicator 4.3*

Number of value chains supported to adopt sustainable business and greening practices (more than 50% of jobs and additional income for women and women-led cooperatives and businesses) (Target – 3 value chains supported)

Number of direct beneficiaries 150,000; Number of indirect beneficiaries 400,000 (50% are women) GEF Core Indicator 11

Output:

Output 2.1.1.

Implement FLR strategies and interventions across 76,500 hectares (ha) of degraded Algerian Aleppo Pine forest, ensuring the active participation of women in restoration activities

Output 2.2.1.

Support implementation of gender-responsive forest management plans in 265,534 ha of the forest landscape, including through inclusive co-management approaches with local communities

Output 2.2.2.

Support CSOs/Forest Associations (i.e., Forest User Groups) and SMMEs with a focus on women to adopt sustainable practices within value chains for specific wood (thinning posts), NWFPs, and use of forest ecosystem services ensuring green jobs creation, income generation and gender inclusive benefit sharing

Output 2.2.3. Facilitate access to markets for sustainably sourced wood and non-wood forest products as well as other forest ecosystem services and support market innovations, digital solutions with an emphasis on increasing benefits for women

Output 2.3.1.

Test and operationalize a gender-sensitive payment for ecosystem services (PES) mechanism to compensate local forest communities for the ecosystem goods and services generated through adoption of practices that reduce pressure on forests and facilitate conservation and restoration

Component 3 Knowledge management, Awareness-raising

Component Type	Trust Fund

Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
128,757.00	3,282,192.00

Outcome:

Outcome 3.1

Project-generated knowledge and lessons shared and results and impact communicated and disseminated for wider learning

Indicators/targets

No. of knowledge products developed and shared with local/national and global audiences

Output:

Output 3.1.1.

Develop and implement strategies for sharing/ exchanging knowledge, lessons and communicating project results and impacts, showcasing benefits for men and women (i.e., gender-disaggregated data)

M&E

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
60,000.00	300,000.00

Outcome:

Outcome 4.1

Adaptive management of project activities in line with UNDP and GEF M&E and Social and Environmental Safeguards policies

Indicators/Target: MTR and TE delivered on time and according to expected quality (targets: MTR, TE and PIR independent quality ratings S or better)

Gender action plan fully implemented and reported in PIRs, MTR and TE

Stakeholder engagement plan fully implemented and reported in PIRs, MTR and TE

Output:

Output 4.1.1 Project M&E plan implemented, and results reported through Project Board, quarterly and annual reports (PIRs).

Output 4.1.2 MTR and TE conducted and reports shared with UNDP and GEF IEOs

Output 4.1.3.

Develop and implement a plan and report on project-level safeguards and risk management measures, including gender action plan and stakeholder engagement plan

Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
Component 1. Policy, regulatory and institutional capacity strengthening to enable inclusive forest conservation, sustainable management and forest landscape restoration.	907,820.00	7,637,808.00
Component 1. Policy, regulatory and institutional capacity strengthening to enable inclusive forest conservation, sustainable management and forest landscape restoration		
Component 2. Conservation, sustainable management and forest landscape restoration across the Algerian Aleppo Pine forest landscapes	2,240,000.00	11,580,000.00
Component 3 Knowledge management, Awareness-raising	128,757.00	3,282,192.00
M&E	60,000.00	300,000.00
Subtotal	**3,336,577.00**	**22,800,000.00**
Project Management Cost	166,391.00	1,200,000.00
Total Project Cost ($)	**3,502,968.00**	**24,000,000.00**

Please provide justification

PROJECT OUTLINE

A. PROJECT RATIONALE

Briefly describe the current situation: the global environmental problems and/or climate vulnerabilities that the project will address, the key elements of the system, and underlying drivers of environmental change in the project context, such as population growth, economic development, climate change, sociocultural and political factors, including conflicts, or technological changes. Describe the objective of the project, and the justification for it. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

Algeria's forests have faced years of underinvestment, including for addressing the impacts of human activities, such as unsustainable harvesting, that have led to forest degradation and loss. The impacts of these are being exacerbated by climate change impacts, including droughts, fires and pest diseases. A notable lack of participation of forest users and local communities in shaping the forest management regime has undermined the capacities of local communities to invest in forest conservation, sustainable use and management. Over time, the mounting pressures, challenges and inadequacy of responses have led to increasing trends in degradation and forest loss in northern Algeria. This project aims to address some of the main challenges to forest protection and management, and promote conservation, restoration, and sustainable management and use of the Algerian Aleppo pine forest in three targeted areas: Telagh, Beni Imloul, Senalba. Maps of the target areas are included in Annex C. The detailed challenges and barriers are elaborated below.

i. Combination of land degradation processes, vulnerability to climate shocks and anthropogenic factors lead to forest degradation and loss

Environmental degradation processes are acute in the areas targeted by the project. These include the combined impacts of land degradation processes and biodiversity loss, both of which are compounded by climate change and unsustainable human activity. The target zone (map in annex C) is characterized by steep slopes, with altitudes that vary from 2300 m (northern) to 50 m (southern). The target forests, located on sloping land, once burned and before vegetative regrowth, are exposed to winter floods carrying the accumulated humus layers. Notably, the Telagh forest within the mountainous region contends with water erosion due to its steep gradients. Conversely, the southern side of this forest facing the steppe contends with notable wind erosion. The Beni Imloul Forest experiences water and wind erosion due to elevation disparities.

Anthropogenic factors have played a significant role in Algeria's decline and loss of forest areas. For instance, Senalba Forest has been impacted by socio-economic pressures stemming from a burgeoning local population. Activities such as small-scale agriculture, selective subsistence harvesting, and commodity-driven plantations exacerbate forest degradation. Data from the Global Forest Watch reveals that Algeria lost around 28,000 hectares of tree cover from 2001 to 2019. This decline can be attributed to agricultural expansion, forest fires, and illegal logging, all intensified by the country's rapid population growth and rising demand for wood products. The practice of using fire for land management, coupled with inadequate governance and regulatory measures, has further compounded the forest's vulnerability.

The extent and intensity of forest degradation is also influenced by various landscape factors resulting from deforestation itself. The forest ecosystem is prone to strong erosive processes, especially in the southern part in direct contact with the Sahara. Their degradation thus accelerates desertification processes. Yet these forest ecosystems and landscapes play a crucial role as a barrier against desertification and constitute a major part of the national Green Dam Project[3][1], a Governmental initiative aimed at forming a vegetal barrier against desertification. In addition, climate change exacerbates land degradation processes in this ecosystem. A proven decrease in rainfall and rising temperatures increases the risk of forests being exposed to extreme heat, forest fires, water shortages and landslides, resulting in the loss of vegetative cover. Climate-induced tree disease outbreaks, including bark beetle infestation, with a high insect proliferation rate, cause the dieback of large swathes of the forest. In general, the effects of climate change on the forest ecosystem are severe. Climate predictions on the evolution of precipitation show that the targeted area will see its precipitation decrease by about -15% compared to the reference scenario (1850-1900) at +2°C [IPCC WGI Interactive Atlas, 2022]. Overall, the northern part of Algeria is highly vulnerable to drought, water scarcity, landslides, flooding, and extreme heat, which will continue to pose challenges for forests.

The total area of the Algerian Aleppo pine forest is a vast 1,158,500 hectares of which this project specifically focuses on three selected sites covering 342,034 ha, or 29.52% of the entire forest. These targeted forests lie in the High Steppe region, home to 30% of the nation's low-income households. Within this target area, approximately 850,000 individuals grapple with vulnerabilities stemming from economic and environmental challenges. Of these, 200,000 individuals are direct beneficiaries of the project activities. The project aims at targeting at least 50% women who are significantly more exposed to

heightened vulnerabilities in the project area considering lack of access to formal and decent work as well as limited access on financial instruments and products.

The targeted forest areas are witnessing a severe decline in forest cover due to a combination of factors. The Beni Imloul Forest area has experienced a deforestation rate of 40% since 1990, while the rate soars to 60% in the Telagh forest area. This diminishing forest cover not only affects the trees but also has detrimental consequences on the terrestrial biodiversity that these forest ecosystems support.

In the Beni Imloul forest area, covering an area of 15,840 Ha, the primary drivers of deforestation and degradation include forest fires, drought and water stress, and attacks from diseases and pests, with the severity of these first three drivers being exacerbated by climate change. Additionally, illegal logging by small-scale farmers looking to expand their farmland, overgrazing by herders, and the unsustainable harvesting and collection of non-wood forest products (NWFPs) such as rosemary, pine needles or medicinal plants, by local communities further contribute to the forest's decline.

In the Senalba forest area (63,267 ha), forest aging, drought, illegal logging, and overgrazing, are the predominant challenges. Meanwhile, the Telagh-Sidi Bel Abbes forest area mainly faces challenges with frequent forest fires which has so far devastated more than 134,515 ha out of 4m ha of the forest during the period between 1990 and 2022. In addition forest aging due to lack of active management, compounded by pest attacks and diseases, as well as illegal logging by small-scale farmers seeking more agricultural land, further accelerates the degradation and forest loss in this forest landscape.

There is a clear need to invest in nature-based solutions, including restoration of degraded forest ecosystems and landscapes, if the challenges presented above are to be arrested, and resilience of landscapes, ecosystems and biodiversity against the impacts of droughts, diseases and fires is to be enhanced. Supporting the adoption of best practices in forest management and enhancing the skills and capacities of local forest users and managers to respond to these challenges will be key to maintaining these forests and improving their prospects against a changing climate, and against mounting pressures from multiple uses. Beyond the climatic and anthropogenic challenges presented above, there exist institutional, legal and regulatory obstacles that must be tackled to foster a conducive environment for sustainable forest management, conservation and restoration. These include:

ii. Weaknesses in the policy and regulatory environment which limit multi-stakeholder action and lack of public investments in sustainable forest management

While most forests in Algeria are part of the public domain[2][2], the lack of sufficient mechanisms and regulatory frameworks to secure user rights hinder long-term sustainable management of forest ecosystems and limits local communities' participation (e.g., farmers) and private sector investments in the forest sector. The current forests management plans were prepared in 1978 and 1982, and have not been updated since, and so are in large part outdated and potentially not effective as a management tool. Overall, the laws, policies and strategies have not caught up since they were disrupted by the civil insecurity of the 1990s, which led to a significant decline in investments, attention and focus on forest management. Local communities and the private sector lack the enabling environment (e.g., legal and regulatory frameworks) to effectively participate in forest conservation, restoration, and sustainable management.

Forest management programmes in Algeria are funded by the State budget annually and implemented by the General Directorate for Forests. This budget has been decreasing steadily in the last few years due to financial constraints in the State budget between 2015 and 2020. As a result, no new forest management programs have been implemented since 2015. However, in 2021, the Algerian Government renewed its commitments towards more sustainable forest management, notably through allocating more funding to forest programmes, including the restoration of degraded forests, particularly those located in the area leading to the Green Dam. The Forest Law, 1984 promotes sustainable and participatory forest practices and management. Professionals, users, residents, and forest owners can form associations, cooperatives, or forest groups. These groups can collaborate with the government on forest management, receiving support and preferential forest resource usage terms. This underscores the government's commitment to boost private sector participation in SFM and the NWFP sector. Interprofessional councils at the territorial level (wilayas) strengthen ties between administration and the private sector, spurring growth in sectors like wood, cork, and medicinal plants. Alongside, a strategy for NWFPs has been developed, with the government supporting 58 NWFPs focused micro-enterprises and encouraging producer associations. This initiative highlights the government's aim to involve small enterprises and women-led businesses in a sustainable forest value chain.

The government recognizes that the state-based funding model for forest management is inadequate due to delayed funding releases, challenges such as inconsistencies in budget allocation, unforeseen budget cuts, and bureaucratic hurdles in the annual budgeting process, and insufficient emergency response funding. Additionally, the absence of private sector investments and overall lack of participation of the private sector and local communities in forest governance, further limits the forest sector's ability to comprehensively address deforestation and forest degradation, and to respond to the emerging challenges, such as forest fires, pests, and disease outbreaks.

The project will contribute to addressing some of these challenges, by facilitating policy dialogue and action around inclusive forest sector governance, and piloting and testing new approaches and mechanisms that promote participation and inclusion of the private sector, local communities and other key actors and stakeholders in forest management. The project will support the updating of forest

management plans and capacities for their implementation, including at local community levels, in order to improve the sector's effectiveness in addressing forest degradation and loss.

iii. Ecosystem management challenges: insufficient knowledge and expertise for sound management of forests

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and its General Directorate of Forestry are aware of the challenges facing forests and have developed a revised National Forest Development Strategy to support ecosystem conservation, restoration and sustainable forest management. But the implementation of the vision is hampered by a lack of application of cutting edge/ up-to-date knowledge and expertise, particularly by those tasked with managing forests (i.e., local forest managers, or forest conservators depending on the DGF), including engineers and technicians. The limitations in technical capacities are in part due to the absence of updated and relevant data for informing decisions, including for development of forest management plans. While forest management plans exist at the central level, capacities to implement them at the local levels are often missing. This is a key barrier to SFM and conservation of forests and impacts the capacity of local forest managers in applying and implementing relevant management interventions that can respond to the multiple challenges the forests face. Undoubtedly, the shortcomings in the management of forest ecosystems accelerate the degradation trends.

A key response is to promote a multi-stakeholder approach to strengthening capacities, skills and enforcement of laws and regulations for forest use. The project will support the updating of skills for SFM and FLR among the community members and at the practitioner level and support the development of science-based decision-support tools to ensure that management decisions are based on an understanding of the costs and benefits of taking those decisions, and to ensure that mitigation measures are also considered to address negative known consequences of decisions. Gender-responsive training programs will be developed and rolled out with the end goal of strengthening all relevant stakeholders' awareness, capacities and skills for forest planning, implementation of interventions and monitoring across different use and management scales.

iv. Limited benefits from forest conservation and use and lack of incentives for sustainable management of forest and stewardship

Poverty characterizes many of the rural areas where the forests are located. Combined with the gaps in knowledge about sustainable approaches to harvesting wood and NWFPs, the lack of investment in forest sector development and management over time and limited benefits to local communities from forest protection, have led to forest use practices that are largely unsustainable and lead to deforestation and forest degradation. While Algerian forests provide various benefits such as timber, fodder, non-wood forest products such as rosemary, pine needles or medicinal plants, as well as ecosystem services, not enough effort has been directed towards enhancing value at local or national scales. This lack of investment diminishes incentives for sustainable forest practices. Destructive activities like excessive logging, land clearance for farming, overexploitation of NWFPs, and unregulated wood collection persist due to the perceived immediate gains outweighing long-term advantages.

