



## **Strengthening Conservation and Resilience of Globally-significant Wild Cat Landscapes through a Focus on Small Cat and Leopard Conservation**

### **Part I: Project Information**

#### **Name of Parent Program**

**Global Wildlife Program**

#### **GEF ID**

**10235**

#### **Project Type**

FSP

#### **Type of Trust Fund**

GET

#### **CBIT/NGI**

☐ CBIT

☐ NGI

#### **Project Title**

Strengthening Conservation and Resilience of Globally-significant Wild Cat Landscapes through a Focus on Small Cat and Leopard Conservation

#### **Countries**

India

#### **Agency(ies)**

UNDP, WWF-US

#### **Other Executing Partner(s)**

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

#### **Executing Partner Type**

Government

#### **GEF Focal Area**

Biodiversity

**Taxonomy**

Focal Areas, Biodiversity, Influencing models, Stakeholders, Gender Equality, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Mainstreaming, Tourism, Agriculture and agrobiodiversity, Forestry - Including HC VF and REDD+, Financial and Accounting, Conservation Finance, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Productive Seascapes, Community Based Natural Resource Mngt, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Species, Wildlife for Sustainable Development, Threatened Species, Invasive Alien Species, Illegal Wildlife Trade, Biomes, Grasslands, Rivers, Wetlands, Tropical Dry Forests, Tropical Rain Forests, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Demonstrate innovative approach, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Deploy innovative financial instruments, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances, Communications, Education, Public Campaigns, Awareness Raising, Civil Society, Academia, Community Based Organization, Non-Governmental Organization, Indigenous Peoples, Type of Engagement, Participation, Consultation, Information Dissemination, Partnership, Private Sector, Large corporations, SMEs, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Local Communities, Beneficiaries, Gender results areas, Capacity Development, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Participation and leadership, Access to benefits and services, Gender Mainstreaming, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Women groups, Gender-sensitive indicators, Knowledge Exchange, Innovation, Targeted Research, Learning, Theory of change, Indicators to measure change, Adaptive management, Knowledge Generation

**Rio Markers**

**Climate Change Mitigation**

Climate Change Mitigation 1

**Climate Change Adaptation**

Climate Change Adaptation 1

**Submission Date**

12/11/2020

**Expected Implementation Start**

7/1/2021

**Expected Completion Date**

7/31/2027

**Duration**

12In Months

**Agency Fee(\$)**

405,000.00

**A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS**

<b>Objectives/Programs</b>	<b>Focal Area Outcomes</b>	<b>Trust Fund</b>	<b>GEF Amount(\$)</b>	<b>Co-Fin Amount(\$)</b>
BD-1-2a	Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes through global wildlife program to prevent extinction of known threatened species	GET	2,500,000.00	27,922,866.00
BD-2-7	Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and Improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate	GET	2,000,000.00	27,903,867.00
<b>Total Project Cost(\$)</b>			<b>4,500,000.00</b>	<b>55,826,733.00</b>

**B. Project description summary**

**Project Objective**

Secure populations and habitats of wild cats subject to habitat encroachment, human-wildlife conflict, poaching and illegal trade in priority landscapes of northern, north-eastern and western India

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$ )	Confirmed Co- Financing(\$ )
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Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
1. Enabling policy and institutional framework for wild cat conservation at landscape level	Technical Assistance	<p>Strengthened policy, planning and institutional framework for wild cat conservation at landscape level in accordance with the National Wildlife Action Plan 2017-2031, as indicated by:</p> <p>-Landscape conservation master plans for Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest Landscapes adopted by the respective State Governments and implementation supported by State Government plans and budgets and multi-sector partnerships;</p> <p>-Tiger Conservation Plans within project landscapes revised to incorporate specific requirements for small wild cat conservation, based on project landscape master plans, Species Recovery Action Plans, SoPs and site specific guidelines;</p> <p>-Improved institutional capacity of relevant State and District agencies for landscape conservation incorporating wild cat needs, as measured by</p>	<p>1.1 Landscape-level master plans for wild cat conservation developed and institutionalized into government plans and programs</p> <p>1.2 National level Species Recovery Action Plans developed and implemented for Caracal, Fishing Cat and Clouded Leopard informed by a national database and atlas on wild cats</p> <p>1.3 Protocol and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for small cat and leopard conservation developed and institutionalized in State and District Forest Departments</p> <p>1.4 Site-specific guidelines on small cat (plus leopard) conservation integrated into revised big cat conservation strategies and management plans of tiger</p>	GET	881,000.00	11,000,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
2. Strengthened management and protection of wild cat landscapes	Investment	<p>Improved protection and management of wild cats and habitats in target PAs, corridors and buffer zones in wild cat landscapes, as indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved management for conservation and sustainable use as measured by METT for Dudhwa Tiger Reserve (220,177 ha); Pakke Tiger Reserve (137,695 ha), Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary (21,700 ha) and Sessa Orchid Sanctuary (10,000 ha);</li> <li>-Targeted reduction in threats to wild cat populations and their habitat and prey, as measured by patrol reporting/MSTRIP ES (at least 20% reduction over baseline);</li> <li>-Improved frontline capacity for conservation and management of small wild cats and their habitats, as measured by Small Cats Capacity Development Scorecard</li> </ul>	<p>2.1 Targeted interventions to improve wild cat habitat and prey management demonstrated at project landscapes</p> <p>2.2 Frontline staff capacitated and equipped to conduct monitoring, surveillance and enforcement.</p>	GET	802,200.00	11,000,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
3. Community stewardship and human-wildlife coexistence in wild cat landscapes	Investment	<p>Enhanced community-based management of wild cats and habitats, with threat reduction including HWC and improved local livelihoods as measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-At least 100,000 ha of project landscapes (excluding PAs) under improved practices, including: sustainable grazing management; improved arable cropping practices (eg reduced chemical use); community-based natural resource management, etc.;</li> <li>-At least 20 villages actively monitoring small wild cat species and their habitats in support of community-based conservation efforts;</li> <li>-Targeted reduction of locally-specific threats related to community-based management of natural resources in project landscapes, including:</li> </ul> <p>A. Dudhwa Landscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) 20% reduction in quantity of firewood collected by targeted</li> </ul>	<p>3.1 Capacity developed for community-based management of wild cats and habitats</p> <p>3.2 Awareness-raising and education programmes for local communities on wild cat conservation and habitat management including documentation of related traditional knowledge</p> <p>3.3 Participatory community monitoring of wild cat populations and HWC operationalized through village-level institutions</p> <p>3.4 Local livelihood options diversified to encourage reduced pressures on wild cat habitats</p> <p>3.5 Targeted interventions in HWC hotspots to implement mechanisms for the prevention and</p>	GET	1,655,000.00	20,135,397.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
4. Partnerships, knowledge management and M&E	Technical Assistance	<p>Effective partnerships, communications, knowledge management and M&amp;E for wild cat conservation, as indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-National-level green business platform operational with TOR, membership of at least 20 corporate bodies, and actively investing through at least one partnership activity in each project landscape;</li> <li>Improved understanding of values of wild cats and more positive attitudes towards small wild cat conservation among target audiences including national and state government line agencies (Forest and Wildlife, Environment, Agriculture, Revenue, Rural Development, etc) and concerned NGOs, as measured by KAP (Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices) scores;</li> <li>-At least 20 PAs and institutions sharing knowledge on small wild cat conservation annually through regional knowledge</li> </ul>	<p>4.1 National-level Green Business platform developed for enhancing corporate sector engagement for community-based wildlife conservation</p> <p>4.2 Awareness raised for wild cat conservation at national and sub-national levels through communications strategy and action plan implementation</p> <p>4.3. Transboundary joint action and collaboration on wild cat conservation</p> <p>4.4 Knowledge management coordinated between landscapes, across India, neighbouring countries and with the Global Wildlife Program, including sharing of best practices and lessons learned</p>	GET	947,800.00	11,000,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
Sub Total (\$)					4,286,000.00	53,135,397.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)						
GET			214,000.00		2,691,336.00	
Sub Total(\$)			214,000.00		2,691,336.00	
Total Project Cost(\$)			4,500,000.00		55,826,733.00	

**C. Sources of Co-financing for the Project by name and by type**

<b>Sources of Co-financing</b>	<b>Name of Co-financier</b>	<b>Type of Co-financing</b>	<b>Investment Mobilized</b>	<b>Amount(\$)</b>
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	400,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	20,363,591.00
Recipient Country Government	State Government of Arunachal Pradesh (relevant Departments)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	5,440,487.00
Recipient Country Government	State Government of Arunachal Pradesh (relevant Departments)	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	327,166.00
Recipient Country Government	State Government of Uttar Pradesh (relevant Departments)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	17,467,840.00
Recipient Country Government	State Government of Uttar Pradesh (relevant Departments)	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	9,933,649.00
Civil Society Organization	Global Tiger Forum	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	120,250.00
Civil Society Organization	Global Tiger Forum	Grant	Investment mobilized	310,750.00
Civil Society Organization	WWF India	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	90,000.00
Civil Society Organization	WWF India	Grant	Investment mobilized	270,000.00
GEF Agency	UNDP	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	250,000.00
GEF Agency	UNDP	Grant	Investment mobilized	550,000.00

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
GEF Agency	WWF-US	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	303,000.00
<b>Total Co-Financing(\$)</b>				<b>55,826,733.00</b>

**Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified**

The portion of Government of India co-financing that is Investment Mobilized represents anticipated additional budgetary provisions to the MoEFCC for the implementation of the National Wildlife Action Plan (through the Wildlife Division) and tiger conservation (through NTCA), and for State Governments, investment via centrally-sponsored schemes for wildlife management. For co-financing from other partners, definitions have been applied conservatively. The term Recurrent Expenditure has been used to reflect existing aligned efforts/activities that are expected to continue during the project implementation timeframe. The term Investment Mobilized has been used to reflect potential increased efforts and investment that will be leveraged alongside the GEF grant: for GTF this covers support towards landscape management planning, preparation of SOPs, facilitation towards private sector engagement, and capacity building elements as envisaged in the project; for WWF India this covers investment in Terai Arc Landscape Conservation Programme and Western India Tiger Landscape Conservation Programme; and for UNDP this covers activities that contribute towards policy review and analysis, establishment of the Wildlife Business Council, effective monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management. The amounts and types of cofinancing have been confirmed in the cofinancing letters provided by each source.