The forests' intrinsic value and the ecosystem services they provide to local communities and the economy have been underappreciated, partly due to lack of awareness and knowledge, and the unrecognized potential for economic benefits beyond basic uses. The project aims to elevate this awareness raising and showcase the advantages of forest protection, sustainable management, and restoration. By piloting payment for ecosystem services and introducing other incentive mechanisms, the project will highlight opportunities for job creation and income generation, especially for women.

Addressing the barriers to SFM and FLR in the project target areas will build on and contribute to past and ongoing investments by government to address land degradation, desertification and biodiversity loss. This project will establish synergies with other ongoing GEF funded initiatives supporting national forestry programmes, and other related MEA implementation initiatives, including the following:

- FAO implemented project on "Rehabilitation and integrated sustainable development of production landscapes of cork oak forests (FCL) in Algeria" (GEF ID 9806),
- FAO implemented project on ''Integrated forest and biodiversity management for sustainable development in the Biban mountain range'' (GEF ID 10170)
- UNDP implemented project on ''Developing a National Strategy and Legal and Institutional Framework on Access to Genetic Resources and Related Benefit Sharing and Traditional Knowledge in Line with the CBD and Its Nagoya Protocol in Algeria'' 2015-202 (GEF ID 5808).

It will also build on, contribute to and be informed by and coordinate national level activities with the new GEF-financed projects, including the following:

- Umbrella Programme to Support NBSAP Update and the 7th National Reports, led by UNDP;
- Global Biodiversity Framework Early Action Support, led by UNDP;
- Country-level activities of the Eighth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme led by UNDP; and
- Umbrella Programme to Support Development of Biodiversity Finance Plans, led by UNDP.

While investments have generally been low in forest conservation and restoration, various ministries are working to reduce pressures on forest ecosystems in the targeted areas. The government has committed 7,595,846 USD for the three forest areas between 2020 and 2025 (see detail in annex). These funds are utilized for creating forest infrastructure, including forest roads for better accessibility

and fire prevention, conducting reforestation efforts to replenish and expand forested areas, and performing silvicultural work to ensure sustainable forest management. Financing from the GEF is critical for catalyzing sustainability of these investments, to integrate SFM best practices and facilitate generation of local and global environmental benefits, as well as social ones in line with Algeria's own commitments within the MEA framework. The GEF's support will also amplify the impact of the government's investment and ensure the implementation of innovative global best practices, addressing both immediate challenges and long-term resilience of the forest ecosystems.

The Government of Algeria has committed substantial resources from its environmental conservation project, amounting to a significant co-financing of USD 24,000,000 (2023-25), in tandem with the GEF-funded initiative for the restoration and sustainable management of the Algerian Aleppo pine forest ecosystem, including by financing projects in watershed conservation, ecosystem restoration, and land rehabilitation within the Aleppo Pine project area, the government is addressing both social and environmental challenges therefore implementing government's strategy to leverage public investment for economic growth, job creation, and enhancing the living standards of its population.

Furthermore, the government's support and co-finance to this project will also extend to provision of logistical support, deployment of technical staff and experts for key project interventions, including technical assessments and surveys, and overall coordination of technical interventions and activities of the project. This includes leveraging physical assets and infrastructure to execute ecosystem restoration and land rehabilitation activities. With GEF's support, the project can adopt a holistic approach to forest conservation, integrating innovative global best practices, fostering community participation, strategically addressing deforestation drivers, and implementing proactive measures against climate change impacts. The incremental cost, therefore, represents the financial and logistical bridge between the baseline and this enhanced, co-financed scenario, ensuring the project not only conserves the forest but also meets global standards and practices, and delivers lasting and sustainable benefits for both the environment and people.

Previous and ongoing initiatives have highlighted the importance of integrating community participation, addressing deforestation drivers proactively, and implementing measures against climate change impacts. These insights will be invaluable in guiding the implementation of the GEF-funded project, ensuring that it adopts a holistic approach to forest conservation, integrates innovative global best practices, and delivers lasting and sustainable benefits for both the environment and the local communities.

Scenario with GEF funding

With GEF's support, the project will introduce a comprehensive approach to forest conservation, sustainable management, and restoration. The alternative scenario would facilitate:

- Implementation of innovative and globally recognized best practices in forest management, ensuring long-term resilience of the forest ecosystem, generating local and global environmental benefits for biodiversity conservation, combatting degradation of landscapes and ecosystems, strengthening the role of forest ecosystems as carbon sinks and enhancing resilience of landscapes, ecosystems and people against the impacts of climate change.

- Enhanced community engagement, with a particular focus on empowering women and youth, ensuring a 'whole-of-society' approach to forest conservation, in turn contributing to strengthened natural resources governance systems, especially at the local levels.

- A multi-pronged strategy to address the various drivers of deforestation, integrating both preventive and corrective measures.• Proactive measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change, ensuring the forest's health and vitality for future generations.

Without GEF's involvement, the Algerian Aleppo pine forest would continue to face significant threats of deforestation and degradation. While the government's planned investment of 7,595,846 USD from 2020 to 2025 is a noteworthy effort, it might primarily address immediate threats without instilling long-term resilience based on global best practice, science and knowledge of forest management. This could result in a continuation of business-as-usual approaches to forest management, continued limited community engagement, particularly of women and youth, and an absence of a comprehensive strategy to tackle the key drivers of deforestation and forest loss, including addressing the impacts of climate change of forest ecosystems and landscapes.

Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs): The Aleppo pine ecosystem is home to a diversity of faunal species: Mammals such as jackal, fox, wildcat, gundi, jerboa, Algerian hedgehog, hyena, hare and wild boar; Birds include the partridge, the calender lark, the field lark, the crossbill, the honeyeater, the wheat quail and diurnal and nocturnal raptors (the eagle, the owl); Reptiles include the chameleon, the collared snake, the Montpellier snake, the green lizard, the common snake, the taranto and the turtle. Several animal species on the IUCN Red List can be found in the Aleppo pine forest ecosystem: Barbary Sheep (*Ammotragus lervia Pallas*) (vulnerable), Barbary Stag (*Cervus elaphus barbarous*), Cuvier's Gazelle (*Gazella cuvieri*) (vulnerable), Greek Tortoire (*Testudo*

graeca) (vulnerable), North African mastigure (*Uromastyx Achantinurus*), Egyptian Vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*) (endangered), Algerian nuthatch (*Sitta ledanti*) (endangered).

Aleppo pine forests are home to a variety of plant species, including Aleppo pine itself, as well as other trees, shrubs, and grasses. The composition of the plant community varies depending on the level of degradation of the forest and the nature of the substrate. Pure natural stands of Aleppo pine are rare, but more common are mixed stands of Aleppo pine and other secondary species, such as holm oak and Phoenician juniper. Degraded stands of Aleppo pine include a variety of shrubs and grasses, such as Mattoral tree, moor, rosemary, Alfa grass, Sparta grass, and white sagebrush. The steppe at Alfa is located on the edge of the Aleppo pine forest and gives way to the steppes at Sparta and white sagebrush on loamy soils.

The project investment will therefore contribute to supporting the conservation of biodiversity, including key species outlined above, which are already under pressure from human and climate-induced impacts. Protecting and restoring the forests will contribute to several SDGs including SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 15 (Life on Land). This initiative serves as a catalyst for harmonizing the objectives of the Rio conventions, contributing to key global targets, including under NDCs, LDN and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, as well as other global initiatives such as the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Although it is not part of the GEF-8 Integrated Program on Ecosystem Restoration, its goals are aligned with it.

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project description

This section asks for a theory of change as part of a joined-up description of the project as a whole. The project description is expected to cover the key elements of good project design in an integrated way. It is also expected to meet the GEF's policy requirements on gender, stakeholders, private sector, and knowledge management and learning (see section D). This section should be a narrative that reads like a joined-up story and not independent elements that answer the guiding questions contained in the PIF guidance document. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

This project aims to support and complement ongoing investments to conserve and restore Algerian Aleppo pine forests in the north of the country. It will do so by bringing 76,500 ha of the forest under restoration and promoting sustainable management of a further 265,534 ha through mainstreaming of biodiversity and SLM into production uses and systems in the landscape. It will adopt a participatory and multistakeholder approach with a focus on women beneficiaries and participation of CSOs and community stakeholders for development of green and sustainable wood and non-wood forest value chains and pilot payments for ecosystem services and other incentive mechanisms to generate green jobs and incomes from value-addition activities that can deliver benefits to communities currently depending on harvesting and collecting wood and NWFPs for household use and markets. These interventions will enhance skills and capacities at all levels of use and management and strengthen systems for forest conservation and sustainable management, and increase individual, community and forest sector investments, including by both public and private sector entities, in SFM and FLR. This is envisaged as the necessary integrated and participatory approach to strengthening these ecosystems and landscapes' resilience against land degradation and climate change impacts such as droughts, pests and diseases, and fires that pose key threats to the forests and the biodiversity they host, and the ecosystem goods and services they generate for people and the planet. The entire programme will be informed by gender analysis to ensure that women are active participants and benefit directly and indirectly throughout interventions across its three components.

Theory of change

In response to the problems described above, the project will seek to support implementation of several interventions that collectively promote inclusive conservation, restoration, and sustainable management of the Algerian Aleppo pine forest ecosystem. These interventions will contribute to the overarching goal of achieving healthy and resilient forest ecosystems, reduce GHGs and improve the livelihoods of local communities living in the landscape and dependent on forest resources for their livelihoods and socio-economic development.

The project will do this by addressing some of the barriers at the policy, institutional and management framework levels, to remove bottlenecks to adoption of sustainable practices by local forest users, including farmers and livestock keepers, small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs), businesses engaged in timber and other wood and non-wood forest product exploitation. The project will also support the creation of and facilitate an enabling environment for incentives, including financial ones (e.g., PES), for forest use to become more sustainable, promote restoration and regeneration of forests, as well as their conservation and protection. The project will also support strengthening of regulatory environment and law enforcement capacities to reduce illegal and unsustainable extraction of forest and forest resources (i.e., illegal logging, overharvesting) by local communities, businesses and private sector entities, and to facilitate participatory governance and management, as well as private sector investments in forest conservation, sustainable management and restoration. It will promote approaches that facilitate increased benefits from sustainable use practices,

reward sustainable practices (e.g., by facilitating access to markets for sustainably produced products) and discourage and make unsustainable practices costly.

By investing in enhancing institutional capacities, integrating modern spatial data and planning tools, and integrating gender-responsive interventions, the project will facilitate a shift away from centralized command and control approach to forest management, towards a more inclusive and participatory forest management regime, recognizing that state institutions alone cannot adequately address the challenges faced by forests, both human and climate-induced. Building and enhancing capacities at local (i.e., communities, local authorities and management institutions, forest rangers), and national (i.e., policies, laws, regulations) and improving access to knowledge, data, decision-support tools and training, is recognized as a key step towards fostering an environment conducive to informed decision-making, use of recognized best practices, participatory governance and equitable benefit sharing from forest conservation, sustainable use and restoration.

The project also recognizes the importance of both public and private sector investments in conservation, forest management, and restoration. By focusing on generating biodiversity, land degradation neutrality, climate benefits, and local economic opportunities, the project aims to initiate a virtuous cycle. Increased investments in sustainable forest management and restoration are expected to lead to improved ecosystem health, which in turn will generate ecosystem goods and services. These ecosystem goods and services will in turn facilitate opportunities for improved livelihoods from sustainable use and income-generation benefits, including through development of nature-based enterprises and greener and more sustainable forest value chains that can access more profitable markets. Additionally, by guiding communities with a particular focus on women and enterprises towards sustainable business practices, the project aims to drive a sector-wide shift towards sustainability, in line with broader conservation and management goals.

These efforts are envisioned as pre-conditions for a transformed forest sector, one characterized by robust institutional capacities, active community participation, increased investments, and the adoption of responsible business practices. Successful implementation, results and impacts would be scalable across the forest sector elsewhere in the country. This transformation is expected to restore ecosystems and landscapes, enabling them to provide essential ecological services, support local livelihoods, and effectively counter challenges posed by human activities and climate change. Underpinning this theory of change and building on the information included under the baseline section, are several assumptions, including the following:

- Regarding private sector investments, the enabling environment will meet the conditions for its promotion, particularly for sustainable use and exploitation of forest products, wood and NWFPs. These activities must be further supported in a participatory framework ensuring the protection of natural resources, defining and enforcing quotas and levels of extraction that allow for renewal/regeneration of resources and where the partner actors are committed and empowered to participate in SFM and FLR.

- The national and sub-national governments are assumed to maintain their commitment to fostering an environment conducive to increased participation and investments in forest conservation, SFM, and FLR. This includes not only sustaining and possibly increasing budgetary allocations from public funds but also incentivizing private sector investments in alignment with the national vision and priorities for the forest sector. The government's proactive steps, such as the establishment of interprofessional councils at the territorial level and the development of a strategy for NWFPs, are expected to be sustained throughout the project's implementation and beyond.

- Building on the government's facilitation of 58 operational micro-enterprises for NWFPs and its encouragement of NWFP producer organization, the project assumes continued governmental interest in supporting the participation of SMMEs and women-led businesses in a sustainable forest value chain. The project will leverage this momentum, targeting these groups for both support and active participation in project design and execution.

- The ongoing legislative process aimed at fostering entrepreneurship and private investment in NWFPs will be both successful and timely. By the project's implementation phase, this new law is expected to be in place, harmonizing stakeholder investments in SFM and FLR.• The DGF will proactively and punctually roll out training and capacity-building programs. These programs will target local and technical staff, equipping them with the skills needed for ecosystem conservation, restoration, and sustainable forest management.

- Local stakeholders, especially professional associations, cooperatives, and micro-businesses (including those led by women) in forest-adjacent areas, are assumed to be receptive to and supportive of the project. Their involvement is expected to span from benefiting from the project to actively participating in the development of nature-based enterprises and forest value chains.

Section A provides details about the key barriers constraining effective conservation and sustainable management of the Aleppo Pine Forest, these include:

- The current policy, legal, institutional, and financial frameworks are insufficient to support SFM and FLR. This includes challenges in co-managing forests with local communities, forest-users, and the private sector.

- The lack of, or limited incentives for investing in conservation and sustainable management of forests and other natural resources, leading to their overharvesting and over-exploitation, as well as to under-investment or lack of investments in their restoration. Realization of increased benefits from investments in SLM, SFM and FLR would incentivize more investments from users to conserve, sustainably use and restore these ecosystems.

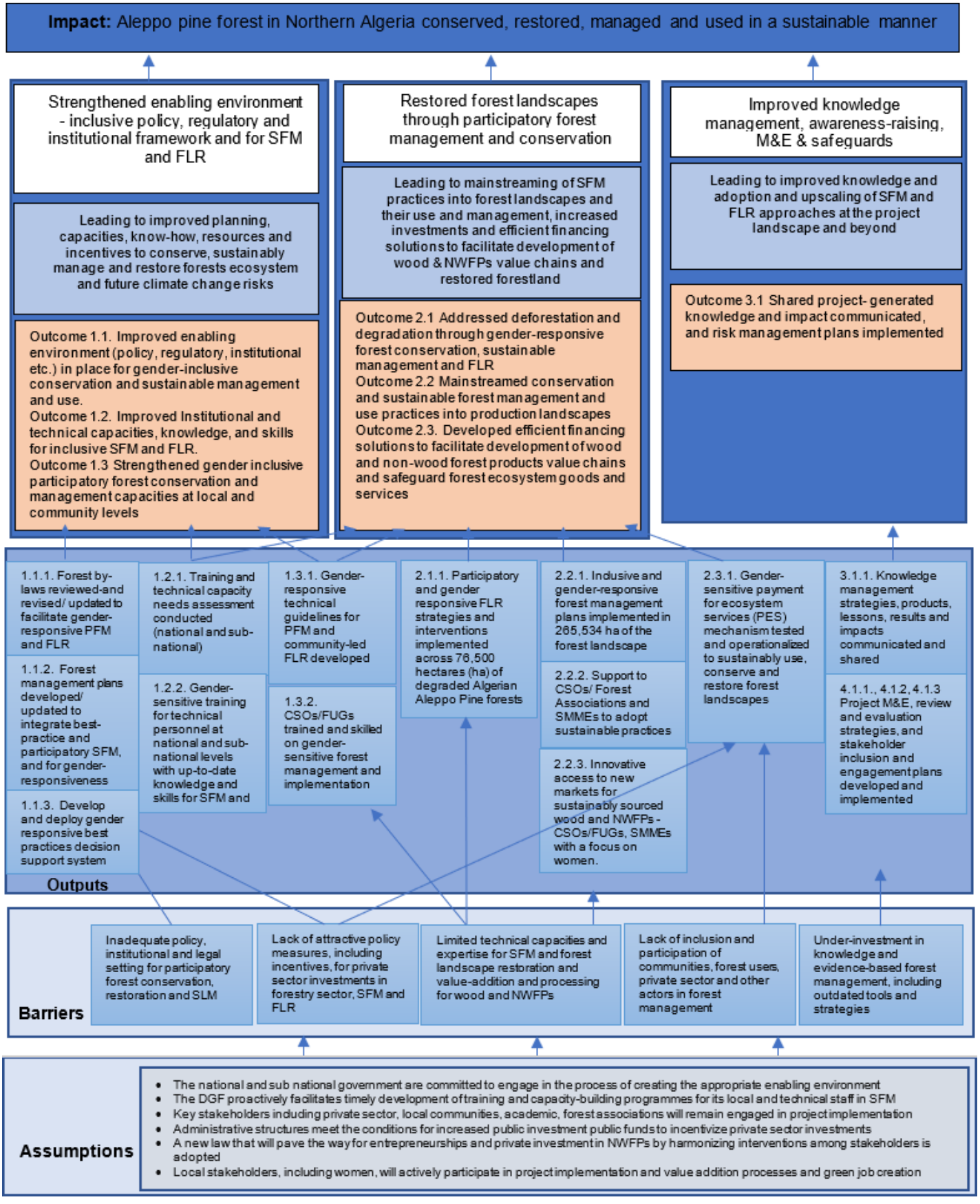
- The lack of, or inadequacy in technical knowledge and know-how on best-practices for conservation, restoration and sustainable management techniques to inform landscape-level interventions by users and managers of forest resources, including individuals, government institutions and private sector actors.

- Lack of know-how, experience and capacities to establish, implement, enforce and monitor mechanisms and guidelines for sustainable harvesting of wood, NWFPs and use of other forest ecosystem goods and services related, developing greener and sustainable value chains, as well as designing of sustainable finance mechanisms such as PES schemes is hindering adoption of these tools and mechanisms to enhance SFM and FLR. Raising awareness, skills and knowledge, including the know-how of all actors would facilitate and contribute to more investments, of effort, time, budgets, into SFM and FLR action on the ground.

There's an urgent need to understand and enhance the value of non-wood products and forest inventory data. However, the current lack of comprehensive data, including a national inventory of valuable non-wood resources, hinders informed management decisions.

The following diagram summarizes the overall project logic, outcomes, outputs, the assumptions necessary for its success, and the barriers the project aims to address.

Figure 1: Theory of change



Project components:

The strategy to achieve the project objectives is composed of four components, namely 1) Policy, regulatory and institutional capacity strengthening to enable inclusive forest conservation, sustainable management and forest landscape restoration; 2) Conservation,

sustainable management and forest landscape restoration across the Algerian Aleppo Pine forest landscapes; 3) Knowledge management, Awareness-raising and 4) Monitoring & Evaluation and Safeguards.

The following section describes in more detail the project components (interventions and activities) identified in the theory of change:

Component 1: Policy, regulatory and institutional capacity strengthening to enable inclusive forest conservation, sustainable management and forest landscape restoration

This component focuses on strengthening policy, regulatory and institutional capacities to enable the participation of government and non-government, including public and private forest actors in the conservation, sustainable management and restoration of forests. The component aims to improve the enabling environment for forest management to contribute to national targets for building climate resilience, adaptation capacity and mitigation action, to address biodiversity loss and degradation of forest landscapes and ecosystems. It will facilitate the contribution of the forest sector to national goals, commitments and targets articulated in NDCs, LDN targets and NBSAP. Overall, the component aims to facilitate a shift towards co-management of forest resources and effective implementation of interventions for forest conservation and restoration, enabled by strong policy, legal and regulatory frameworks, and capacities, skills and know-how.

Outcome 1.1. Improved policy, regulatory, institutional and management frameworks in place for conservation and sustainable management and use of the Algerian Aleppo pine forest to contribute to national targets for climate action (NDCs), LDN and biodiversity conservation (NBSAPs)

This outcome aims to facilitate revision and updates to existing forest by-laws and forest management plans to become inclusive and participatory, allowing effective co-governance of forests with local communities, forest user groups and the private sector, and to be effective in implementing forest policies and enforcing forest laws and regulations. This will involve developing Standard Operating Procedures for sustainable forest management practices and providing clarity on allowable and illegal forest use practices. It will facilitate access to decision support tools that enable co-management, collaboration and coordination among stakeholders, and enhance decision-making processes to be more inclusive and gender-responsive, and to allow for deployment of best practice decision-making mechanisms for forest conservation, sustainable use and restoration. Under this outcome, the following outputs are proposed:

Output 1.1.1. Review and revise/ update forest by-laws to enhance inclusive, gender-responsive and participatory forest conservation, sustainable management and restoration. The revised by-laws will provide clear guidelines for responsible forest use and conservation action. Indicative activities include:

- Review existing forest by-laws: Conduct a comprehensive review of the current forest by-laws to identify gaps and areas for improvement.
- Engage stakeholders: Engage all relevant stakeholders affected by forest laws and policies, including government agencies, local communities, and environmental experts, and women's groups to gather views, insights and inputs and facilitate an inclusive law revision process that is informed and shaped by all stakeholders.
- Incorporate best practices: Integrate international best practices and up-to-date science and context-specific evidence and data into the forest by-law revision process, to ensure they align with sustainable forest management principles while remaining relevant to the local context.

Output 1.1.2. Develop/update forest management plans to integrate best-practice SFM principles and approaches, inclusive, participatory and gender-responsive measures, to enhance effective policy implementation, law enforcement. The project will develop and update forest management plans to incorporate science and evidence based on data collected at local levels and informed by proven best practices for SFM and FLR. These plans will help translate forest policies and laws into action. Indicative activities include:

- Conduct an inventory and review of existing plans: to determine gaps and areas requiring updates and improvements and localize/contextualize them to the specific forest ecosystems being targeted for conservation, sustainable management and restoration.
- Integrate conservation targets: Ensure that the new or updated forest management plans include specific targets for forest conservation, biodiversity protection, sustainable use and restoration.
- Collaborate with stakeholders: Involve relevant stakeholders, such as local communities, NGOs, women's groups, and researchers, in the development or update of forest management plans to incorporate multiple forest actor views, knowledge systems, needs and to ensure implementable management plans, once approved.

Output 1.1.3. Develop and deploy gender-responsive best practice decision-support systems and tools for sustainable forest management (SFM) and forest landscape restoration (FLR). The project will support the development of decision-support systems and tools, informed by needs assessments that will be carried out across all relevant user groups, to facilitate decision-making processes and protocols that are inclusive and responsive to the needs of all forest users. These tools will assist in making informed decisions that reflect multiple views and knowledge systems, including local, indigenous, and traditional knowledge, in addition to conventional scientific data and assessments. Indicative activities include:

- Identify data information needs required for effective decision-making in forest conservation, management and restoration.
- Develop decision-support tools that are user-friendly, gender-responsive and facilitate real-time access to relevant data, enabling informed decision-making by forest managers, policymakers, forest user groups and communities.
- Deploy decision-support tools and provide technical training and support on the use of the tools in decision-making processes at different levels, including community, user group, forest managers and policy makers, including through training and capacity building sessions.

Outcome 1.2. Institutional and technical capacities, knowledge and skills strengthened to facilitate, gender-responsive, science-based forest management and forest landscape restoration

This outcome aims to improve the technical capacity, knowledge, and skills of forest managers, researchers, and other stakeholders to effectively conserve, sustainably use, manage and restore Aleppo Pine forests in Algeria. The outcome will be achieved through several outputs, including conducting a training and technical capacity needs assessment at national and sub-national levels for SFM and FLR, and developing and delivering targeted training programs to equip technical personnels at national and sub-national levels with up-to-date knowledge and skills for SFM and FLR, including spatial analysis, planning, monitoring, and reporting. The assessment will help identify the specific technical and institutional capacity gaps that need to be addressed to facilitate science-based forest management and restoration. The targeted training programs will provide technical personnel with the necessary skills and knowledge to apply science-based approaches in forest management, ensuring that the best available knowledge is applied to management decision-making processes. Under this outcome, the following outputs are envisaged:

Output 1.2.1. Conduct a training and technical capacity needs assessment at national and sub-national levels for SFM and FLR, ensuring gender considerations are integrated into the assessment process. The assessment will help identify areas requiring improvement and guide the development of targeted training and capacity building programs. Indicative activities include:

- Assess technical capacity gaps and the specific technical knowledge and skills required for science-based forest management and restoration at national levels, among key institutions engaged in forest policy decision-making.
- Assess technical capacity gaps and the specific knowledge and skills required to oversee and carry out implementation of forest conservation, management, and restoration at sub-national and site/forest landscape levels among key forest sector institutions.

Output 1.2.2. Develop and deliver targeted gender-sensitive training programmes to equip technical personnel at national and sub-national levels with up-to-date knowledge and skills for SFM and FLR, including for participatory planning, monitoring and reporting: Based on the capacity needs assessment, the project will design and deliver training programs to equip technical personnel with the necessary knowledge and skills for sustainable forest management and restoration. These programs will cover planning, monitoring, and reporting aspects. Indicative activities include:

- Identify priority training topics based on the needs assessment and feedback from target groups.
- Customize training content and adapt training materials to each target group, such as forest rangers, planners, data analysts and technicians as necessary. For example, the project will coordinate with regional organizations (e.g., Near East Forestry and Range Commission - NEFRC) and conduct hands on training such as Forest Ecosystem Assessment/Inventory by using RS/GIS techniques.
- Evaluate training effectiveness and impact of the training programs on improving technical capacity and adjust the content as needed.
- Facilitate dialogue to institutionalize periodic refresher training and capacity building programs for integration into relevant institutions annual workplans and budgets.

Outcome 1.3. Strengthened participatory forest conservation and management capacities in place at local and community levels to promote inclusive and gender-responsive conservation, sustainable use and restoration of forest landscapes

This outcome aims to enhance the capacity of local community forest rangers, forest user groups, local communities and civil society organizations to effectively participate in the management, conservation, and restoration of Aleppo Pine forests in Algeria. This outcome supports the development of guidelines for community conservation and forest management to facilitate their participation in development and implementation of forest management plans, and to monitor the results and impacts of forest management interventions at the landscape level, and to foster a collaborative and joint management approach between communities and government institutions. The technical guidelines for community-led forest conservation and management are intended to equip communities with the know-how and strengthen their involvement, including through integration of traditional knowledge and practices. Under this outcome, the following outputs are envisaged:

Output 1.3.1. Develop gender-responsive technical guidelines for community conservation and forest management to facilitate participatory management of forests and community-led forest landscape restoration. These technical guidelines will facilitate increased awareness at community levels on SFM, SLM and FLR practices and approaches, and identify, recognize, and integrate good and proven local best practices already in use at community levels, based on local and traditional knowledge and citizen science. Indicative activities include:

- Engage local communities through culturally appropriate consultation methods to seek views, expectations and understand local level needs for effective participation in forest governance.

- Develop technical guidelines tailored for different community level target groups (e.g., farmers, SMMEs, forest user groups etc.,) in appropriate format and language, in line with their identified needs and expectations and disseminate through various means, including information-sharing and awareness-raising sessions.