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

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Trust Fund</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Focal Area</b>	<b>Programming of Funds</b>	<b>Amount(\$)</b>	<b>Fee(\$)</b>
UNDP	GET	India	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	1,975,000	177,750
WWF-US	GET	India	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	2,525,000	227,250
<b>Total Grant Resources(\$)</b>					<b>4,500,000.00</b>	<b>405,000.00</b>

**E. Non Grant Instrument**

NON-GRANT INSTRUMENT at CEO Endorsement

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Includes Non grant instruments? **No**

Includes reflow to GEF? **No**

**F. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)**

PPG Required

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**PPG Amount (\$)**

150,000

**PPG Agency Fee (\$)**

13,500

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programmin g of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)
UNDP	GET	India	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	150,000	13,500
Total Project Costs(\$)					150,000.00	13,500.00

Please provide justification

NIL

## Core Indicators

**Indicator 1 Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use**

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
0.00	389,572.00	0.00	0.00

**Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created**

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protected Area	WDP A ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
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**Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial Protected Areas Under improved Management effectiveness**

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
0.00	389,572.00	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protected Area	WDP A ID	IUCN Category	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
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Name of the Protected Area	W DP A ID	IUC N Category	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
<b>Akula National Park</b> Dudhwa Tiger Reserve	<b>125689</b> 691	<b>Select</b>		220,177.00			41.00		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Akula National Park</b> Eagle nest Wildlife Sanctuary	<b>125689</b> 62666	<b>Select</b>		21,700.00			54.00		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Akula National Park</b> Pakke Tiger Reserve	<b>125689</b> 4530	<b>Select</b>		137,695.00			52.00		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Akula National Park</b> Sessa Orchid Sanctuary	<b>125689</b> 62670	<b>Select</b>		10,000.00			55.00		<input type="checkbox"/>

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)
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Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
0.00	100000.00	0.00	0.00

**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)
	100,000.00		

**Indicator 4.2** Area of landscapes that meets national or international third party certification that incorporates biodiversity considerations (hectares)

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)

**Indicator 4.4** Area of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) loss avoided

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

**Documents (Please upload document(s) that justifies the HCVF)**

Title	Submitted
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**Indicator 11** Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
<b>Female</b>		3,690		
<b>Male</b>		2,610		
<b>Total</b>	0	6300	0	0

Provide additional explanation on targets, other methodologies used, and other focal area specifics (i.e., Aichi targets in BD) including justification where core indicator targets are not provided

Core Indicator 1: Terrestrial PAs under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (389,572 ha in total) as measured by METT (see Prodoc Annex 10) : a) Dudhwa Tiger Reserve (220,177 ha) ? Baseline METT of 41, target of 81 b) Pakke Tiger Reserve (137,695 ha) - Baseline METT of 52, target of 81 c) Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary (21,700 ha) - Baseline METT of 54, target of 81 d) Sessa Orchid Sanctuary (10,000 ha) ? Baseline METT of 55, target of 82. Core Indicator 4: 100,000 ha in project landscapes outside PA Core Areas under improved practices, including: sustainable grazing management, improved arable cropping practices (eg reduced chemical use), community-based natural resource management and engagement in habitat management, agroforestry, NTFP/medicinal plant production, ecotourism development, HWC mitigation such as solar fencing and non-wildlife attracting crops, etc. The sustainability of these interventions would be supported by the proposed landscape conservation master plans for Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest Landscapes for adoption by the respective State Governments and implementation supported by State Government plans and budgets and multi-sector partnerships. The target of 200,000 ha in the project concept referred to four landscapes at that early stage of project design. In view of the reduction in scale to two landscapes, and strong feasibility considerations regarding the budget available, this target has been scaled back proportionately to 100,000 ha. This shift in scope responds to feedback from GEF Secretariat at project concept stage that strongly emphasized reducing the target area of the project significantly so that financial resources can be concentrated with a higher USD/area ratio. UNDP, WWF and the PPG team strongly agreed with this assessment and considered the inclusion of four demonstration landscapes covering some 720,949 ha of terrestrial PAs and landscape areas under improved practices in the approved Project Concept to be unrealistic for the GEF budget and cofinancing available. Consequently, the final project design now focuses on two project landscapes (Dudhwa in Uttar Pradesh, and Pakke-Eaglenest complex in Arunachal Pradesh), covering some 389,572 ha of PAs and 100,000 ha of improved practices outside PAs, plus limited intervention in a third landscape (Ranthambhore in Rajasthan) that is of value to aridland cats. The proposed Gir landscape included at concept note stage has been dropped due to implementation costs and challenges with including a large, remote western site, along with consideration of its limited significance for small cat conservation with only two species present, both not globally threatened. Core Indicator 11: The number of direct project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender will consist of: a) Targeted communities in the demonstration landscapes: 6,000 individuals (60% women, through proactive support); b) State and local government and PA staff receiving training: 300 individuals (minimum of 30% women) The 300 government trainees have been added since project concept stage.

## Part II. Project Justification

### 1a. Project Description

**1a. *Project Description.*** Elaborate on:

1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description); 2) the baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects; 3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project; 4) alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies; 5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing; 6) global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF); and 7) innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up. ?

#### ***1) the global environmental problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed***

Changes in the global environmental problems, root causes and barriers to be addressed by the project since project concept approval first and foremost concern the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic that occurred in the latter part of the PPG phase. The potential impacts of the pandemic on project implementation are diverse, including financial and operational risks (see Risks section), and potential direct impacts on the project landscapes such as a slowdown or cessation of tourism visitation in the short to medium term, rural economic hardship driving habitat encroachment, poaching and wildlife trade, and restrictions on movement and assembly affecting baseline and project conservation actions. It needs to be recognized that COVID-19 impacts are diverse and very dynamic, therefore constant monitoring, review and adaptation will be required throughout implementation and in particular will need to be reassessed during the project inception phase before field activities commence.

In addition, the selection of project demonstration landscapes was extensively reviewed with the aid of a set of objective criteria and discussed among the project partners, with the result that Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape in Arunachal Pradesh was added in view of its outstanding significance for diverse tropical forest cat species; Dudhwa Landscape in Uttar Pradesh was maintained; and Ranthambhore Landscape in Rajasthan has been scaled back to very limited intervention only, based on prioritization and selection criteria for small wild cat conservation. Ranthambhore already has a lot of work ongoing, so the project will engage only on certain outputs in Components 1 and 4 in this landscape that will help to promote Caracal conservation, in particular. Overall, trends of local population growth and economic development have continued in the selected landscapes, exerting pressure on their forests, grasslands

and wetlands. Significant additional information was obtained on the distribution and intensity of threats to biodiversity across the three selected landscapes, which has been elaborated in Project Document section I (Development Challenge - see **Table 2**). Gir NP in Gujarat scored lowest of the landscapes reviewed in terms of criteria including its conservation significance for small cats (two species, not globally threatened), other globally significant biodiversity, prevalent threats, potential for community engagement, feasibility of achieving conservation gains, etc.

**The key threats** impacting wild cats and their landscapes are: hunting, poaching and illegal wildlife trade (IWT), human-wildlife conflict (HWC), free-ranging dog presence, unsustainable grazing and use of fuelwood and NTFPs, unsustainable logging and forest encroachment, degradation of wetland and riparian habitats, unsustainable use of wastelands and ravine in-filling, stone, sand and gravel mining, invasive alien species, infrastructure development, road kills and climate change impacts.

**The root causes and drivers of these threats** vary with the context of each project landscape. **In Dudhwa**, little natural habitat remains outside the protected areas, therefore working with farming communities is necessary. Human population density is increasing in the relatively intensive agricultural areas, which exerts increasing pressures on the water, forest and grassland resources and intensifies human-wildlife conflict. Its location on the porous Indo-Nepalese border increases the prevalence of poaching and IWT. **In Ranthambhore**, the conversion of ravines continues at a rapid pace, unhindered by enforcement as they are classified as Wasteland areas. Most of the villages and residents of urban areas are dependent on forests for fuelwood and fodder for animals. Most of the area (especially the focal areas in Karauli) are backward by national standards[1]<sup>1</sup>. Poverty and lack of alternatives leaves people with little option apart from depending on forest resources, therefore sustainable land management is a priority. **In Pakke-Eaglenest**, the dependence of indigenous communities on forests is high, both by tradition and necessity. The local communities are also the dominant forest land holders. Although hunting traditions are strong, and demand for certain species in illegal wildlife trade (eg bear gall bladders) is significant, the landscape still maintains a high diversity of wildlife and some communities are involved in conservation. Since timber cannot be commercially harvested, forest-based livelihood options are crucial for maintaining the value of community forests. Collection and marketing of NTFP, MAP, ecotourism, etc. are important in the local economy. Support and partnerships with local and national NGOs/key individuals are critical for successful conservation. Arunachal Pradesh depends to a large extent on financial assistance provided by the central government through Centrally Sponsored Schemes. Thus various central ministries also have an important role in shaping the sustainable future of the state and in the landscape such as the Ministry of Development of North-East Region.

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Baseline assessments all took place prior to COVID-19 and were curtailed due to strict, prolonged government lockdown in the second quarter of 2020. As per an ILO study, 'The COVID-19 crisis has the potential to push around 400 million informal sector workers in India deeper into poverty, with the lockdown and other containment measures affecting jobs and earnings'. The effects of the pandemic on the rural economy have been severe. Accordingly, the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to impact various aspects of project implementation, including financial and operational risks (see Risks section), and potential direct impacts on the project landscapes such as a slowdown or cessation of tourism visitation, rural economic hardship driving habitat encroachment, poaching and wildlife trade, and restrictions on movement and assembly affecting baseline and project conservation actions. Agriculture based livelihoods were specially supported during the peak lockdown period to ensure food supply, which was crucial for communities in the project landscapes, since the majority of the population is agrarian. Tourism was banned during the lockdown period, thus, the local economy that depended on ecotourism across project landscapes may have suffered to an extent, though most of the tiger reserves are closed during the rainy season every year (which included some period of the lockdown). The peak tourism across Ranthambore and Dudhwa occurs during pre-winter and winter months, and the ongoing 'unlock' measures are bringing this sector back on track (as of November 2020). These links to barriers and drivers impacting the targeted landscapes and species will be reviewed during the project inception phase and addressed through adaptive management as far as possible, in view of the highly dynamic and unpredictable nature of the pandemic's distribution and impacts.