Output 1.3.2. Train local CSOs/forest associations on gender-sensitive forest management and equip them with skills and knowledge to coordinate implementation of forest management plans at community levels. The project will identify key local institutions and CSOs (e.g., cooperatives and forest associations) that can be targeted for training and capacity building to play a facilitation role to coordinate knowledge-sharing, information dissemination and as key stakeholder engagement partners at the local levels, and to play a liaison role at community/landscape levels, working closely with the project and national level stakeholders. Indicative activities include:

- Map key civil society and community-levels organisations, including cooperatives, associations, including women-led forest user-groups to receive targeted training and capacity building and to play a key liaison role at the local level in collaboration with national and local government institutions.

- Identify the capacity needs for the local CSOs and forest associations involved in forest management and develop and deliver a tailored capacity building and training program for this target group in line with expected roles in forest conservation, management and restoration.

Component 2. Conservation, sustainable management and forest landscape restoration across the Algerian Aleppo Pine forest landscapes

This component will support on-the-ground implementation of interventions aimed at generating conservation, sustainable management, and restoration outcomes across the targeted Algerian Aleppo Pine forest landscape. It will also pilot and implement innovative tools and strategies geared at incentivizing adoption and scaling up of sustainable forest management approaches and practices in production landscapes and across forest-dependent sectors, including SMMEs and forest user groups and other actors engaged in forest value chains. Interventions under this component will seek to lead to three key outcomes:

Outcome 2.1. Deforestation and forest degradation addressed through gender-responsive Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR)

This outcome aims to improve the ecological conditions of the forest landscape by implementing various strategies and interventions, to restore degraded forest and forest land with the aim of protecting, tending to and managing naturally regenerating trees to enhance recovery of ecosystem processes. This outcome will support Output 2.1.1. *Implement FLR strategies and interventions across 76,500 ha of degraded Algerian Aleppo Pine Forest, ensuring the active participation of women in restoration activities.* This output will prioritize natural regeneration as a cost-effective method of restoration, including natural forest regrowth and assisted natural regeneration (ANR), with limited active restoration where relevant and necessary. Indicative activities include:

- Identify the degradation hotspots across the 76,500 ha of Aleppo Pine forest landscape and prioritize areas for key interventions depending on the type and level of degradation, and the current land uses.

- Identify the appropriate restoration options, techniques, and interventions for eliminating threats to forest growth and limiting forest disturbance, e.g., preventing the spread of fires by building firebreaks and clearing forest floor of dry debris; controlling cattle grazing

patterns/establishing seasonal enclosures to protect tree saplings; removing invasive grasses and shrubs; channeling water into soil; weeding, pruning, fertilizing, enrichment planting and reintroduction, and pruning branches, etc.

- Mobilize local stakeholders (e.g., individuals, families, smallholder farmers, forest managers through appropriate mechanisms (e.g., cash-for-work schemes) to implement the relevant identified techniques in the forest landscape, covering 76,000 ha. • Establish 500 ha of Aleppo Pine (*Pinus halepensis)* woodlots through community-based reforestation activities, ensuring support to women and youth-managed nurseries in collaboration with Forest Associations and other user groups.

Outcome 2.2. Conservation and sustainable forest management and use practices mainstreamed into production landscapes across the Aleppo Pine ecosystem

In production landscapes where the use of the landscapes and ecosystems is focused on extractive use (e.g., for timber production, non-wood forest product harvesting/collection, the project will support integration of sustainable use principles and promote practices that facilitate regeneration, protect biodiversity, including forest and agro-biodiversity, and promote the integration of trees into production landscapes. It will also promote the consideration of biodiversity conservation in these landscapes, including for protection on wild and native species of flora and fauna (e.g., medicinal plants) in the harvesting/collection and use practices of local communities, businesses, and forest users.

Aleppo pine provides various products and services to local populations, such as Aleppo pine seeds (APS), fuelwood products, corns as well as forest employment. Recent research[1][3] shows that APS have gained multiple usage, being a key ingredient in various agro-food industries such as ice-creams, candies, and pastries, and highlights the nutritional benefits from consuming APS given the high content of protein (22.7%), oil (43.3%) and various mineral elements (potassium, magnesium and calcium). Collecting APS constitutes an important component of rural households, and households living within forest areas also collect fuelwood and medicinal plants. Research in Tunisia shows that in some regions APS collection is influenced by gender, with women playing an important role in harvesting forest products. Forage, mainly leaves derived from trees, shrubs and bushes are of high importance in Algeria and it plays an essential role in animal based production systems (e.g. goats, sheep and cattle), which contribute significantly to the local and national economy in Algeria.

The project will therefore give particular focus to enhancing the participation and beneficiation of women in the implementation of the forest management plans across the target of around 265,534 ha of Aleppo Pine forest landscape, with the following Outputs:

Output 2.2.1. Support implementation of gender-responsive forest management plans in 265,534 ha of the forest landscape, including through co-management approaches with local communities. Indicative activities include:

- Prioritize, schedule and identify modalities for implementation of interventions identified as key and relevant to forest management in the forest management plans prepared under Output 1.1.2, ensuring participation of local communities.

- Zone/map intervention areas for different uses, establish/review harvesting quotas, harvesting methods etc., ensuring equity in benefits across user groups (e.g., SMMEs, farmers, women), and ensuring compliance with established sustainable yields for wood and non-wood forest products.

- Mobilize required inputs (including budgets, tools, equipment, labour) for carrying out the forest development operations (e.g., silviculture) and establish performance measures and targets for each intervention.

- Collect key data, and compile, analyze and report to key institutions for monitoring implementation of the forest management plans to inform adaptive management.

Output 2.2.2. Support CSOs/Forest Associations (i.e., Forest User Groups) and SMMEs with a focus on women to adopt sustainable practices within value chains for specific wood (thinning posts), NWFPs, and use of forest ecosystem services, ensuring greener value chains and businesses through innovative access to financing and digital solutions.

This output will support targeted groups engaged in forest use, particularly forest user groups, associations, cooperatives, and enterprises, including SMMEs, to adopt sustainable practices in the collection, harvesting and processing of wood and non-wood forest products and to contribute to the development of sustainable forest value chains. Indicative activities include:

- Conduct a mapping of key wood and non-wood value chains associated with Aleppo Pine and the different actors involved to identify opportunities for integrating sustainable practices and improving efficiency.

- Develop, through a consultative process, a value chain improvement strategy, focusing on removing inefficiencies, promoting more sustainable practices across the entire value chain to integrate sustainable and greener practices.

- Conduct targeted and tailored trainings for value chain actors to raise awareness and demonstrate different approaches for integrating sustainable practices at different value chain stages for increased access to new and better markets for sustainably sourced forest products.

- Facilitate access to finance and sustainable financing options for SMMEs through MFIs and local commercial banks and producer groups engaged in sustainable forest products.

Output 2.2.3. Facilitate access to markets for sustainably sourced wood and non-wood forest products as well as other forest ecosystem services and support market innovations, digital solutions with an emphasis on increasing benefits for women. Indicative activities include:

- Conducting a survey and assessment of the ecosystems goods and services local communities derive from Aleppo Pine forests, including the wood and non-wood forest products (e.g., Aleppo Pine Seeds), and their contributions to household livelihoods, food security, incomes, and local economies.

- Conduct an assessment of the markets and their readiness for sustainably sourced local wood and non-wood forest products (e.g., willingness to pay studies) and identify gaps for targeted support to address challenges and remove barriers to value addition and market access.

- Tailor and deliver targeted technical support to individuals, households, groups, and enterprises engaged in wood and non-wood forest product collection, harvesting, processing and use to access new and better markets for sustainably sourced forest products.

- Provide support for facilitation of purchasing deals and contracts between SMMEs and local and international off-takers/buyers for sustainably sourced wood and non-wood forest products

Outcome 2.3 Efficient financing solutions developed to facilitate sustainable investments in wood and non-wood forest value chains and to conserve and restore forest ecosystems.

This outcome aims to support the development, testing and operationalisation of a pilot payment for ecosystem services (PES) mechanism that will also be developed to economically recognize and compensate and provide incentives for local stakeholders for reducing pressure on forests, restoring ecosystems and/or sustaining the provision of ecosystem services. Examples of already operational mechanisms will be considered and lessons learned adapted to the Algerian context. Relevant examples include the forest financing fund in Costa Rica (FONAFIFO) and the Vietnamese National Forest Fund (VNFF) - among others - which are two successful cases of how an effective forest PES mechanism can be designed and operationalized at national and local levels. Under this outcome, the project will support:

Output 2.3.1. Test and operationalize a gender-sensitive payment for ecosystem services (PES) mechanism to compensate local forest communities for the ecosystems goods and services generated through adoption of practices that reduce pressure on forests and facilitate conservation and restoration.

The project will design and operationalize a PES mechanism that compensates forest users for protecting forests and incentivizes them to maintain production of forest ecosystem goods and services, by reducing pressure on forests, restoring ecosystems, and investing in sustainable practices for wood, non-wood forest products, and forest ecosystem services value chains. The project will support the government to establish mechanisms for mobilizing funds from private and public sources to facilitate payments to PES scheme beneficiaries. Previously, several large public companies requested the DGF for the implementation of environmental actions in forests which initially only concerned plantation. Many public companies wanted to participate financially in conservation and livelihood actions in forest areas (e.g., SONATRACH). The project will support the development of a mechanism to channel this type of financial support towards conservation and restoration projects proposed, developed, and implemented by cooperatives or associations in forest landscapes. Indicative activities include:

- Conduct a baseline assessment of available financing options and opportunities for enhanced conservation and restoration of forests and understand barriers to financing the adoption of sustainable practices.

- Conduct a valuation of the existing forest ecosystem goods and services to determine the costs of maintaining them.

- Assess the policy, legal and regulatory environment for development of PES mechanisms.

- Design and test a payment for ecosystem services mechanism that aligns with the conservation and sustainable use and restoration goals of the project.

- Support implementation and monitoring of the PES mechanism and document its successes and failures to inform adaptive management and improvements.

Component 3: Knowledge management and awareness-raising

Component 3 will facilitate knowledge production, management and dissemination, and support awareness raising and learning among local communities, government institutions and the wider public on forest conservation and restoration to inform future investments, policy reforms and upscaling.

Outcome 3.1. Project-generated knowledge and lessons shared, results and impact communicated for wider learning. This outcome will support the development and implementation of plans and strategies for collating knowledge generated by the project and widely sharing lessons and communicating results and impacts from the project across all components.

Policy and law-related outputs for SFM and FLR under component 1 have relevance to national level institutional mechanisms for forest management, with implications and applicability to the entire forest sector in Algeria. The Project Board as the apex decision-making structure for the project will provide overall guidance on how knowledge products and data from these policy review processes are packaged and shared with the forest sector stakeholders and the wider public (e.g., workshops, print documents, radio, TV) in line with the project's transparency requirements and the stakeholder engagement plans. The forest management plans that the project will support the revisions/updates or development of, are key sector plans that the entire public should be aware of, to ensure compliance and understanding of how forests are managed and so their dissemination, through appropriate channels, format and language, will be supported by the project. For stakeholders who will be directly responsible for implementing these plans, direct knowledge sharing approaches will be used, including workshops and dissemination of printed copies of documents in relevant language. Technical guidance and tools that can be used as everyday reference will be compiled in easy-to-read format and in downloadable format and employ the use of infographics for easy comprehension and in multiple/relevant local languages in a 'how-to' format to ensure accessibility by the different stakeholders, including those with lower levels of literacy. Component 2 will generate data and information with the potential to inform the development of a new sector approach in Algeria, with regards to forest sector financing, including restoration financing, with potential implications for transitioning the sector towards sustainability, and towards a co-management approach with strong benefit sharing mechanisms that also include local communities, women, youth who are currently not significantly involved or benefiting from the forest management regime. This work will build on experiences from elsewhere, especially on how to set up mechanisms such as PES, and how to engage the private sector in forest management and restoration. Knowledge products from these investments will therefore be widely shared with stakeholders beyond the project landscape and beyond Algeria, regionally and internationally to share lessons and make this knowledge available to others elsewhere. The project aims to communicate forest valorization options and new financing opportunities to a broader audience at local and national levels. It also aims to clarify existing mechanisms for forest use and exploitation and raise awareness about sustainable forest use under the existing framework. Knowledge products and communication materials will therefore be packaged and disseminated in a manner that's accessible to all forest stakeholders and beyond, including law-makers and policy makers for wider adoption, upscaling and support through public financing and policy de-risking approaches. Under this outcome, the following output is envisaged:

Output 3.1.1. *Develop and implement strategies for sharing/exchanging knowledge, lessons and communicating project results and impacts, showcasing benefits for men and women* will be delivered through the following indicative activities:

- Develop and implement a project Knowledge Management Plan to guide data collection, packaging and dissemination to various audiences through appropriate measures.

- Develop and roll-out a Communication Strategy for the project, ensuring use of multiple channels appropriate for different audiences at local, national and international levels.

Component 4. Monitoring & Evaluation and Safeguards

Component 4 of the project focuses on the M&E, reporting and risk management aspects of the project to ensure adaptive management of the project in line with UNDP and GEF policies. The objective of this Component is to ensure that the project is responsive to changing circumstances and that progress is tracked, monitored and evaluated effectively, and safeguards risks are well understood and appropriately mitigated and managed, and that stakeholders have access to project personnel and the concerns they raise are appropriately handled through a transparent project-level Grievance Redress Mechanism.

Outcome 4.1. Adaptive management of project activities in line with UNDP and GEF M&E and SES policies, will support the following Outputs:

Output 4.1.1. Project M&E plan implemented and results reported through the Project Board, quarterly and annual reports (PIRS). The M&E plan will be prepared at PPG stage and validated at the inception of project implementation, and periodically reviewed and adjusted to respond to the project context.

Output 4.1.2. MTR and TE conducted, and reports shared with UNDP and GEF IEOs. The MTR will be conducted mid-way through project duration and serve the purpose of tracking the project's progress towards meeting the overall project development objectives, while the TE will serve the purpose of assessing the project's success and failures against the set objectives by end of project implementation.