**Project conceptual model:** The diversity of direct and indirect factors that threaten globally significant small wild cat landscapes in India is shown in **Figure 1**. This indicates the relationships between direct threats and various underlying factors (root causes and barriers) and the points of intervention where project strategies (yellow hexagons) will contribute towards a reduction in the level of threats, and therefore contribute towards the long term vision of the project, namely to put in place an integrated model for wild cat conservation at landscape level that can be upscaled and replicated nationally and in wild cat landscapes of other range States. The outputs and outcomes of these strategies are summarized in the Theory of Change diagram below (**Figure 2**).

**The key barriers** remain largely unchanged from project concept stage – these can be summarized as follows (see Project Document Section I):

- 1: Gaps in the policy, planning and procedural framework for landscape conservation
- 2: Limited capacity for wild cat conservation at landscape level
- 3: Lack of community engagement in wild cat conservation
- 4: Insufficient partnerships, regional coordination and outreach.

[1] Backward Districts are the least developed areas of the country, comprising mostly marginal farmers and forest dwellers. In many of these districts poverty has increased despite consistent focus of several poverty eradication programmes. Governance has little or no presence in most of these districts. They are priorities for Government-led poverty reduction programmes. See: [https://nrega.nic.in/Planning\\_Commission.pdf](https://nrega.nic.in/Planning_Commission.pdf) and <https://pmawards.gov.in/public/List-of-Backward-Districts.pdf>

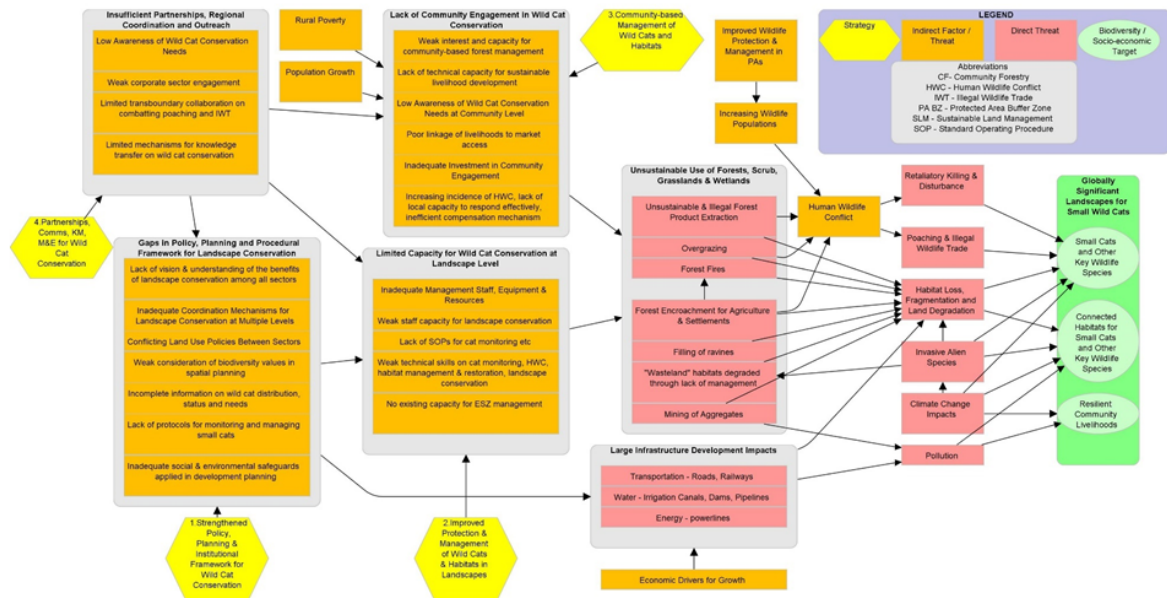


Figure 1. Conceptual diagram for the project

## Project Theory of Change

The GEF-supported Project Alternative responds to the development challenge by systematically addressing the barriers described above. In doing so it takes full account of the substantial baseline summarized for each project component and will coordinate with ongoing initiatives described in the Results and Partnerships section. The connections between the threats, root causes, barriers and intervention strategies are indicated in the Project Conceptual Diagram in **Figure 1**.

**The Project Objective** is to secure populations and habitats of wild cats subject to habitat encroachment, human-wildlife conflict, poaching and illegal trade in priority landscapes of northern, north-eastern and western India. The project objective will be achieved through four complementary components that aim to build the required enabling policy framework and institutional capacity (Component 1); strengthen government management of wild cats and habitat (Component 2) and build community stewardship (Component 3) at landscape level; and enhance private sector partnerships, regional collaboration, and knowledge transfer and learning supported by gender mainstreaming and monitoring and evaluation (Component 4). The project intervention pathways are described in the theory of change diagram in **Figure 2** below, with supporting assumptions and evidence for the landscape conservation approach and individual project outcomes given in **Table 1**. The baseline situation, incremental reasoning and global environmental benefits are summarized below. These assumptions are also included in the Monitoring Plan in Prodoc **Annex 3**, and will be regularly reviewed during project implementation as part of the PIR reporting, following sound adaptive management and risk management principles.

**Component 1** will put in place a landscape-level approach to wild cat conservation that will guide the revision and implementation of existing policies, plans and programs of government departments at national and sub-national levels, and other donor/partner initiatives. GEF support will be used to establish landscape-level master plans for wild cat conservation (**Output 1.1**) in Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest landscapes through a participatory process involving government agencies, communities and other local stakeholders. These master plans will provide the vision and strategic basis for multi-stakeholder engagement in landscape conservation actions and a framework for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of progress, including demonstration of inter-agency collaboration mechanisms for management of the Environmentally Sensitive Zones (ESZ) that are being established around National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries[1]. The implementation of landscape conservation master plans will be supported by outputs under Components 2 (integration of landscape master plan actions into existing site-based conservation and PA management plans), 3 (community mobilization and incentives for collective action towards small cat conservation) and 4 (creation of business partnerships to support private-sector supported conservation and livelihood pilots in project landscapes).

Participatory processes will engage stakeholders and conservation partners at national and subnational levels to develop national Species Recovery Action Plans for Caracal, Fishing Cat and Clouded Leopard[2]<sup>2</sup> informed by a national database and atlas on wild cats (**Output 1.2**) ? providing a framework for action in support of the landscape master plans and other project activities. Standardized procedures will support the operationalization of landscape conservation master plans, including the development of a monitoring protocol for wild cats, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for HWC management, and strengthening human-rights approaches to wildlife-related law enforcement

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(**Output 1.3**). Guidelines on small cat conservation will be developed in accordance with landscape-level master plans, SoPs and national species recovery action plans developed under Component 1 and integrated into revised big cat conservation strategies, Tiger Conservation Plans and the management plans of other types of PAs (**Output 1.4**). Landscape conservation priorities for wild cats will be mainstreamed through capacity building of State departments (e.g. Forest, Revenue, Animal Husbandry, Land Use Planning, Agriculture & Fisheries, Water Management), District Administrations and research institutions for landscape conservation (**Output 1.5**).

**Components 2 and 3** will be implemented in two project landscapes (Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest), putting in place the required local capacity, collaborations and community stewardship for landscape-scale conservation in globally-significant landscapes for wild cats that are focused on Key Biodiversity Areas where small cat distribution overlaps with big cat habitats (see **Annexes 1 & 16**). **Component 2** will bring together key government departments with roles to play in wild cat conservation to support the implementation of landscape-scale master plans. This will help to build a complementary and coordinated action portfolio for wild cat conservation bringing together big cat and small cat conservation under the guidance and supervision of NTCA. Supporting the implementation of landscape conservation master plans, targeted interventions will be demonstrated to improve key habitats used by wild cats and their diverse prey (**Output 2.1**), including measures such as forest, grassland and wetland habitat management. Finally, frontline staff will be capacitated and equipped to support wild cat conservation, monitoring and enforcement (**Output 2.2**). This will include completion of security assessments and provision of equipment for monitoring and surveillance and training in state-of-the art monitoring protocols (e.g. M-STriPES ?Monitoring System for Tigers - Intensive Protection and Ecological Status? protocols and software system), and implementation of SOPs for wild cat conservation developed under Component 1 including training in community engagement and delivery of a human rights-based approach to site-based wildlife law enforcement.

Working in parallel with Component 2, in the same wild cat landscapes, **Component 3** will build community stewardship and engagement towards the co-management of wild cat habitats. Target locations for community collaboration on wild cat conservation were determined during the PPG phase, and local consultations conducted to confirm support for project activities (see Stakeholder Engagement Plan in **Annex 7B**). The project will strengthen the governance and capacity of existing community and village-level institutions (e.g. Gram Panchayats, Women Self-Help Groups, Eco-Development Committees (EDC), Forest Rights Committees (FRC), Tribal Village Councils (Pakke and Eaglenest), cooperatives, etc.) to take a greater role in wild cat conservation in support of landscape-level strategies (**Output 3.1**). The project will provide training on wild cat habitat management, participatory monitoring and business skills. Community engagement and participation will be enhanced through awareness and outreach programmes for local communities including documentation of related traditional knowledge (**Output 3.2**). A new model for participatory community monitoring of wild cat populations and HWC damage and risks will be operationalized (**Output 3.3**) with the support of village-level institutions, raising understanding of local wild cat population status, the quality and use of habitats within PAs and across the surrounding mosaic of

forest and agricultural land, and on the extent of threats impacting habitats, as well as HWC, poaching and roadkills. Incentives will be provided to support community participation in wild cat conservation and reduce pressure on wild cat habitats through diversification of local livelihoods (**Output 3.4**). Uptake of more sustainable land and habitat management practices, and mitigation of any livelihood impacts from the actions in component 2, will be supported by value addition to agriculture products to reduce environmentally damaging farming practices, while improved livestock management will aim to reduce open grazing practices and roaming abandoned cattle. Establishment/enhancement of tourist facilities and COVID-secure ecotourism programmes where feasible at targeted sites, provided a business model is there, will provide income to communities to reduce dependency on natural resource exploitation. Finally, HWC hotspots will be identified and innovative mechanisms for preventing and managing HWC in areas adjacent to PAs and corridors demonstrated (**Output 3.5**). This will involve the completion of SAFE workshops with communities and local stakeholders applying the WWF SAFE Framework, followed by investment in community-based HWC solutions (e.g. solar electric fencing) that respond to the identified issues.