Output 4.1.3. Develop, implement plans and report on project-level safeguards and risk management measures, including gender action plan and stakeholder engagement plans. In addition to the pre-liminary SES risk assessment undertaken as part of the PIF preparation, the PPG will conduct detailed assessments and prepare risk mitigation and management plans that will form part of the full project package to be approved for implementation, with clear budgets and monitoring and reporting protocols.

Gender

In Algeria, women in rural areas are particularly impacted and exposed to vulnerabilities related to environmental degradation processes. They have limited access to decent jobs in the formal economy and employment sector. Many women belong to organised groups such as cooperatives and associations contributing actively to the social solidarity economy, considered a third form of income generation. It will be important, therefore, that the project prioritizes support to women and their forest-related livelihood practices and income-generation options in the context of climate change and land degradation. Women's participation will be ensured in all decision-making bodies of the project, and their inclusion will be fostered in the various dialogue platforms that will serve the project implementation. KPIs on women participation will be monitored in all possible activities. For instance, gender equality considerations will be mainstreamed in the revision of policy and regulatory frameworks, and forest management plans. Building on existing local governance processes, local women groups and associations will be consulted to ensure their priorities and needs are well reflected in the revised frameworks and plans. The project will support improvements of these frameworks and plans to become more gender responsive. Women forest managers, operators and community representatives will be supported to participate in and benefit from capacity-building activities of the project. Project implementation will ensure that women have equal access to new jobs and additional income created/generated through project investments, including the envisaged PES mechanism.

During the PPG stage, the project will map stakeholders and ensure they are engaged in informing project design. It will also develop a stakeholder engagement plan that facilitates equal participation and establishes a grievance redress mechanism. This mechanism will ensure that throughout project implementation, stakeholders have access to decision-making linked to the project, whether they are directly or indirectly involved in project implementation. The project recognizes the crucial role of women and youth in society, especially in the context of forest resource utilization. Their involvement, participation, and benefits from investments in conservation, management, and restoration of these forests are part of the future success factors for the project. As direct resource users and managers, they are key to the sustainability of project results and impacts, including beyond the life of the project, and so are important project participants.

The project will further develop strategies for their proactive participation and involvement during the PPG and refine them continuously during the implementation phase of the project. The project's gender-focused approach aligns with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 5, which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Gender analysis will be conducted as part of the PPG, in line with UNDP and GEF requirements, and a gender action plan will be developed and costed, and gender-disaggregated indicators will be included in the project results framework to ensure that the interventions are gender-responsive and that their gender-responsiveness is monitored and reported on at project implementation review (PIR) periods, and at project mid-term (MTR) and end-of-term (TE).

An additional component on M&E will ensure that the project continuously monitors and evaluates its performance and reports on progress towards the development objective. This component will ensure alignment with UNDP and GEF monitoring, evaluation and reporting frameworks.

Role of private sector

The project will engage with private companies, including SMMEs, operating on wood and non-wood forest products on the development of greener and sustainable forest value chains and adoption of more sustainable and greener business practices. In line with the project's emphasis on collaborative governance, forest management plans will be jointly developed, involving the

government, communities, and private sector stakeholders. While the government retains ownership of these plans, active participation from all stakeholders will be encouraged to ensure the successful implementation of sustainable practices and the conservation and restoration of forest ecosystems. Furthermore, the project will facilitate dialogue with the private sector to promote investment in sustainable forest management and explore opportunities for public-private partnerships that support the restoration of degraded forest areas, contributing to environmental benefits and the achievement of project goals. The envisaged PES mechanism will be designed to recognize the role of local forest resource users, including individuals, small business operators and corporations, as contributors to and also as beneficiaries of the scheme in a public-private partnership arrangement.

Knowledge management and learning

The project will identify best conservation, restoration and sustainable management measures that require testing, validation and dissemination/rolling out, as well as capacity-building and technical support for their wider adoption and scaling.

Part of such measures will include financial incentives and mechanisms, such as a Payment for Ecosystem Services schemes that will help mobilize and channel resources to local communities and enterprises engaged in forest development, conservation and restoration. Project's lessons learned and good practices will be documented and packaged for wider dissemination with different stakeholders, including at national levels to inform policy dialogue (e.g., the General Directorate of Forestry (DGF), the National Advisory Company for Rural Development (BNEDER) and the National Institute for Forestry Research (INRF), and at the sub-national levels with authorities overseeing forest resource management (Forest conservators, local Directorates of Agricultural Services), and local communities (e.g., through CSOs, associations, businesses) to ensure awareness about the project's results and lessons and impact, to also inform long-term adoption and replication. As part of the project's KM and Communication Strategy, the project will establish an online presence through which project resources and media pieces will be shared, and to facilitate interaction with the wider public. The various components of the project will generate significant data, information and knowledge products and these will be shared, as appropriate and through relevant means, with the different project stakeholders mentioned above.

The project will establish a systematic mechanism for capturing outcomes related to policy, regulatory improvements, and enhancing institutional capacities as well as record knowledge about conservation practices, sustainable management techniques, and restoring forest landscapes in the Algerian Aleppo Pine region. Regular meetings, workshops, and seminars to consult stakeholders in the generation of knowledge products and to share and discuss findings of studies and assessments and to raise-awareness will also be used as opportunities to disseminate information and share progress on project activities and receive feedback from project stakeholders and beneficiaries.

At local and national levels, local and national media will be mobilized to share key information on available techniques and incentives mechanisms developed and promoted by the project. All relevant local and national sectoral agencies will also be engaged to help disseminate lessons learned and good practices with the public. At the regional and international levels, existing networks and initiatives on ecosystem conservation, restoration and sustainable forest management will be leveraged, including in the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (UNDER) platforms and links may be established, as appropriate, with the GEF-8 Ecosystem Restoration Integrated Program led by Conservation International. Forest platforms and regional/international fora such as the Silva Mediterranean committee on Mediterranean forest issues, the Near East Forestry and Range Commission (NEFRC), the World Forest Week/CFO sessions, UNFF sessions, etc., provide relevant communication platforms to share lessons learned and good practices and learn from other countries and contexts. These aspects will be elaborated in the project's Knowledge Management and Learning Plan as well as its Communications Strategy to be articulated at PPG stage and fully developed during implementation.

Upscaling and replication potential

This project, focusing on the Algerian Aleppo pine forest, is strategically positioned to serve as a model for sustainable forest management and conservation, not just within Algeria but potentially in similar ecosystems in the North Africa and Middle East region and globally. The project's design, which currently targets less than a third of the vast 1,158,500 hectares of the Algerian Aleppo pine forest, inherently carries the blueprint for replication and upscaling. The innovative approaches and techniques developed under this project are not merely reactive solutions to existing challenges but are proactive strategies that anticipate future conservation and management needs. As the project uncovers and refines best practices, these can be seamlessly integrated into the broader Algerian forest landscape, ensuring that the entirety of the Aleppo Pine forest benefits from the project's successes.

These approaches, combined with the project's strong strategy for inclusivity - emphasizing gender equality, youth empowerment, and community engagement - ensure that the conservation and restoration benefits are deeply embedded within the communities that rely on these forests, while generating key global environmental benefits for carbon mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem resilience. Furthermore, the project's collaboration with the private sector and its pioneering efforts in establishing sustainable financing mechanisms, such as PES, underscore its strong potential for laying the foundation for sustainability

and wider replication. These mechanisms not only guarantee the project's longevity but also position it as a replicable model in regions grappling with conservation and restoration finance challenges.

Coordination and Cooperation with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

Does the GEF Agency expect to play an execution role on this project?

Yes

If so, please describe that role here. Also, please add a short explanation to describe cooperation with ongoing initiatives and projects, including potential for co-location and/or sharing of expertise/staffing

As per request by the Government of Algeria (see in annex), this project will be executed under support to National Implementation Modality (Support to NIM). UNDP has been requested to provide the following indicative implementation services under the support to NIM arrangements:

- Management of payment processes, and disbursement of funds to contractors and/or Responsible Parties for the implementation of on-the-ground activities.
-
    - Procurement of goods and services for the project including contractual services for individuals - recruitment and contract issuance
    - Staff selection, recruitment process and staff HR & benefit administration and management
    - Travel management

The Implementing Partner of this project is Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (General Directorate of Forestry). No NGOs operating in Algeria have been assessed/judged to have sufficient capacity to absorb the project funding for purposes of implementation under this project. The GEF recipient agencies such FAO is implementing biodiversity and land degradation projects (GEF ID 10170 and 9806) and promote collaboration across sustainable management of CBNRM at the landscape level.

In delivering execution support to the project, and in line with the corporate Internal Control Framework, UNDP will ensure proper separation of functions between UNDP staff providing oversight and execution support to the Implementing Partner. The following arrangement will be put in place: The National Project Director (NPD) will be appointed by the Government and will be the authority implementing the project workplan and authorizing project expenses on behalf of the Government. The Project Management Unit (project staff under UNDP contracts) will be responsible for operationalizing project activities under the strategic direction of the NPD. UNDP will ensure the financial management of expenses for activities authorized by the NPD, ensuring that transactions are in line with the approved PRODOC budget and workplan and in line GEF and UNDP regulations. The provision of execution support services will be led by the Operations Team which will provide oversight to processing of direct payments requested by the IP. The Results and Quality, and Finance Teams will be reviewing the supporting documents that will trigger processing of direct payment requests.

As per the UNDP's Internal Control Framework, and with the aim of minimizing the risk of fraud and detecting it quickly, there will be a reasonable segregation of duties. The principles underlying this separation are:

- Staff members who approve vouchers (approving managers) cannot create vouchers (Finance); and
- Staff members who approve PO's (approving managers) do not create a PO (Buyer).

- The separation of tasks between the first authority (Project manager) and the second authority (approving managers) is achieved by assigning either a “Project manager” role or an “approving manager” role (Senior Manager, Manager level 2, Manager level 1)
- The office should designate a senior finance staff member who will have the authority to approve vendors. At least one other staff member, with a finance profile, must also have the right to approve “vendors” as “Back-up”. The two approvers do not have to create vendors, POs or vouchers or prepare the bank reconciliation.
- Separate the Buyer function from the receipt of goods and services
- Separate the bank reconciliation function from bank signatories
- Separate the function of the asset focal point from the person responsible for the physical inventory of assets
- Separate the functions between the HR Administrator, global payroll administrator and the disbursing officer- Payroll

UNDP Algeria's Internal Control Framework also provides for strict procedures to separate roles in order to ensure the absence of conflict of interest. As part of GEF projects, UNDP Algeria ensures the strict separation of roles, in line with the recommendations of the UNDP audit in 2020 and the subsequent decisions of the GEF Council during the 59th GEF Council meeting. The capacities and configuration of the Algeria Country Office are outlined in the GEF Checklist submitted with the PIF.

UNDP will support the Executing Entities, including UNDP, (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development/DGF, BNEDER, INRF, etc) to carry out activities within the Support to NIM arrangements aligned with UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures. Day-to-day project activities will be managed by the Project Manager, with the support of the Project Management Unit (PMU) and the Project Steering Committee. The Project Steering Committee will be established to provide guidance and assist with decision-making and will comprise representatives from Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Environment, other Ministry agencies associated with ecosystem conservation, restoration and sustainable forest management in Algeria, NGOs, community and private sector representatives, as well as UNDP. The PMU and Steering Committee structures will be specified during PPG phase. UNDP, together with the DGF, will ensure synergies are built with other potential technical assistance and/or investment projects in the project areas. They will also foster dialogue with other cooperation agencies addressing conservation, restoration and sustainable forest management issues, such as (not limited to): GIZ, FAO, UNFF, World Bank, etc.

Implementation arrangements

In both components 1 and 2, national institutions will play a key role under the coordination of the General Directorate of Forestry (DGF). For example, activities related to the production of knowledge (technical guidelines, benchmark and compilation of best practices) could be implemented by organizations like the National Institute for Forestry Research (INRF) and efforts to revise management plans by the national rural development consulting enterprise (BNEDER). Local ‘conservations’ (decentralized forest administrations at wilaya level) will play a key role in project implementation in selected projects areas. More details on the implementation arrangement will be developed at the full Project Preparation phase (PPG phase).

UNDP Algeria CO has received an official request from Government (see in annex) to support National Implementation by the General Directorate of Forestry (DGF). In its Note Verbale, the Algerian Government further confirmed its alternative of a HACT assessment of the Directorate General of Forests. If approved for execution support role, UNDP Algeria CO will ensure necessary firewalls between execution and oversight roles in line with the ICF and establish protocols to ensure transparent and efficient use of resources, in alignment with UNDP policy and GEF guidelines. UNDP Algeria has explored multiple options to mobilize a responsible party considering that other GEF recipient agencies are among UN System operational agencies in country, yet, the government’s advice is to proceed with the modality of UNDP’s support to NIM since it responds to operational and technical requirements for the current initiatives.

In Algeria, despite existing national NGOs focusing on forest ecosystem conservation, none possess the financial capacity to absorb substantial funding due to legal constraints and operational risks associated with receiving international funding without prior Ministry approval. On the other hand, the Government identified the UN agencies for implementing the project was based on rigorous national criteria, involving risk management, partner value, and past implementation performance, ensuring diverse participation and support from relevant ministries and consultation with other accredited agencies.

In parallel, the complexity of Algerian banking regulations presents considerable challenges in justifying international bank transfers due to restrictions on using foreign currencies in international contracts. While these regulations don't fully prohibit foreign currency transactions, they mandate a complex and time-consuming clearance process. Consequently, both issuing and executing contracts requiring foreign currencies encounter limitations. Efforts to enhance the financial regulatory framework, such as Presidential Decree No. 15-247 of September 16, 2015 (DMP), were initiated, yet the full implementation of the Regulatory Authority for Public Procurement (ARMP), responsible for critical functions, remains pending.

To address these challenges, the Directorate General of Finance (DGF), supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and National Community Abroad (MFA), submitted a compelling request to UNDP Algeria, shared to the GEF. The proposed solution suggests granting UNDP approval to provide execution support services to NIM with costing USD 37,403, will be absorbed through the UNDP co-finance, and will not be recovered from the GEF funds. The detailed justification, option analysis for potential execution partners and fund calculation are in the annex.

Core Indicators

Indicator 3 Area of land and ecosystems under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
76500	0	0	0

Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3.2 Area of forest and forest land under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
76,500.00			

Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and woodland under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3.4 Area of wetlands (including estuaries, mangroves) under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
265534	0	0	0

Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
265,534.00			

Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value or other forest loss avoided

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

Name of the OECMs	WDPA-ID	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)

Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)	8382098	0	0	0
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)	0	0	0	0

Indicator 6.1 Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)	8,382,098			
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting	2025			
Duration of accounting	20			

Indicator 6.2 Emissions Avoided Outside AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) Sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)				
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting				
Duration of accounting				

Indicator 6.3 Energy Saved (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Total Target Benefit	Energy (MJ) (At PIF)	Energy (MJ) (At CEO Endorsement)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at MTR)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at TE)
Target Energy Saved (MJ)				

Indicator 6.4 Increase in Installed Renewable Energy Capacity per Technology (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Technology	Capacity (MW) (Expected at PIF)	Capacity (MW) (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at MTR)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	100,000			
Male	100,000			
Total	**200,000**	**0**	0	**0**

Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

GEF-8 Indicator 3: Restored land/ecosystem area (hectares) Target: 76,500 ha: The project will focus on restoring 29.52% of the degraded Algerian Aleppo Pine Forest and forest land area in Aurès (indicator 3.2), Senalba Chergui, and Telagh. Geographic Information Systems will be used for spatial monitoring with up-to-date data through assisted natural regeneration (76,000 ha) and active restoration (500 ha) interventions. The project primarily focuses on FLR within the Algerian Aleppo pine forest ecosystem. This approach is holistic and integrates SFM practices to enhance the resilience, productivity, and biodiversity of the forest landscapes. The restoration activities will include a combination of assisted natural regeneration, enrichment planting, and the establishment of agroforestry systems, tailored to the specific needs and conditions of the target areas. These practices aim to restore ecological functionality and enhance the provision of ecosystem goods and services, while also contributing to improved livelihoods for local communities.

GEF-8 Indicator 4: Area of landscapes under improved practices, sub-indicator 4.3 - Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems Target: 265,534 ha.: The project will promote sustainable land management practices across the entire area of the forest landscapes in Aurès, Senalba Chergui, and Telagh which will promote both the conservation and productive use of the Algerian Aleppo pine forest ecosystem, it is essential to ensure that the land's productive capacities are maintained and enhanced in a sustainable manner. This includes sustainable harvesting, agroforestry practices, and other sustainable land management techniques that benefit both the environment and the local communities (indicator 4.3).

GEF-8 Indicator 6: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated (metric tons of CO2e) estimated 8,382,098 Tons which will be further confirmed by detailed calculation during the PPG phase, following baseline studies and assessments.

GEF-8 Indicator 11: Number of direct beneficiaries, disaggregated by gender, as beneficiaries of GEF investment Target: 200,000 beneficiaries with increased resilience. In addition, 650,000 individuals will receive indirect benefit from the project activities, 50% of whom are women (number based on local statistics).

Risks to Project Preparation and Implementation

Summarize risks that might affect the project preparation and implementation phases and what are the mitigation strategies the project preparation process will undertake to address these (e.g. what alternatives may be considered during project preparation- such as in terms of consultations, role and choice of counterparts, delivery mechanisms, locations in country, flexible design elements, etc.). Identify any of the risks listed below that would call in question the viability of the project during its implementation. Please describe any possible mitigation measures needed. (The risks associated with project design and Theory of Change should be described in the "Project description" section above). The risk rating should reflect the overall risk to project outcomes considering the country setting and ambition of the project. The rating scale is: High, Substantial, Moderate, Low.

Risk Categories	Rating	Comments
Climate	Substantial	Risk: Climate vulnerability is a key threat justifying the project. If actual climate change would evolve in the t-case scenario, high-level climate threats could compromise the project's achievements. Mitigation measures: The project's activities will thus have to consider the probability of the worse-case scenario happening and design adaptation measures accordingly.
Environment and Social	Moderate	Risks: Anthropogenic pressures should such as human-induced fires, illegal logging and overgrazing, among others remain issues of concern. Generating alternative revenue sources through green value chains and implementing restoration options may have negative social effects that will be analyzed. First positive impacts of the project on jobs and income may take time to materialize. Mitigation measures: Stakeholder Engagement and Participation: Ensure the active involvement of local communities, and other relevant stakeholders in the

		project planning and decision-making processes. Foster a participatory approach that considers their perspectives, needs, and concerns. This can help identify potential social impacts, design appropriate mitigation measures, and enhance the project's social acceptance. Social & Environmental Screening analysis: Conduct a comprehensive social impact assessment to understand the potential positive and negative effects of the project on local communities, livelihoods, and social structures. Identify potential risks and develop specific strategies to address and mitigate those impacts. This assessment should consider the short-term and long-term effects of the project, including the transitional period until positive impacts on jobs and income materialize.
Political and Governance	Moderate	Risk: limited inclusion of local communities (in particular women) and private sector representatives. Mitigation measures: The project will foster inclusive decision-making approaches and management frameworks. The local administration for example will foster multisectoral dialogues and the inclusion of local stakeholders. Local forest governance can indeed be improved, which will form part of the project activities.
Macro-economic	Moderate	Risk: the global economic crisis, with upwards inflation trends could represent challenges for the success of the value chains related activities of the project. Mitigation measures: preference will be given to value chains that have a potential on local/national markets.

Strategies and Policies	Moderate	Risk: the policy and management frameworks would not be updated and revised as expected Mitigation measures: Clear Governance Structure: Establish a clear governance structure with defined roles and responsibilities for policy and framework updates. Designate individuals or teams responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and updating policies and frameworks regularly. Ensure there is accountability and oversight to ensure timely updates. Stakeholder Engagement: Engage relevant stakeholders in the policy and framework revision processes. Involve key decision makers and make them 'own' the process to ensure direct influence on the frameworks. Regular Review Schedule: Develop a schedule for regular reviews of policies and management frameworks. Set specific timelines for reviews and revisions to ensure they are not overlooked or delayed. Include checkpoints and milestones to track progress and ensure adherence to the schedule.
Technical design of project or program	Low	Risk: Limited technical expertise available in national institutions/at national level. Mitigation measures: Technical Assistance: the design of the project takes into consideration the engagement of external experts and/or consultants to provide technical assistance to national institutions. This can be done through short-term assignments, knowledge-sharing sessions, or long-term partnerships. These experts can offer guidance, share best practices, and provide hands-on support to address specific technical challenges.

Institutional capacity for implementation and sustainability	Moderate	Risk: Overloaded capacities of national institutions' staff may represent an implementation risk, in terms of abilities to deliver the project results in a timely manner. Mitigation measures: With the project support, necessary trainings will be provided to reinforce capacities and specific technical knowledge. National and local administrations dispose of sufficient resources and staff to ensure coordination and supervision of the project implementation, with UNDP support.
Fiduciary: Financial Management and Procurement	Low	Risk: Heavy bureaucratic financial management and procurement framework. Mitigation measure: Support services schema: UNDP will support the IP with expertise in financial management and procurement.
Stakeholder Engagement	Moderate	Several dialogue platforms are in place (see section C.). The project will ensure inclusion of local communities, women and the private sector.
Other		
Financial Risks for NGI projects		
Overall Risk Rating	Moderate	Risk level is considered Moderate overall.

C. ALIGNMENT WITH GEF-8 PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES AND COUNTRY/REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Describe how the proposed interventions are aligned with GEF- 8 programming strategies and country and regional priorities, including how these country strategies and plans relate to the multilateral environmental agreements.

Confirm if any country policies that might contradict with intended outcomes of the project have been identified, and how the project will address this.

For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e., BD, CC or LD), please identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and explain how. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

The project is aligned with the GEF focal area strategies for Biodiversity (BD Objective 1. To improve conservation, sustainable use and restoration of natural ecosystems - *Biodiversity Mainstreaming in Priority Sectors*), Land Degradation (LDFA Objective 2 - *Reverse land degradation through landscape restoration*) and Climate Change Mitigation. Under the BD focal area, the project prioritizes the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of the Aleppo Forest's biodiversity, ensuring that its rich flora and fauna are conserved for future generations. This not only safeguards the forest's unique ecosystems but also contributes to global biodiversity conservation goals. In addressing LD, the project emphasizes sustainable land management practices and restoration efforts, aiming

to reverse the degradation trends in the Aleppo Forest area. This ensures the land's productivity is maintained, benefiting both the environment and the local communities that rely on it. Lastly, by focusing on forest conservation and restoration, the project directly contributes to CCM, by enhancing the resilience of the forest ecosystem as a carbon sink.

Alignment with international environmental agreements

The international context in which the project takes place responds to Algeria's commitments in terms of environmental protection and promotion of environmental goods and services, such as:

- Sustainable forest management in relation to the Strategic Framework of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)
- Achievement of Algeria's SDG commitments, including in terms of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) objectives (under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification);
- Implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) (whose strategic orientation C 'Promote the conservation and restoration of biodiversity in order to sustain and develop Algerian natural capital' is aligned with this project. The Algerian NBSAP also calls for the design of innovative financing mechanisms, such as Payments for Ecosystem Services that the project will pilot. Thus, the proposed project is an example of building operational synergies between Rio conventions at the country level; and
- National Climate Plan (PNC) that highlights the forest sector in the priorities for adaptation.

Algeria has signed the Agadir Commitment for Forest and Landscape Restoration. Under the umbrella of the Silva Mediterranea Committee on Mediterranean Forest Issues, the Agadir commitment is a formal contribution to the Bonn Challenge.

In addition, Algeria has been one of the pioneer countries for Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) with ambitious restoration programmes for forest and landscape restoration. The project will therefore contribute to the achievement of the national

LDN targets, including the treatment of 1.5 million hectares of forest land in watersheds by 2030. Algeria is also committed to the goals and objectives of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030).

As a co-benefit, the project contributes to meeting the country's commitments to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 7% with its own funding and by 22% with international funding (according to NDC).

In summary, the project contributes towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 13 on Climate Action and 15 on Life on Land and is a catalyst for restoration action in Algeria in the context of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. It also contributes to the goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) – in particular its targets 2, 10, 11, 19 and 23.

The project's alignment with the GBF is integral to its design and objectives. Below is a detailed explanation of how the project contributes to each of the identified GBF targets:

1. Target 2: "Ensure that at least 30 percent globally of land areas and sea areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and its contributions to people, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes."

   Contribution: The project aims to conserve and restore 76,500 hectares of the Algerian Aleppo pine forest ecosystem, integrating sustainable forest management practices over 265,534 hectares. This contributes to expanding the area under conservation, ensuring ecological representation, and enhancing connectivity within the landscape.

2. Target 10: "Ensure all areas under agriculture, aquaculture, and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity."

Contribution: The project promotes sustainable forest management (SFM) and Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) approaches, ensuring that forestry practices contribute to biodiversity conservation. It also aims to improve knowledge management and capacity-building in these areas, fostering sustainable practices in forestry.

3. Target 11: "Maintain and restore ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods, and well-being."

   Contribution: By restoring degraded forest ecosystems and implementing SFM practices, the project will enhance the provision of ecosystem services, including water regulation and soil stabilization, which are crucial for local communities' health, livelihoods, and well-being.

4. Target 19: "Ensure that people are encouraged and enabled to make responsible choices and take positive actions for biodiversity through awareness, education, and public participation."

   Contribution: The project includes components aimed at raising awareness and building capacities among local communities and stakeholders. This will empower them to participate actively in conservation efforts and make informed decisions that positively impact biodiversity.

Alignment with national policies and multistakeholders' platforms

The project also aligns with several policy frameworks, including the National Spatial Planning Plan 2030 and the 'National Forest development strategy 2035' prepared by the General Directorate of Forestry (DGF) at the end of 2016. The 2035 Forestry Strategy was developed through a participatory and bottom-up approach across geographical and decision-making levels involving stakeholders in the forest sector and the various ministerial departments concerned. 3 main orientations of the strategy include:

- Sustainable management of forest and alfa ecosystems, land conservation and restoration as part of an integrated landscape approach;
- Conservation of flora and fauna genetic resources for their sustainable use and development;
- Development and promotion of ecosystem goods and services in the context of sustainable socio-economic development.

Existing platforms for dialogue and stakeholders include those set up by the state, such as the:

- National Forestry Commission
- Intersectoral Commission for the Adoption of Anti-Erosion Development
- Operational committees of wilayas (territorial level)

Project areas are located in the area of the green dam project, these are Beni Imloul (Batna, Khenchela) and Senalbas (Djelfa). They therefore benefit from the platforms set up by the public authorities in Algeria as part of the fight against desertification and the revival of the green dam project:

- The national body to combat desertification and revive the green dam;
- An intersectoral commission appointed as the steering committee of the project;
- A technical and scientific committee; and
- Local committees at the level of all 13 wilayas in the green dam programme.

As outlined in Section A of the PIF, the project also acknowledges the existing challenges in policy coherence and intersectoral coordination. The outdated forest management plans, dating back to the 1970s and 1980s, and the lack of enabling environments for local communities and the private sector to participate in forest conservation, highlight the need for updated policies and strategies.

The project aims to address these gaps by facilitating policy dialogue, updating forest management plans, and building capacities at local levels, ensuring a more effective response to forest degradation and loss.

The Algerian government's renewed commitment to sustainable forest management, demonstrated by increased funding and support for forest programs, provides a solid foundation for the project. The Forest Law of 1984, which promotes sustainable and participatory forest practices, and the development of a strategy for Non-Wood Forest Products (NWFPs), further underscore the government's dedication to involving various stakeholders in sustainable forest value chains.

The project taps into existing platforms for dialogue and stakeholder engagement, leveraging the institutional setup provided by the state. This includes the National Forestry Commission, the Intersectoral Commission for the Adoption of Anti-Erosion Development, and operational committees at the wilaya (territorial) level. These platforms facilitate cross-sectoral coordination and ensure that the project is embedded in the national framework for forest management and biodiversity conservation.