Finally, **Component 4** will build the necessary partnerships and platforms for integrated and collaborative wild cat conservation. The establishment and initial operation of a national-level platform for green business including development of a private-sector[3]<sup>3</sup> fund will be supported (**Output 4.1**) to engage the private sector in small wild cat conservation and facilitate the identification of sustainable financing options to maintain community stewardship outside the core tiger habitats in PAs. This is expected to include partnerships with agricultural (e.g. sugar production at Dudhwa) and tourism businesses operating within the project landscapes, supporting pilot conservation and livelihood initiatives under Component 3. Targeted communications and outreach (**Output 4.2**) will be deployed to targeted audiences at national and subnational levels to address threats and build support for project actions in the landscapes. Transboundary and regional collaboration on wild cat conservation, including with tiger range states, will be enhanced through integrating small wild cat concerns into existing agreements (eg on tigers), and strengthening local level collaboration under existing agreements[4]<sup>4</sup> for the sharing of information and knowledge on small wild cat conservation, collaborative training activities, and identification of areas of common concern and agreed joint actions for monitoring, species conservation and combating illegal trafficking (**Output 4.3**). This will explicitly support collaboration with the WWF/GEF-6 Integrated Landscape Management in the Terai Arc Landscape of Nepal (ILaM), and the UNDP/GEF-7 GWP tourism project in Bhutan. Web-based knowledge platforms and e-networks will be established (**Output 4.4**) to facilitate knowledge sharing and information dissemination between landscapes, States and through the Global Wildlife Program, while an effective M&E system (**Output 4.5**) will help ensure project impact and adaptive management and adequate consideration of gender mainstreaming and social and environmental safeguards.

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Components 1 and 4 will be supported by UNDP, and Components 2 and 3 by WWF as GEF Agency.

Overall, the project's approach to awareness raising in Outputs 3.2 and 4.2 aim to engender stakeholder engagement, sensitization and support for conservation actions, usually as part of an integrated set of activities so they are mutually supportive. Awareness target groups and samples will be systematically designed in consultation with local people and authorities, and linked to ongoing communication and awareness schemes of the state and the central government. The sustainability of awareness raising efforts will be ensured through alignment with ongoing efforts, for example: WWF is running a long-standing *One Planet Programme* in partnership with some State Education Departments. Also, WWF has been involving students of village schools in conservation awareness programs. Several children that were involved in the awareness programs over the years have grown up under the mantle of the 'Bagh Mitras (Friends of the Tiger)' program that is being implemented in some areas of the country, including the project landscape in Dudhwa, thus ensuring the necessary shift in attitudes and longevity of such campaigns. Thus, the awareness programs and materials for conservation of small wild cats will complement such ongoing initiatives. Similarly, the GTF's work on planning for reduction of HWC in the Dudhwa project landscape, as well as nationally on supporting conservation planning involves a strong component on communication and awareness, including promotion of 'citizen science' and people's participation, as a key conservation strategy in master planning, protected area management and similar action strategies.

Further to the above, a key issue with small wild cat conservation is that they have had little or no public exposure in most areas, and their secretive habits mean that they are little known even to conservationists and scientists. Consequently, there is a significant need to communicate existing knowledge as well as the new knowledge that will be generated by the project's citizen science efforts to relevant stakeholder groups through a targeted communications programme in order to foster support for conservation efforts at different levels. As explained earlier, this would not be a social behaviour change campaign because the project is not tackling one specific issue here, and the available budget does not allow it. The project work on awareness raising will be GEF financed, tying in with cofinanced efforts by GTF, WWF and others.

Livelihood goals (Output 3.4) include incentivizing engagement in the project's conservation strategies, also compensating for any access restrictions (eg on grazing) that may arise from strengthened conservation measures as part of safeguards mitigation for impacted groups, and also as alternatives to baseline livelihood activities that have negative impacts on habitats and wildlife with improved economic conditions as a potential project co-benefit. The baselines for livelihood interventions will be assessed during the initial phase of the project, along with review of associated indicators. The interventions will be designed and supported in alignment with the Tiger Conservation Plans of the area, along with existing livelihood schemes in place across the districts. The valuable experiences gained in executing livelihood micro-planning exercises in the state of Sikkim under the GEF-supported SECURE Himalayas project will inform effective engagement of communities in the entire process. Similarly, the GTF is working with the state governments to enhance the capacity of

frontline and community groups to develop site specific micro-plans, focusing on livelihoods, with reciprocal commitments to ensure conservation of wildlife and mitigation of human-wildlife interface conflicts to ensure the intended impacts of livelihood actions are visible and sustained as regular practice.

The project Theory of Change can be summarized as follows: in order to address the serious threats impacting small wild cats and the ecological integrity of their landscapes in India, the project will develop a model approach to integrated landscape management that will provide a basis for improved inter-sectoral coordination and stakeholder engagement for three key landscapes for wild cat conservation in north, northeastern and western India. This approach will increase government capacity and provide capacity, awareness and incentives for engagement of local communities in conservation activities and sustainable livelihoods so that they value wild cats and other biodiversity and contribute to its conservation including through reductions in habitat encroachment, HWC and poaching. This will contribute towards the prevention and mitigation of threats to biodiversity from sectoral development practices, unsustainable land uses, and illegal hunting and trading of wildlife.

Theory of Change considerations include:

- Strengthening the policy, planning and institutional framework for wild cat conservation in accordance with the National Wildlife Action Plan 2017-2031, putting in place the basis for an integrated landscape approach to conservation and building capacity of related government agency staff;
- Improving the protection and management of wild cats and habitats in target PAs, corridors and buffer zones in wild cat landscapes, through demonstrating habitat management and building frontline government staff capacity for wildlife and habitat protection;
- Enhancing community-based management of wild cats and habitats, with threat reduction including HWC and improved local livelihoods; and
- Developing effective partnerships, communications, knowledge management and M&E for wild cat conservation

The landscape conservation approach necessitates working across multiple scales and stakeholders in the natural resource management sector, including local communities, local forest user groups, small-scale agriculture users and the private sector. This recognizes that a sustainably managed landscape and provision of ecosystem services is critical for local livelihood provision, and likewise, sustainable and biodiversity-friendly community land use options are key to landscape conservation. The landscape conservation approach recognizes emerging threats to each of the project landscapes, particularly in the form of habitat fragmentation driven by economic development and increasing human populations, and includes coordination with production sectors, towards reducing threats to biodiversity, increasing sector engagement in landscape conservation, and facilitating local ? state - national dialogue. The project will also seek to embed Global Wildlife Program threat-reduction priorities regarding combating human-wildlife conflict, poaching and illegal wildlife trade.

The key assumptions that have been made in the Theory of Change and designing the project are detailed in **Table 1**. These include assumptions related to: the connection between the landscape conservation approach and its benefits towards the conservation status of small wild cat populations and their habitats; the political will available to support the inter-sectoral cooperation needed for landscape conservation and to address the needs of small wild cats and flagship species; the capacity of State, District and village level government institutions to implement integrated natural resource planning and management; the motivation of communities to participate in sustainable livelihood activities that support landscape conservation; the contribution of livelihood and HWC mitigation interventions towards resilient community livelihoods; the critical connection between HWC responses

and livelihood improvement activities contributing towards threat reduction as designed; and that improved knowledge management will actually increase capacity for more effective conservation management and threat reduction.

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[1] ESZs must be established for National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries under the Environmental Protection Rules 1986. See: <http://moef.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/2The%20Environment%20%28Protection%29%20Rules%2C%201986.pdf> According to government guidelines (2011), the purpose of ESZs is to provide a shock absorber for the PAs, and a transition zone between areas of high protection to areas of lesser protection. Their extent is flexible, with width up to 10km from a PA boundary as a general principle. See: <http://moef.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/1%20Guidelines%20for%20Eco-Sensitive%20Zones%20around%20Protected%20Areas.pdf>

[2] Fishing Cat is listed as Vulnerable in the IUCN Red List and Schedule 1 and rare and is greatly threatened by habitat loss and conflict. Clouded Leopard is Vulnerable and involved in some IWT cases. Caracal is representative of the arid / semi-arid biome and a Schedule 1 species in India and also very rare.

[3] Note ? while referred to as private sector here, government-linked corporations are also an important component and are included in this definition

[4] For example, the transboundary conservation agreements on tigers under NTCA ? see: [https://projecttiger.nic.in/content/52\\_6\\_Nepal.aspx](https://projecttiger.nic.in/content/52_6_Nepal.aspx)