The project is thereby not just aligned with, but is an integral part of Algeria's strategic framework for forest management and biodiversity conservation. It builds on existing policies, leverages national platforms for stakeholder engagement, and contributes to the country's broader goals of sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, and land restoration. This ensures policy coherence, intersectoral coordination, and a holistic approach to addressing the challenges of forest degradation and biodiversity loss in Algeria.

D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:

We confirm that gender dimensions relevant to the project have been addressed as per GEF Policy and are clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B).

Yes

Stakeholder Engagement

We confirm that key stakeholders were consulted during PIF development as required per GEF policy, their relevant roles to project outcomes and plan to develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan before CEO endorsement has been clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B).

Yes

Were the following stakeholders consulted during project identification phase:

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities: Yes

Civil Society Organizations: Yes

Private Sector: Yes

Provide a brief summary and list of names and dates of consultations

A wide range of stakeholders have already been consulted in the lead up to and during PIF development as listed below Further consultations will take place during the PPG phase, and a stakeholder mapping exercise will be conducted, specific roles and responsibilities of all key stakeholders will be defined in a Stakeholder Engagement Plan to be elaborated before CEO endorsement.

The proposed project will adopt an integrated multi-stakeholder approach that will mobilize a diversity of key public and private sector stakeholders. While the forest and environment sectors will be in the leading seat, several other key sectors, such as water, agriculture, economy and trade, etc., will play an active role both at national and local levels. Stakeholders at the wilaya level and local communities will be at the frontline of the project implementation and will thus directly benefit from restoration efforts. The incentive mechanisms designed, such as the foreseen Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) approach, will also contribute to

reinforcing community-level engagement. Mobilization of key local community actors will help to create the momentum needed for proactive and inclusive implementation.

Use and reinforcement of the existing cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder platforms will facilitate policy dialogue and will serve to mobilize various sectors in the project implementation, both at national and local levels. The past and ongoing efforts of cross-sectoral cooperation in the framework of the nation-wide green dam project will be a solid basis for cross-sectoral collaboration among key sectors. Several consultations took place as part of the preparation of this PIF, including:

1) **Field mission** in the project area, from December 28 to 30, 2021, with meetings of local stakeholders, including:

- Local authorities
- Local forest conservations
    - Local rural development groups
    - Local forest companies (wood and non-wood forest products)
    - Local production units (wood and non-wood forest products)
    - Private enterprises

2) A national workshop held in Bouchaoui, Algeria, from July 17 to 21, 2022 (organized with UNFF support), enabled key discussions on the project idea. In person participants included 40+ participants from the following institutions/organizations:

- General Directorate for Forestry (DGF)
- Directorate of Studies in charge of International Cooperation (DECCI-DGF)
- Directorate of forest and alpha ecosystem management (DGF)
- Directorate of Studies in charge of information, regulation and litigation (DGF)
- Directorate for the Protection of Fauna and Flora (DGF)
- Directorate for the Fight against Desertification and the Green Dam Project (DGF)
- Directorate of Land Restoration and Reforestation (DGF)
- Planning and Information Systems Directorate (DGF)
- Conservation of BATNA Forests
- Conservation of KHENCHELA Forests
- National Bureau of Studies for Rural Development (BNEDER)
- Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy
- Ministry of Water Resources and Water Security (Department of Studies)
- Ministry of Finance - Budget General Directorate
- Ministry of Finance - Directorate General of the National Domain
- Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts

- AREAED (Association)
- Rural engineering company (x2)
- GEF Focal Point (Global Environment Facility)
- Adaptation Fund Focal Point
- Green Climate Fund Focal Point
- FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization)
- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)
- United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

3) **Online participants** included the management and technicians of 58 conservation of forests of wilayas; 8 national parks; 3 hunting centres and 4 game reserves.

A **national consultation workshop** in Bouchaoui, Algeria, on December 5, 2022 (organized with UNFF support) with partner sectors and the main international institutions present in Algeria (FAO, UNDP, WWF, UNESCO, WFP, AFDB). This meeting provided an opportunity to learn about the priorities of the forest sector aligned with the objectives of the United Nations 2030 Agenda. The national vision for the forest sector has been consolidated and the Aleppo pine forest ecosystem has been selected as a priority landscape for support.

(Please upload to the portal documents tab any stakeholder engagement plan or assessments that have been done during the PIF development phase.)

Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

And if so, has its role been described and justified in the section B project description?

Yes

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

We confirm that we have provided indicative information regarding Environmental and Social risks associated with the proposed project or program and any measures to address such risks and impacts (this information should be presented in Annex D).

Yes

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Medium/Moderate			

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge management

We confirm that an approach to Knowledge Management and Learning has been clearly described in the Project Description (Section B)

Yes

ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

Indicative Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	GEF Project Grant($)	Agency Fee($)	Total GEF Financing ($)
UNDP	GET	Algeria	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	Grant	1,319,863.00	125,387.00	1,445,250.00
UNDP	GET	Algeria	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation: CCM-1-4	Grant	680,594.00	64,656.00	745,250.00
UNDP	GET	Algeria	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-2	Grant	1,502,511.00	142,739.00	1,645,250.00
Total GEF Resources ($)						**3,502,968.00**	**332,782.00**	**3,835,750.00**

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Is Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount ($)

150000

PPG Agency Fee ($)

14250

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	PPG($)	Agency Fee($)	Total PPG Funding($)
UNDP	GET	Algeria	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	Grant	50,000.00	4,750.00	54,750.00
UNDP	GET	Algeria	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation: CCM-1-4	Grant	50,000.00	4,750.00	54,750.00

UNDP	GET	Algeria	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-2	Grant	50,000.00	4,750.00	54,750.00
Total PPG Amount ($)						**150,000.00**	**14,250.00**	**164,250.00**

Please provide justification

Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Sources of Funds	Total($)
UNDP	GET	Algeria	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	1,500,000.00
UNDP	GET	Algeria	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation	800,000.00
UNDP	GET	Algeria	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	1,700,000.00
Total GEF Resources					**4,000,000.00**

Indicative Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Co-financing($)
BD-1-3	GET	660,930.00	5100000
BD-1-4	GET	658,933.00	5100000
CCM-1-4	GET	680,594.00	4800000
LD-2	GET	1,502,511.00	9000000
Total Project Cost		**3,502,968.00**	**24,000,000.00**

Indicative Co-financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount($)
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	7200000
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	16800000
Total Co-financing				**24,000,000.00**

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

The Government of Algeria, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, will avail resources of the government environmental conservation project amounting up to USD 24,000,000 in support of the implementation of the GEF funded project “Restoration and sustainable forest management of the Algerian Aleppo pine forest ecosystem”. These parallel resources will be delivered directly though the Ministry in the states in support of forest management and conservation. This mobilization of public investment is an important strategy for Algeria government to promote economic growth, create jobs, and improve the living standards of Algerians. It is intended to address social and environmental challenges by financing projects in areas of watershed conservation, restoration of the ecosystems and land rehabilitation in Aleppo Pine project area.

The government support will be in the form of availing logistical support, engaging technical staff and experts in relevant surveys, assessments and technical coordination of related interventions of the project. The support includes using of physical assets and infrastructure to undertake ecosystem restoration and land rehabilitation activities.

Information regarding related investments that the project can build on and articulate with is detailed in Section A. The project is strategically positioned to leverage and contribute to ongoing and past investments by the Algerian government and other stakeholders in addressing land degradation, desertification, and biodiversity loss.

The following table represents the development programs carried out in parallel by the Algerian Government in the project area.

-National Programme on the three project sites through the National Fund for Rural Development

and the Sectoral Development Plan (2020-25)
USD55,295

-National forestry inventory and National Programme for Forest Development (2021-24)

USD 3,639,750

-Watershed Restoration Programme

(development of mountain areas and combat against land degradation and desertification 2020-23)

USD 19,072, 292

-Actions targeting the Great Green Dam (Barrage Vert)

USD 950,000

-In-kind contribution of the DGF

290,000

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

GEF Agency(ies) Certification

GEF Agency Type	Name	Date	Project Contact Person	Phone	Email
GEF Agency Coordinator	Pradeep Kurukulasuriya	4/12/2023			pradeep.kurukulasuriya@undp.org
Project Coordinator	Adel AbdelKader	4/12/2023			adel.abdelkader@undp.org

Record of Endorsement of GEF Operational Focal Point (s) on Behalf of the Government(s):

Name	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
Karim Baba	Director of Urban Environmental Policy	Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy	12/4/2023

ANNEX C: PROJECT LOCATION

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place

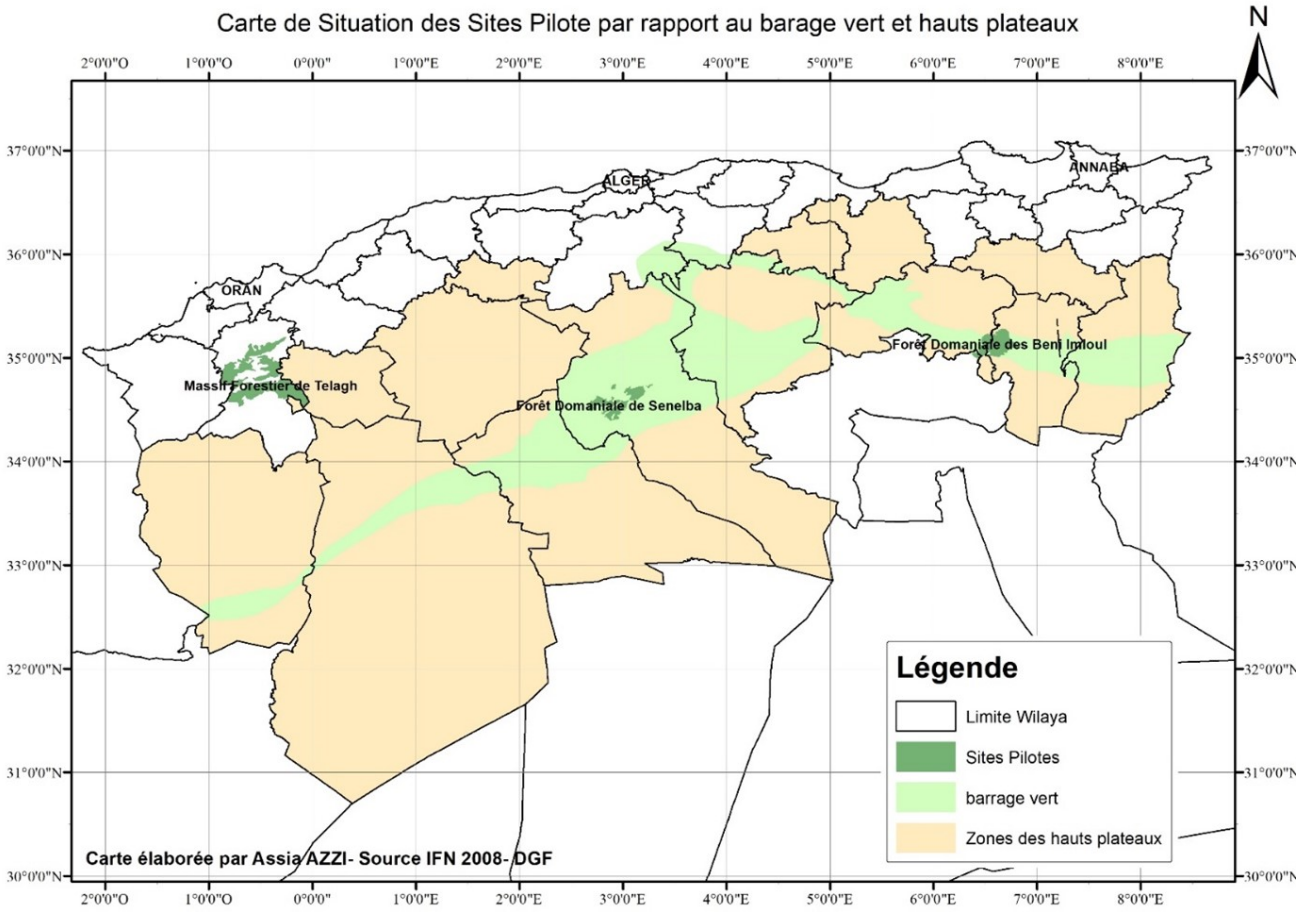
The Aleppo pine forests are divided into three geographical zones, each of which hosts one of the project's implementation sites:

- The East Zone - the Aurès, Hodna and Bibans: for the implementation site of the Beni Imloul national forest (69,064 ha).
- The Central Zone at the level of the central steppe with the Ouled Nails mountains: for the implementation site of Senalba (63,267 ha).
- The Northwest Zone concerning the Telagh forest, the Saida and Frenda Mountains, contains a significant block of Aleppo pine forests (209,703 ha).

The cumulative area of implementation sites thus represents 342,034 ha in total, out of which 76,500 ha will be restored.

Selected project areas were proposed and selected considering their geographical location in relation to the seven (7) ecological zones of Algeria, three of which are project sites: Beni Imloul for the Monts des Aurès in the East, Senalbas for the central steppe and the Telague for the Western Tell. The project site selection is also based on the inventory results of 1984 and 2008, which will be consolidated by the current inventory whose completion is scheduled for 2024. The latter, conducted by the national rural development consulting enterprise 'BNEDER' will result in a national forest development plan for all forest areas, which will include new dispositions for the implementation of more sustainable practices potentially supporting the initiatives implemented as part of this project. The proposed GEF project will provide critical support to these national planning priorities.

Figure 1: Repartition area of the Aleppo Pine ecosystem, and projects' sites (source: DGF)



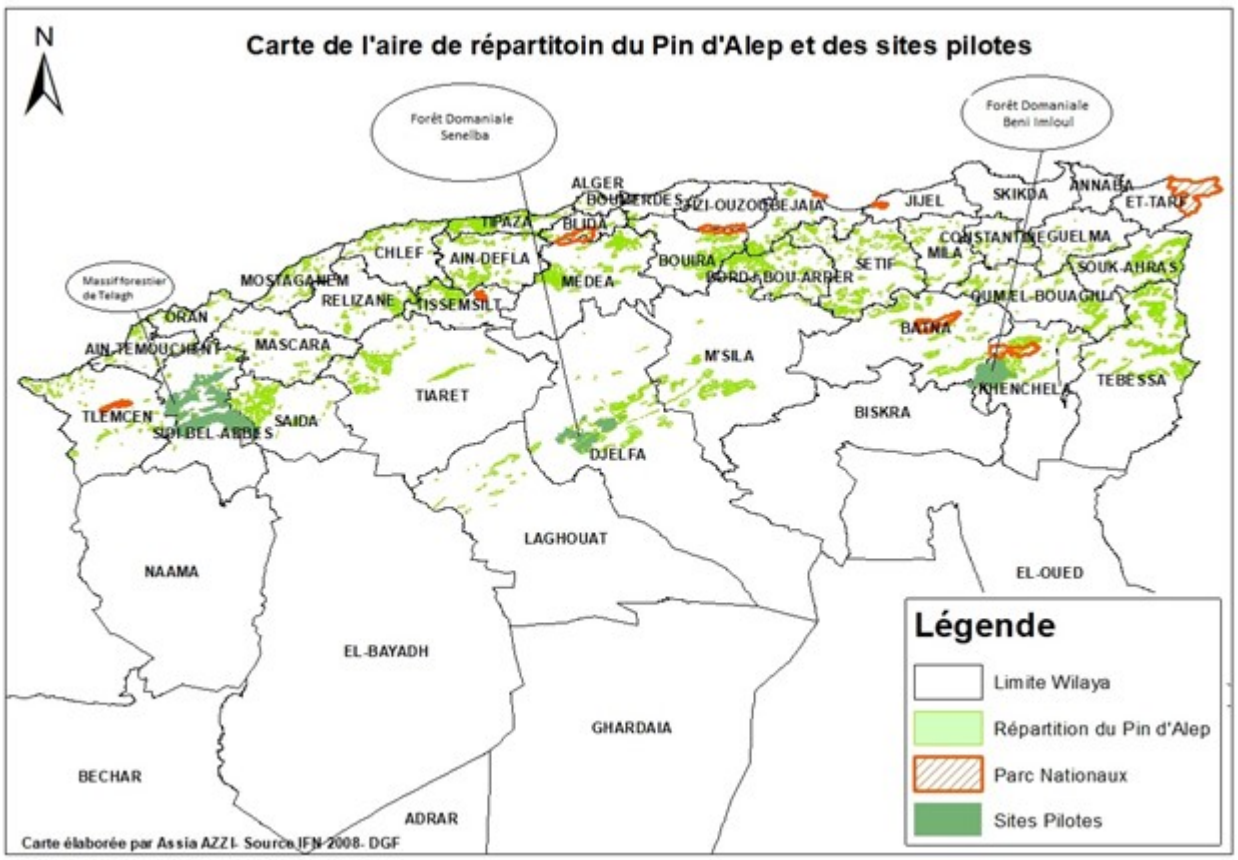
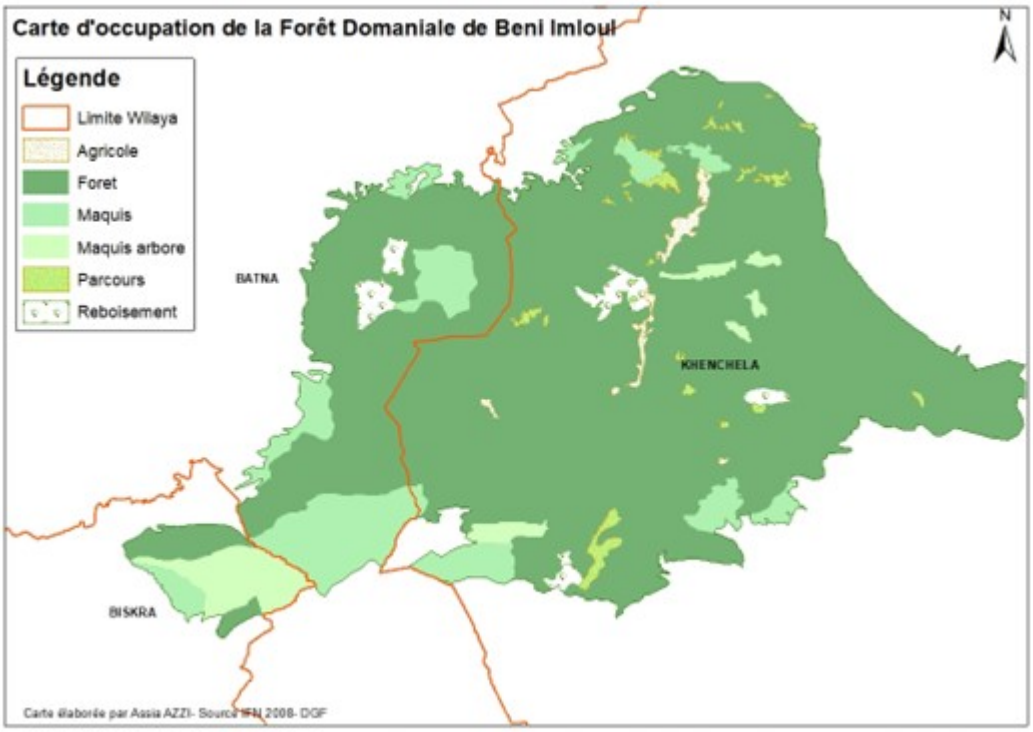
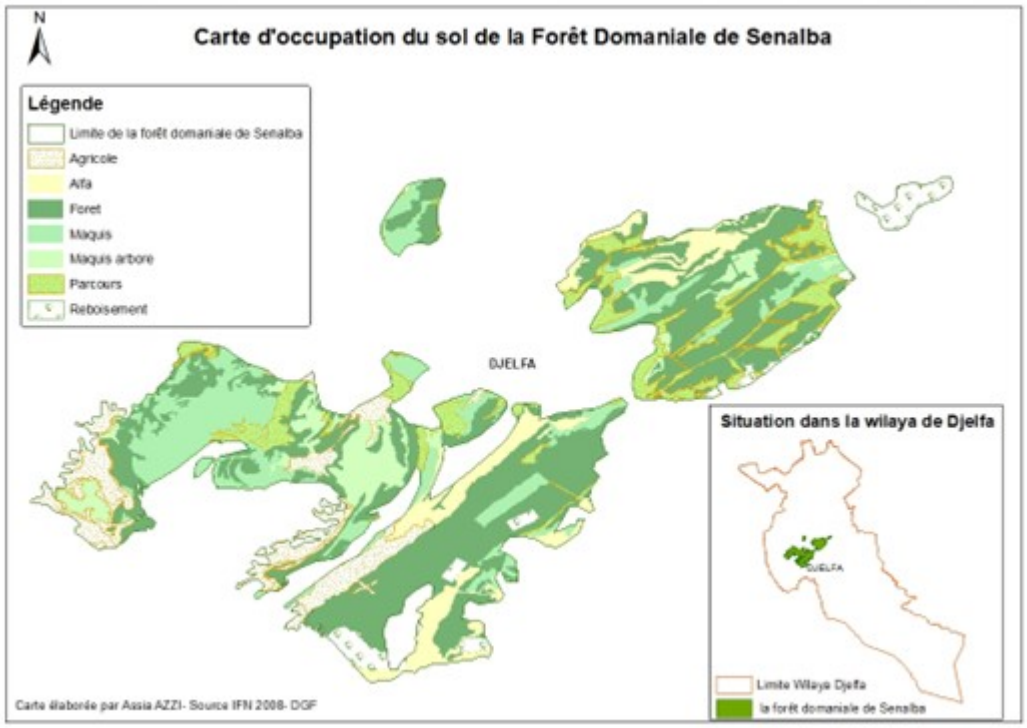


Figure 2: Map of the Beni Imloul forest (69,064 ha), 35°01'05'N 6°30'00'W; 35°10'08'N 6°50'02'W



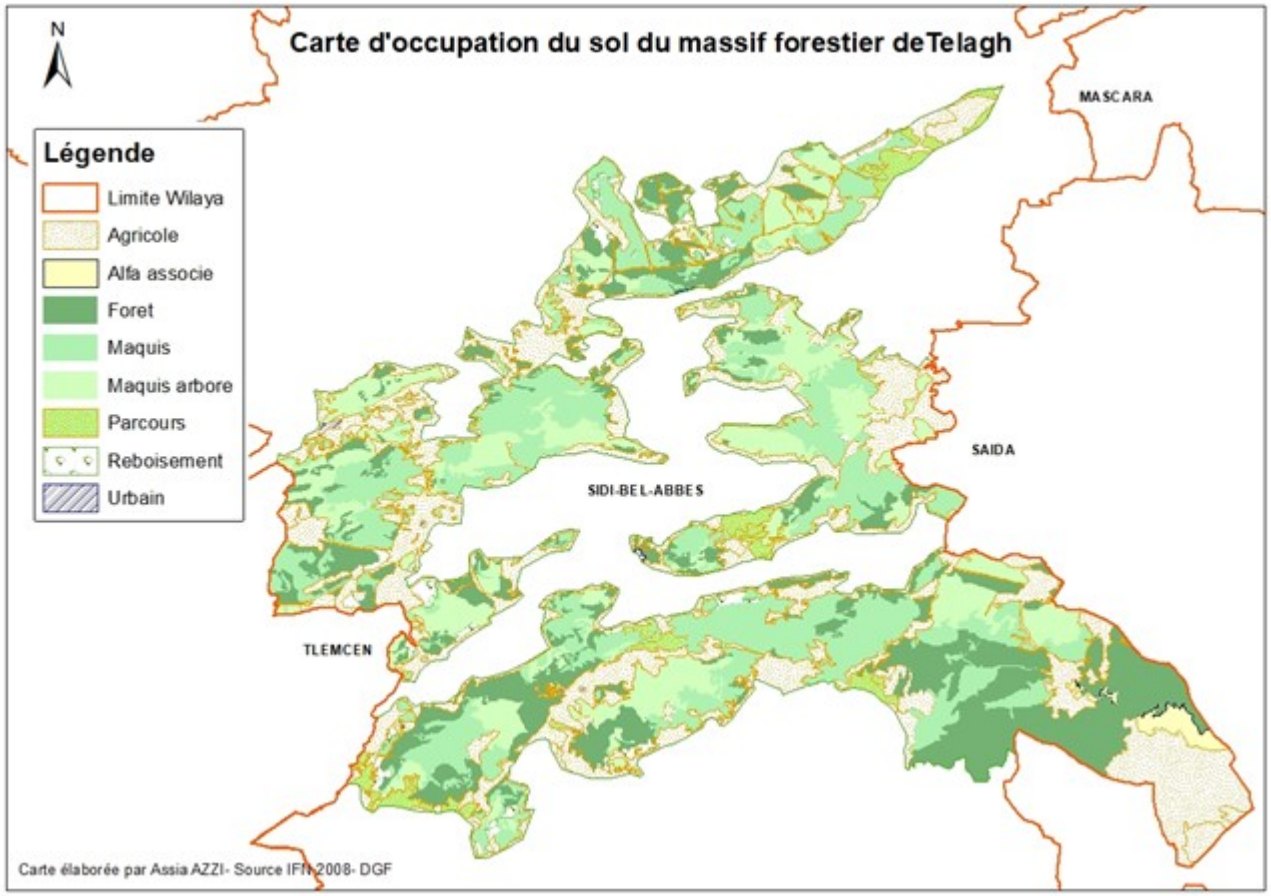
Source: DGF, 2023.

Figure 3: Map of the Senalba forest (63,267 ha). 34°38'20'N 2°65'02'W; 34°73'20'N 3°21'32'W



Source: DGF, 2023.

Figure 4: Map of the Telagh forest (209,703 ha), 35°02'20'N 0°31'57'W; 34°43'24'N 0°29'32'W (source: DGF)



Source: DGF, 2023.

ANNEX D: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING

(PIF level) Attach agency safeguard screen form including rating of risk types and overall risk rating.

Title
ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING Annex D PIMS_6379 Algeria pre-SESP

ANNEX E: RIO MARKERS

Climate Change Mitigation	Climate Change Adaptation	Biodiversity	Land Degradation
Significant Objective 1	Principal Objective 2	Principal Objective 2	Principal Objective 2

ANNEX F: TAXONOMY WORKSHEET

Only relevant taxonomy tags appear in the below table. Full Taxonomy table can be found as Annex F of the PIF document uploaded to the Portal Roadmap.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Influencing models			
	Transform policy and regulatory environments		
	Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making		
	Demonstrate innovative approaches		
Stakeholders			
	Indigenous Peoples		
	Private Sector		
		Capital providers	
		SMEs	
		Individuals/Entrepreneurs	
	Beneficiaries		
	Local Communities		
	Civil Society		
		Community Based Organization	
		Non-Governmental Organization	
		Academia	
	Type of Engagement		
		Information Dissemination	
		Partnership	
		Consultation	
		Participation	
	Communications		
		Awareness Raising	
		Behaviour Change	
Capacity, Knowledge and Research			
	Capacity Development		
	Innovation		
	Knowledge and Learning		
		Knowledge Management	
		Capacity Development	
	Stakeholder Engagement Plan		
Gender Equality			
	Gender Mainstreaming		
		Beneficiaries	
		Women groups	
		Sex-disaggregated indicators	
	Gender results areas		
		Access and control over natural resources	
		Participation and leadership	
		Access to benefits and services	
		Capacity development	
		Awareness raising	
		Knowledge generation	
Focal Areas/Theme			
	Biodiversity		
		Protected Areas and Landscapes	
			Community Based Natural Resource Management
	Forests		
		Forest and Landscape Restoration	
			Drylands
	Land Degradation		

		Sustainable Land Management	
			Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands
			Ecosystem Approach
			Community-Based NRM
			Sustainable Livelihoods
			Income Generating Activities
			Sustainable Forest/Woodland Management
			Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques
			Sustainable Fire Management
		Land Degradation Neutrality	
			Land Productivity
			Land Cover and Land cover change
		Food Security	
	Climate Change		
		Climate Change Adaptation	
			Climate Resilience
			Ecosystem-based Adaptation
			Community-based Adaptation
			Livelihoods
		Climate Change Mitigation	
			Agriculture, Forestry, and other Land Use
Rio Markers			
	Sustainable Development Goals		
	Climate Change Mitigation 1		
	Climate Change Adaptation 2		