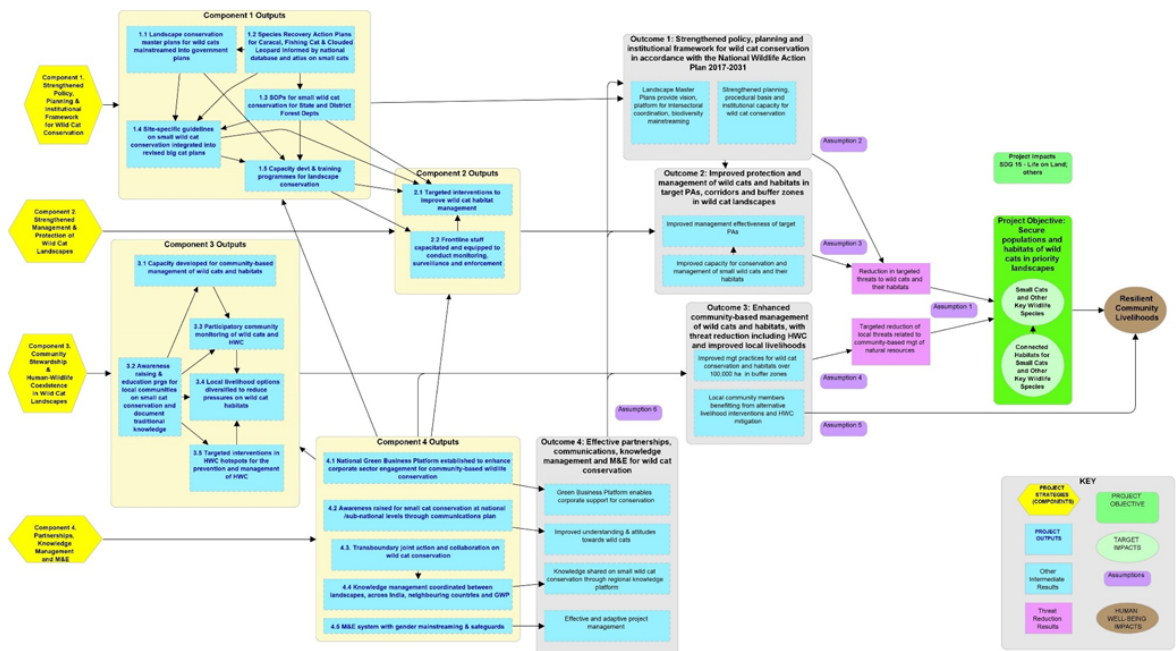


Figure 2. Theory of change diagram for the project

See **Figure 1** for Conceptual Diagram describing current state and points of intervention, and **Table 1** for details of Assumptions

Table 1. Assumptions and Evidence for the Project Theory of Change

Project Objective	Assumption	Questions for Monitoring Assumptions	Notes and References
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<p>To secure populations and habitats of wild cats subject to habitat encroachment, human-wildlife conflict, poaching and illegal trade in priority landscapes of northern, north-eastern and western India</p>	<p>#1: The landscape conservation approach will benefit the conservation status of small wild cat populations and their habitats in targeted regions of India</p>	<p>-What tangible changes in the protection and management of key habitats have occurred as a result of the project approach to landscape conservation?          -Has the connectivity of habitats for wildlife been emphasized in landscape and sector plans for the targeted areas?          -To what extent has small cat conservation been integrated into Tiger Conservation Plans?          -How have land uses outside PAs been influenced by the landscape conservation planning approach?</p>	<p>Scientific understanding of the distribution, abundance and conservation status of small wild cats in India is currently very incomplete ? with a few exceptions, information is anecdotal and has not been systematically collected. One exception is the ?bycatch? data on non-target species from camera traps during the systematic monitoring of tigers in tiger landscapes, however these data have not been extracted and analysed to date[1]. During the PPG, desk study of available evidence and interviews with stakeholders allowed key threats to wild cats and their habitats to be determined in each landscape (see Development Challenge and prodoc <b>Annexes 16, 18, 20</b> for details). These included the fragmentation and loss of forested habitat due to agricultural encroachment for forest-dependent species such as the Asiatic golden cat, marbled cat, clouded leopard, rusty-spotted cat and leopard cat; conversion of ?wasteland? scrub, ravines and grassland for agricultural use affecting Caracal and Asian Wildcat; and loss and degradation of wetlands and riparian habitats due to agricultural encroachment affecting the fishing cat. All of these habitat-related threats are driven by land use changes that do not take into consideration habitat integrity and connectivity for wildlife conservation. The landscape conservation approach represents a shift away from the traditional approach of focusing resources solely on increasingly isolated protected areas, given that these PAs are ecologically and socio-economically inter-dependent on their surrounding habitats, corridors and mix-used areas within the landscapes. This approach is enshrined in the National Wildlife Action Plan 2017-31 and has been successfully applied to tiger conservation in India, with modelling showing a reduction of extinction risk for a study in Central India, for example[2]. The current project ?piggy-backs? on tiger conservation efforts in each landscape, seeking to strengthen landscape conservation and inclusion of small cats in conservation planning. The landscape approach has also been successfully applied in the transboundary Terai Arc Landscape with Nepal[3] and in Bhutan (where PAs cover more than 50% of the country and are connected by eight biological corridors[4]). The landscape approach recognizes protected areas as core areas for biodiversity conservation and aims to ensure their integration with sustainable land use in buffer zones, and biological corridors that connect PAs in order to deliver sustainable and climate-resilient natural resource management.</p>
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<p>1: Strengthened policy, planning and institutional framework for wild cat conservation in accordance with the National Wildlife Action Plan 2017-2031</p>	<p>#2: There is political will to support the inter-sectoral cooperation needed for landscape conservation and to address the needs of small wild cats in addition to flagship species such as tiger, elephant and rhino.</p>	<p>-What tangible examples of coordinated inter-sectoral actions for landscape conservation have occurred?          - to what extent have the District Collector's Offices coordinated local sector agency inputs for landscape conservation?          - how has inter-sectoral coordination been institutionalized in Eco-Sensitive Zone policies and planning mechanisms?          - Has awareness been raised among related sectors to support biodiversity mainstreaming in their practices within the landscapes?</p>	<p>The central policy and planning framework exists in the form of the National Wildlife Action Plan 2017-2031 under the Wildlife Division of the MoEFCC, together with the National Development Agenda, and the National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, with the National Biodiversity Action Plan listing MoEFCC and 23 other Ministries and Departments of the Government of India for achieving the National Biodiversity Targets. NITI Aayog is entrusted with coordinating implementation of Agenda 2030 ? Sustainable Development Goals. The NWAP overtly supports the landscape conservation approach (Chapter 2) and integration of NWAP with other sectoral programmes (Chapter 17), recognizing the need to mainstream biodiversity conservation into production sector agency plans. It includes the establishment of institutional mechanisms at central and state levels to coordinate implementation of the NWAP, and projects for MoEFCC to promote a policy of biodiversity impact assessment for all planned government projects and programmes, and to review wildlife impact assessments. At District level, the District Collector's Offices provide a focal point for integration of sector agencies, that potentially could support planning for buffer / ESZ management.</p> <p>The reality is likely to be challenging (as all intersectoral collaboration is) to the extent that this represents a risk for project success (see prodoc <b>Annex 5</b>), but project-supported awareness raising, stakeholder engagement and facilitated dialogue towards landscape conservation plans will assist in building the necessary cooperation with the assistance of non-governmental partners. Project awareness raising will emphasize the importance of ecosystem services and sustainable use of natural resources in increasing the resilience of COVID-affected communities.</p>
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<p>2: Improved protection and management of wild cats and habitats in target PAs, corridors and buffer zones in wild cat landscapes</p>	<p>#3: State, District and village level government institutions governing PA buffer areas, Eco-Sensitive Zones and adjacent production landscape areas have sufficient capacity to implement integrated natural resource planning and management</p>	<p>-To what extent do the targeted State, District and village level govt institutions understand and support ESZ policies, plans and management requirements?          -What changes in awareness and capacity of targeted agencies have occurred as a result of project intervention?          -Have changes in capacity resulted in improved natural resource management?</p>	<p>All project landscapes include well-established Tiger Reserves that include buffer and corridor areas outside the Protected Areas, whose management is guided by the Tiger Conservation Plans and supported by wider baseline landscape programmes operated by WWF India, as well as a variety of conservation and community livelihood support activities supported by governmental and non-governmental bodies. Consequently, there is some experience of landscape conservation in each landscape, only this is focused on tigers and the integration of PA management with sustainable land uses in buffer and corridor areas remains weak, often with conflicts due to HWC and heavy anti-poaching enforcement around the PAs. The Eco-Sensitive Zones are in the process of being negotiated for the PAs in each landscape<sup>[5]</sup>, this process itself representing a challenge for intersectoral cooperation and understanding. The project will support capacity development of State and District agencies based on the capacity development assessment during the PPG which identified specific areas for improvement (see prodoc <b>Annex 19</b>), and for forest department staff (see prodoc <b>Annex 18</b>). The project will build the vision and awareness for the landscape conservation approach through targeted awareness campaigns, support stakeholder engagement and knowledge sharing (see [prodoc <b>Annex 7B</b>]), and the development of SOPs in relevant subjects.</p>
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<p>3: Enhanced community-based management of wild cats and habitats, with threat reduction including HWC and improved local livelihoods</p>	<p>#4: Communities are motivated to participate in sustainable livelihood activities that support landscape conservation for the benefit of small cats and other wildlife</p>	<p>-What is the level of participation achieved within targeted communities?          -What benefits have participating communities received as a result of their participation?          -What recognition have such benefits received in the participating communities?          -What actions ensure the sustainability of the livelihood activities?          - Do these livelihood activities reduce exploitative or unsustainable practices that impact on small cat habitats or conservation efforts, (such as opening new farmlands in sensitive areas)?</p>	<p>As for Outcome 2, in each of the landscapes there are examples of communities that are already participating in sustainable livelihood activities that are aligned with conservation benefits, such as Moghiya communities at Ranthambhore collaborating with Tiger Watch to conduct anti-poaching patrols outside the Tiger Reserve and whose women are receiving training in clothes making with Dhugh NGO; Tharu communities at Dudhwa participating in alternative energy solutions and handicraft production with support from WWF India and Forest Department to reduce firewood consumption; and a Bugun community near Eaglenest conducting patrolling and ecotourism for birdwatchers (see prodoc <b>Annexes 7B, 8, 16, 18, 20</b>). This project will seek to take such examples to another level through providing a landscape conservation framework, opportunities for learning and sharing experiences, and targeted support for livelihood diversification and participation in habitat restoration, participatory monitoring of small wild cats, etc. The project will also enhance the capacities of gram panchayats, villages, community groups and District level government staff for sustainable, community-based approaches for landscape conservation. This will involve building institutional and community capacity to implement interventions to reduce deforestation and habitat degradation, providing technical training and resources for community based approaches to wildlife conservation, and facilitating the simplification of compensation processes for fair settlement of legitimate HWC claims.</p>
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	<p>#5: Livelihood and HWC mitigation interventions will contribute towards resilient community livelihoods</p>	<p>-What is the level of participation in livelihood and HWC mitigation interventions in targeted communities? -Are any stakeholders spontaneously adopting such practices in the light of project demonstrations? - What tangible benefits have resulted from these practices?</p>	<p>Livelihood interventions are only likely to contribute towards resilient community livelihoods if they are participatory and concerned communities have a significant say in the alternatives to be adopted, and receive sufficient start-up support and technical assistance for these to become sustainable. While project resources are somewhat limited (eg compared to many poverty alleviation or rural development-focused projects), the proposed participatory process (see Stakeholder Engagement Plan in prodoc <b>Annex 7B</b>), financial and technical assistance proposed (see Output 3.4) and considerable project duration (6 years) provide sufficient opportunity to achieve such an outcome. In addition, the landscape scale interventions emphasizing ecosystem conservation and connectivity are consistent with ecosystem-based adaptation (recognized by IPCC as an integral part of adaptation strategy<sup>[6]</sup>), and systematic participatory planning and investment will address HWC mitigation in key hotspot areas, increasing community livelihood resilience. The project will increase awareness of the risk of zoonotic disease transmission between wildlife and people to encourage reduction of the human-wildlife interface.</p>
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	<p>#6: HWC response, livelihood improvement and other activities reduce the threats to wildlife / habitats / biodiversity as designed</p>	<p>Have HWC response activities been effective in reducing threats to wildlife?</p> <p>-Have livelihood improvement activities contributed towards reduction of threats to wildlife and habitats?</p> <p>-How will the project mitigate the impacts of natural disasters such as floods and droughts that are exacerbated by climate change on project progress towards threat reduction?</p>	<p>The project approach to HWC response follows the WWF SAFE System approach, allowing a strategic response based on the specific local situation in each case. The response measures will be locally owned and implemented, primarily to protect lives, property and crops. This approach has been piloted in Bhutan with some degree of success and is also being applied in the WWF/GEF Terai Arc Landscape project. Certain types of livelihood improvements may directly reduce HWC such as provision of natural gas for cooking removing the need to collect firewood from the forest (this has been supported by the government in parts of India).</p> <p>Community-based monitoring of wild cats within the vicinity of their villages should provide an indication of whether their engagement in HWC response and / or livelihood improvement activities has resulted in improved local status of wild cats. Similarly, monitoring of hunting/poaching activities should provide an indication of whether this declines in the project-targeted areas as a result of increased awareness / sensitization and improved livelihood conditions.</p> <p>Further to the climate risk screening conducted during PPG (Prodoc <b>Annex 26</b>), the project's main thrust towards application of an integrated landscape management approach for the two landscapes is the development of a landscape master plan through a consultative process involving key government stakeholders and a wide range of other stakeholders in the landscapes. Climate change vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning will form important aspects of the development of the landscape master plans, and will be integrated into other relevant planning outputs. These measures will put in place the mechanisms for responding more effectively to climate change impacts, however short term impacts such as droughts or floods during the project period will be difficult to mitigate and may directly impact access to field sites, and the success of habitat management and rehabilitation works. This is recognized as Risk 9 (see Prodoc <b>Annex 5</b>).</p>
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4: Effective partnerships, communications, knowledge management and M&E for wild cat conservation	#7: Improved knowledge management will increase capacity for more effective conservation management and threat reduction	-What examples are there of increased access to knowledge on landscape conservation for small wild cats at targeted locations? -How has increased access to knowledge informed conservation planning and local action?	This is hard to demonstrate, however the national priority afforded to tiger conservation is an outstanding example of how species conservation can be successful when it receives political backing, a strong planning and implementation framework and substantial outreach. This project aims to build on the established success of the tiger conservation model, adapting this to benefit small cats, and seeking to strengthen engagement among stakeholders in the landscapes around the tiger reserves. In addition, the GEF Global Wildlife Program (9071)[7] <sup>7</sup> and its second phase launched in June 2019 (10200)[8] <sup>8</sup> exemplify a GEF programmatic framework facilitating coordinated knowledge management and cross-fertilisation of the individual projects under its scope, through webinars and sharing of documents, etc. This provides an important and established global mechanism for sharing experiences and results from the project.
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**Project Document Annexes referred to above:** Annex 5 - UNDP Risk Register; Annex 7B - Stakeholder Engagement Plan for Project Implementation; Annex 8 - Gender Analysis and Action Plan; Annex 16 - Demonstration Landscape and Protected Area Profiles; Annex 18 -Baseline Analysis Report on Small Wild Cats including Capacity Development Scorecards for Frontline Staff; Annex 19 - Capacity Development Scorecards for Targeted State and District Agencies; Annex 20 - Baseline Analysis Report on SLM for the Project Landscapes

## ***2) the baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects***

No significant changes in the overall baseline scenario from project concept stage, although this section has been elaborated (see Prodoc Annexes 16 A, B & C, 18, 19 and 20). However, at the landscape level, the baseline has been developed for the new project landscape of Pakke-Eaglenest in Arunachal Pradesh (see Prodoc Table 3 for a summary of the characteristics of each landscape; Annex 16 for landscape and PA profiles including Pakke Tiger Reserve and Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary; and Annex 10 for METT baselines). The baseline analysis is summarized for each project component in Prodoc Section III (under Expected Results), while baseline projects that the project builds on or will coordinate with are also described in Prodoc Section III (under Partnerships). The baseline for each Component can be summarized as follows:

### **Component 1. Enabling policy, planning and institutional framework for wild cat conservation**

In the baseline situation, India's National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) 2008 guides investment and resource allocation for biodiversity conservation at the national level. A comprehensive raft of policies and laws has been put in place to implement the NBAP, including the National Forestry Policy 1988, the National Environment Policy 2006, and National Agroforestry Policy 2014. The Biological Diversity Act 2002 created a three tier architecture for its implementation at national, state and the local levels, which coordinates implementation of the NBAP in collaboration with line agencies and non-government stakeholders. The Wildlife Protection Act 1972 (amended 2006) empowers the State to declare protected areas, implemented by the Wildlife Division in the Directorate General of Forests in MoEFCC at Central Government level, and state wildlife departments and their subordinate offices at field level in states. The 2006 Amendment brought in a separate chapter on tiger conservation, with the establishment of a National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) under MoEFCC; definitions of a Tiger Reserve, Core Zone, Buffer Zone and Corridor (National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries nominally being Core Zones); and management of Buffer Zones became a statutory requirement through the Tiger Conservation Plans (TCPs). Previously management plans only applied to the PAs - not Buffer Zones outside PAs. The TCPs now cover the tiger plus co-predators (e.g. small cats).

Despite this relatively comprehensive policy, planning and institutional framework for nature conservation, important gaps need to be addressed in order to advance the conservation of landscapes for wild cats, beyond the well-recognized needs of tigers and other flagship species. First, the current poor understanding of the distribution, conservation status, needs and threats impacting small cats and lack of understanding of conservation priorities at the landscape level are key weaknesses. Secondly,

while tiger conservation planning has stimulated a landscape approach to conservation in India, this remains very focused on tigers and protected areas, and there remains a lack of vision and knowhow regarding the integration and harmonization of conservation with multiple land uses in the production lands outside PAs in buffer zones and corridor areas for the benefit of diverse species including small cats. Related to this, the inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms for landscape conservation at District and State levels are weak and ineffective, with conflicting land use policies.

The development of Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZ) around Protected Areas under the Environment (Protection) Act 1986 in line with official Guidelines published by the Wildlife Division of MoEFCC in 2011 have only been partially identified, with most still at proposal stage, and largely untested implementation procedures. Even within the conservation field, there is weak integration of conservation plans for species, protected areas and issues such as climate change adaptation and control of invasive alien species. With regard to small cat conservation, there are no guidelines or national species action plans to guide conservation, and a lack of technical protocols to guide responsible agency staff.

**In Dudhwa landscape (Uttar Pradesh),** the Forest Department has monthly coordination meetings with SSB (Border Force). The Agriculture Department supports farmers through a wide range of schemes. The Horticulture Department is experimenting with cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants that are not eaten by elephants and yield good returns. Subsidies are given for cultivation of these crops and there is also market integration. The Animal Husbandry Department carries out several animal welfare programmes and activities including livestock census, dairy development schemes and a cattle shed scheme is implemented for stray cattle and for self-owned cattle there is the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act scheme. There is considerable potential for development of fisheries in the project area with support from the Fishery Department.

**In Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape (Arunachal Pradesh),** due to increased national demand for timber and rapid deforestation the Hon. Supreme Court of India passed a judgement to completely halt all commercial timber extraction, which remains in force. Timber extraction is allowed for domestic, non-commercial use for the local communities outside the protected areas. Extraction of NTFP is also permitted. In addition, there is an absence of well-defined land use policy in Arunachal Pradesh at present. The State is planning land reforms, with an exercise in progress for cadastral survey to strengthen the mapping and land records data base of the state. Currently, there is emphasis on development of agriculture in the state by intensive and mechanized means, and also government emphasis on industrial development. Outside the PAs, government programmes include Horticulture Department subsidies for planting fruit tree orchards, and Tourism Department subsidies and loans for establishing home stays, which constitute the main tourism development model. Tourism is seen as an effective intervention for providing monetary benefits to community that has lot of potential in Arunachal Pradesh. The effective ecotourism programme in Eaglenest has created interest and raised

expectations. An Ecotourism Society has been formed with the Chief Minister as the chairperson for implementing ecotourism schemes. There was a slowdown in funding due to the Covid-19 situation, however it is expected that funds will be received and the schemes will be activated in the first half of 2021.

The baseline assessment (see prodoc **Annexes 16, 18, 19, 20**) has indicated that the existing capacity for landscape conservation and PA management for each project landscape is below that required to meet the needs of coordinated cross-sectoral planning and land use, and the professional requirements for the effective management of wild cats and their habitats. At State and District level, capacity for integrated landscape management and management of Eco-Sensitive Zones that advances habitat and wildlife conservation outside PAs remains very weak.

With regards to COVID-19 impacts on the baseline, emerging government policy responses to COVID-19 could boost support for green recovery and proposed project activities. The Prime Minister in his address to the nation on May 12, 2020 announced an economic recovery package of Rs. 20.90 lakh crore (USD 0.29 trillion; 10% of India's pre-COVID GDP. The five pillars of the recovery stimulus efforts are: 1. Quantum jump in economy 2. Infrastructure 3. Tech driven system 4. Vibrant demography 5. Sustained demand and the supply chain to meet the same. The focus of the announced package would be self-reliance to empower local economies through local enterprises, particularly MSMEs and agriculture. Strengthening agricultural infrastructure, logistics and capacity building: 'Agri Infrastructure Fund' that will finance projects at the farm-gate and aggregation points for efficient post-harvest management of crops has been announced with provision of Rs. 1 lakh crore (USD 13.4 billion) for aggregators, farmers producers' organisations (FPOs), primary agri-cooperative societies, agri-entrepreneurs and start-ups. Funds have also been earmarked for schemes for micro food enterprises, cold-chains, cattle and dairy sectors, fisheries, herbal plantation, beekeeping, horticulture, organic and nutritional products. The inclusive green economy approaches are seen as complementing India's transformational recovery for a sustainable future, and an opportunity to flatten the curve by aligning economic recovery to the SDGs and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) as part of the revival process with an understanding that the poor and vulnerable are at greater risk with deprioritization of climate and ecological concerns.

The linkage to biodiversity conservation and human health is paramount, and conservation efforts, vis-à-vis green development initiatives may gain the desired support and policy stimulus. The schemes such as 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-reliant India) announced recently, could foster local community-based conservation models for small wild cats, which traverse both protected areas and human-dominated surroundings. The communities need to be additionally supported with green business models and convergence of public-private efforts to strengthen livelihoods and income of local communities across the small wild cat landscapes, which is an important aspect of this project.

## **Component 2: Strengthened management and protection of wild cat landscapes**

At the landscape level, the main responsibilities and projects of various line agencies and the dominant industries are described in prodoc **Annexes 16 and 20**. These baseline inputs vary between the landscapes owing to geographical, socio-economic and cultural differences.

**In Dudhwa landscape,** Dudhwa Tiger Reserve is governed by the Forest Department with the Field Director as the head. The annual budget for recurrent operational funds excluding staff costs in 2019-2020 was USD 1,910,400. The annual budget for project or other supplementary funds excluding staff salary costs in 2019-2020 was USD 1,119,657. However, delays in receiving budgeted funds are common and many staff posts have not been filled: In Dudhwa National Park and Kishanpur WLS against 128 posts, 57 are vacant (44.5%), in Katarniaghat WLS, against 68 posts 28 are vacant (41%) and in North Kheri against 47 posts 16 are vacant (34%). No training has been provided for officer / managers. Meetings and trainings have been organised in the past three years but focused trainings on developing core skills (e.g. wildlife crime investigation, collection monitoring of various management inputs, monitoring of wildlife health, reading wildlife signs and evidences), among field personnel were few. No long term staff development plan and training schedule has been developed. Support from NGOs has included WWF inputs on tiger estimation (All India Tiger Estimation), rhino monitoring, gharial monitoring and staff training. The two districts, Lakhimpur-Kheri and Bahraich have District Magistrates as respective heads. Since the landscape shares an international border with Nepal, Sashastra Seema Bal (a border police force) patrols the border. Co-ordination with counterparts in Nepal is usually conducted through the office of the District magistrate. The presence of SSB personnel (border force) has been reported to be very effective in controlling poaching. The Forest Department has monthly coordination meetings with SSB.

**In Pakke-Eaglenest landscape,** Pakke is a Tiger Reserve, hence the management is focused on tigers and their prey base. A large part of the landscape is also included in the Kameng Elephant Reserve, where the focus is on conserving the connectivity of the elephant habitat. The Sessa Orchid Sanctuary has an active research and conservation program for conservation of Orchids; it is headed by a Divisional Forest Officer from Khellong Forest Division. Pakke Tiger Reserve is governed by the Forest Department with the Field Director as the head, while Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary (West Kameng) is headed by a Divisional Forest Officer from Shergaon Forest Division. The annual budget for Pakke TR for recurrent (operational) funds ? excluding staff salary costs in 2019-2020 was USD 353,543; and the annual budget for project or other supplementary funds ? excluding staff salary costs was USD 713,286. The annual budget for recurrent (operational) funds for Eaglenest WS was USD 78,844 for 2019-2020. However, protracted delays in receiving budgeted funds has been a major issue impacting operational management for these PAs. In addition, Singchung Bugun Village Community

Reserve (17 km<sup>2</sup>) lies in West Kameng District. Outside the PAs, a large fraction of the forested landscape is under nominal governance of the Forest Department as 'Unclassified State Forests'[9]<sup>9</sup>, where local communities hold traditional rights. Involvement of local communities in biodiversity conservation through ecotourism or sustainable NTFP harvest practices is emphasised in the fringe areas of PAs and in the wider landscape. The respective Forest Departments as well as several NGOs are actively engaged in this. The Kati Trust, Nature Conservation Foundation, Wildlife Trust of India and WWF-India are active in the landscape.

While the Tiger Reserves in each landscape are systematically managed according to their Tiger Conservation Plans and evaluated through the national Management Effectiveness Evaluation, there remain chronic staffing shortages, lack of the necessary skills among PA staff and lack of opportunity for staff professional development. For example, the Tiger Conservation Plan (TCP) of Dudhwa has highlighted an acute shortage of staff, even though the posts are sanctioned. Among the more prominent are vacancies in front-line staff (Forest Guard, Wildlife Guard). The METT baseline assessments (prodoc **Annex 11**) and analysis of PA management staffing and SWOT analysis in the landscape profiles (prodoc **Annex 17**) and other baseline assessment inputs (prodoc **Annexes 19 & 21**) provide details of these shortcomings. In addition, the living conditions for field staff at Dudhwa pose health and safety challenges, and there are needs for improved facilities and equipment in all landscapes. Technical skills need to be strengthened on monitoring wild cat populations and habitats, applying appropriate management techniques for habitat restoration and connectivity, managing HWC effectively and related subjects, through the development of SOPs and providing appropriate training support.

### **Component 3. Community stewardship and human-wildlife coexistence in wild cat landscapes**

The baseline assessments (see prodoc **Annexes 7, 8, 16, 18, 19, 20**) have indicated diverse socio-economic conditions and awareness of small wild cats in local communities and tribal groups across the project landscapes. In some cases, the communities and tribal groups have a strong affinity with the natural environment, traditional knowledge, customs and beliefs that foster a respect for nature, and where opportunities have arisen they have embraced conservation initiatives in all the project landscapes with NGO facilitation. However, such awareness and opportunities are very limited and the successes need to be replicated and upscaled in key landscape areas to foster sustainable land uses and habitat conservation and to reduce threats from hunting, IWT and HWC. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic had significant impacts across India in 2020 including a national lockdown period (see earlier).

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While certain government initiatives have also had positive effect, such as the LPG cylinders provided through the Ujwala Yojna scheme and National Livelihood Rural Mission (NLRM) support for backward districts<sup>[10]</sup> at Dudhwa, there remains much to be done to align such rural development schemes with conservation objectives and to improve their uptake and effectiveness. There is also poor linkage of livelihoods to market access, constraining their sustainability. Many communities near PAs and forested areas suffer significant HWC losses, including locally severe impacts from leopard attacks, elephant crop damage and widespread damage from animals such as wild boar. The trauma involved, lack of HWC response support and current government compensation systems that are slow, complicated and only partially redress losses incurred, often cause negative local attitudes towards wildlife and PAs. Overall, incentives for community engagement, remain weak, restricting community capacity and willingness to apply eco-friendly land use and habitat management techniques that will support wild cat conservation and help prevent and manage HWC. The non-statutory, bottom-up initiative of Community Conservation Areas is widespread across regions of India, however so far these largely do not overlap with the main geographic range of small cat species. Further there is a lack of technical capacity in community institutions to support habitat and wild cat conservation. NGO support has included WWF support for HWC mitigation (solar fencing), livelihood skill development for Tharu women on weaving handicrafts, alternative energy to reduce fuelwood consumption, distribution of mosquito nets, jackets, vehicles (in buffer) etc. WTI has provided staff and primary response team training for conflict mitigation; publicity through announcements in Masjid, Gurudwara etc. related to tigers; Rapid Response Team is deployed by WTI. There are several Eco-Development Committees (EDCs) that were set up in the region (152 EDCs and 32 JFMCs) but currently not all are functional but could potentially be revived. They should be included in awareness and training programs and in turn they can then organize awareness programs among locals.

**In Pakke-Eaglenest landscape**, community-based ecotourism has been initiated with some success. However, current tourist visitation has been seriously impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and the outlook for further tourism development remains uncertain in the face of related risks (see Risk Register, prodoc **Annex 5**). At present, tourists can stay at the tourist lodge of the Forest Department in Pakke. The Ghora Abhe Society has established an Ecotourism Camp where tourists can stay. There are also some home stays in villages around Sejosa, including Mobosotu-2 and Darlong. The Forest Department gives grants for developing home stays. Assuming some level of normality post COVID-19 recovery in the next year or two that would allow for domestic and international tourism, substantial work is possible in the area of home stays and ecotourism, such as training and financing. Several individuals and organizations have helped in developing ecotourism at Pakke including Ramana Athreya, Amruta Rane, Ramki Srinivasan, Aparajita Dutta and Help Tourism. At present the local people are thinking of constituting a committee to establish the rules and regulate tourism. There is also potential for horticulture development including cultivation of various types of fruit, with Horticulture Department subsidies available. Horticulture is less prone to damage by elephants compared to agriculture. Local people make traditional handicrafts for sale. NGO activities include WTI support for a bear rescue centre at Pakke since 2003 and a hornbill adoption programme is being implemented by

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NCF to address the hunting of Great / Rufous-necked hornbills by Nyishi community for their casques. Eco-Development Committees from the landscape are mostly non-functional but could be revived and included in awareness and training programs and in turn they can then organise awareness programs among locals.

#### **Component 4. Partnerships, knowledge management and M&E**

While there are some existing partnerships in place in the landscapes, including WWF landscape programmes that collaborate with government, and diverse NGOs working with local communities such as TigerWatch at Ranthambhore, WWF at Dudhwa and Nature Conservation Foundation at Pakke. However, these partnerships tend to focus on specific locations or issues and are insufficient to address landscape conservation needs for small cats. In addition, the corporate sector is largely not involved, despite strong potential for engagement in conservation action and financing for conservation programmes evidenced under the earlier World Bank-supported initiative to establish an Indian National Wildlife Business Council[11]<sup>11</sup> including regional workshops and c.30 companies, some of which took up Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities. However, that initiative was too centralized to fully succeed. The formation of the India wildlife Business Council was done through a MoU between the World Bank and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), where a grant was given to CII to initiate a conversation, but everything was managed by CII, which directly did not have much experience of handling wildlife related work. While the industry was on board to some extent, the helping end from the other side (i.e. the conservation fraternity and the government) was not involved to a major extent and kept out of the process.

The Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) is a global UNDP programme that has been implemented in India since May 2015 by the MoEFCC through the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA). BIOFIN offers a sophisticated and country-specific methodological framework to assess current expenditures and finance needs for implementing the NBAP and suggests innovative and scalable financial solutions to fill the finance gap for achieving the National Biodiversity Targets. Data gathered through detailed country level assessments based on a wide range of consultations has supported the preparation of country specific Biodiversity Finance Plan[12]<sup>12</sup> (BFP) in 2019, which suggests a range of potential financial solutions suited to fill the finance gap for implementing the NBAP. Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) and CSR programmes are identified as key strategies in the BFP, noting that India ranks high in terms of operational maturity of PPP and creating an ideal environment for PPP projects (especially in the infrastructure sector). During 2006-07 to 2015-16, spread across sectors of roads, civil aviation, housing, ports, railways, sports and tourism, as many as 287 projects have been

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undertaken adopting PPP model involving a total investment of about USD 4.59 billion[13]<sup>13</sup>. The Draft Forest Policy, 1988 recognizes location-specific PPP models involving Forest Departments, Forest Development Corporations, Communities, Public limited companies, etc for achieving the target of increased forest & tree cover in the country?.

In India, CSR has become mandatory since 2014, and corporates meeting specified turn-over criteria are required to earmark and spend 2% of their average net profits over the last three years to discharge this responsibility. Eligible activities that could be funded under CSR include livelihoods and environment. CSR funds could be accessed by various societies, NGOs, educational institutions, trusts, community based organizations, or corporates could spend the money on their own on specified activities. According to the BIOFIN assessments, less than 3% of CSR funds are currently spent on biodiversity-related activities, out of a total of CSR expenditure during 2017-18 of about USD 80 million. According to the BFP, greater awareness of needs for biodiversity conservation, availability of project proposals to support, and inter-ministerial coordination to guide CSR policy could increase CSR provision towards biodiversity conservation. The Prime Minister in his address to the nation on May 12, 2020 announced an economic recovery package. As stated by the PM, the focus of the announced package would be self-reliance- to empower local economies through local enterprises, particularly MSMEs, and agriculture. Accordingly, the project would be well aligned to contribute towards green recovery efforts by engaging with local enterprises on business partnership development.

Awareness of the status and conservation needs of small wild cats is generally low amongst stakeholders, with the exception of certain groups at local level (see baseline awareness assessment results in prodoc **Annex 18**). However, given that several small cat species are globally threatened and near-threatened and the status of some others is of national concern (e.g. caracal) or poorly known (most small cats), the lack of awareness and scientific understanding of these species and the threats affecting them is an issue for conservation. While various scientific studies have been carried out, some with community engagement (eg on fishing cats[14]<sup>14</sup>), there has been little attempt so far to foster awareness of small cat species. Finally, transboundary collaboration for landscape and species conservation, including reduction of poaching and trafficking of wildlife / wild cats (e.g. clouded leopard skins), and to support knowledge exchange and transfer, is limited and should be strengthened especially at the local level where bureaucratic constraints can be limited. Current global / regional tiger conservation initiatives do not currently cover small cat species, which could be incorporated through minor changes and capacity development regarding small cat monitoring and research, etc. Relevant transboundary IWT enforcement issues relating to small cats need to be documented and raised bilaterally or through the South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN)[15]<sup>15</sup>.

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***3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project;***

The proposed GEF Alternative is highly consistent with the project concept, with no change in the GEF focal area strategies, for which targets have been confirmed through the related GEF Core Indicators ? see Part I E above. Indicator targets have been established for all expected Outcomes, as presented in Annex A of this document.

Consistent with the above, the main change in the alternative scenario responds to feedback from GEF Secretariat at project concept stage that strongly emphasized reducing the target area of the project significantly so that financial resources can be concentrated with a higher USD/area ratio. UNDP, WWF and the PPG team strongly agreed with this assessment and considered the inclusion of four demonstration landscapes covering some 720,949 ha of terrestrial PAs and landscape areas under improved practices in the approved Project Concept to be unrealistic for the GEF budget and cofinancing available. Consequently, the final project design now focuses on two project landscapes (Dudhwa in Uttar Pradesh, and Pakke-Eaglenest in Arunachal Pradesh), covering some 389,572 ha of PAs and 100,000 ha of improved practices outside PAs, plus limited intervention in a third landscape (Ranthambhore in Rajasthan) that is of value to aridland cats.

The project landscapes have been selected on the basis of their importance for particular wild cat species ? Dudhwa is a key landscape for fishing cat (supporting four species of small cats), while Pakke-Eaglenest supports no fewer than six species including clouded leopard, marbled cat and Asian golden cat. Ranthambhore is important for caracal (and supports five small cat species). The proposed landscape master plans will focus on Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest only, while species recovery plans will focus on three globally threatened cat species, again with an initial focus on the project landscapes, but with scope for wider action linked to tiger conservation areas through the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), and potentially other areas if government support permits. Further information on the target landscapes is provided in Prodoc **Table 3** and **Annexes 18 and 20**.

The project will target specific areas within these landscapes that are of highest priority for wildlife conservation and under greatest threat for its interventions on the ground, seeking to integrate different types of intervention (eg capacity development, HWC mitigation, habitat improvement, threat reduction, awareness raising, livelihood diversification) in order to achieve more sustainable impacts. The focus will be on the top priority habitats for wild cat conservation and those areas in most need of conservation action ? critical forest areas in Pakke-Eaglenest, grassland and wetland areas in Dudhwa,

and arid scrubland and ravine areas in Ranthambhore. Specific sites will be selected based on criteria listed in Prodoc **Box 1**. Further, project-supported planning has been streamlined so that it is integrated or closely aligned with Indian government processes, especially through the NTCA's mandate for Tiger Conservation Plans, the wider national requirement for more concerted management of PA buffer areas through the Eco-Sensitive Zones, and increasing national attention and stakeholder engagement in small wild cat conservation through citizen science, targeted awareness raising and knowledge sharing mechanisms.

In terms of mainstreaming project planning in Component 1 into government processes, the proposed master plans for landscape conservation are aligned with the current provision for landscape conservation in the National Wildlife Action plan, and will strengthen understanding and inter-sectoral support for the management of Buffer Areas, Corridors and revenue lands adjacent to Tiger Reserves. Currently all PAs are mandated to have an Eco-Sensitive Zone demarcated of minimum 1km width from their boundaries as a buffer zone. The ESZ is under the authority of various agencies depending on location, yet so far there is a lack of a clear model for the intersectoral coordination and measures that would apply to ESZs. The project will assist directly in developing the necessary capacity and coordination mechanisms to support this. In addition, the integration of conservation measures for wild cats and their habitats under Tiger Conservation Plans under the NTCA would be a significant advance for conservation management, broadening the approach from the narrow confines of single species conservation towards a more holistic approach that would also benefit a wide range of other species (as wild cats occupy a variety of habitats including agricultural lands, and are dependent on diverse small prey). The species action plans for three species of wild cats will be mainstreamed into NTCA programmes and their implementation would be cofinanced as such, ensuring financial sustainability. The Annual Report of the MoEFCC for 2018-2019 states that the 'Recovery Programme' under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Development of Wildlife Habitat' was increased from 17 to 21 species, including the addition of Clouded Leopard – one of the species supported by the current project.

Another significant change is that the project will now take place across a six year implementation period in order to buffer against risks that may cause delays in implementation (including potential COVID-19 related implementation delays) and to strengthen the sustainability of its outcomes. Additional COVID-related risks on *ongoing or new human disease outbreaks such as the COVID-19 Pandemic (#13)*, and *Impacts of exchange rate fluctuations on the budget available to support implementation plans, global economic recession and changes in government priorities impacting delivery of cofinancing commitments for project implementation (#14)* have been integrated into project design as far as possible at this stage (and captured in the risk register in **Annex 5**). The growing awareness and support in India for green recovery from COVID-19 (e.g. as seen in the emergence of government programmes such as 'green packages', 'one product-one landscape') could offer opportunities for the project via enhanced political support at all levels for landscape planning under Component 1, and potential private sector engagement under Component 4. These opportunities will be assessed further during the project inception and integrated into detailed planning for project activities

and stakeholder engagement accordingly. Announced schemes for building self-reliance at local level could foster local community-based conservation models for small cats, which will align to the project's proposed support for green business models and convergence of public-private efforts to strengthen livelihoods and income of local communities across small cat landscapes.

Adaptive management mechanisms will be implemented which will include adaptation of project organizational structures and teams, timelines, results frameworks (including indicators and targets), priorities to align with changing context and needs. The Annual Planning meetings and the quarterly reviews will be undertaken by CO to assess the progress of the project, identify and mitigate risks and challenges and leverage on opportunities for maximising the impact of the project. This would inform the project Steering Committees at national and state levels, the Implementing Partner and state responsible agencies to adapt and implement strategies and actions for achieving the desired outcomes under the project. Output 4.5 on M&E, Activity 4.5.4 includes an Annual Adaptive Management Review to review M&E data and prepare for each coming year, linked to annual work plan preparation (and mid-year reviews) as key tools for adaptive management of project activities. At the end of every year of the project, the PMU and other relevant partners will convene in an exercise that is intended to improve the strategic direction of the project. At each exercise, a review of the M&E data, project progress and challenges will occur, and the project theory of change will be assessed to decide whether or not any assumptions or strategies need modification. This will provide opportunities for adaptive management that will lead to changes in the project design, management or operation. The changes will be largely reflected and incorporated into the new Annual Work Plans. All modifications will be reviewed for no objection by the Project Steering Committee, UNDP and the WWF GEF Agency. This is reflected in RF Indicator 16: *Number of annual reflection meetings to review M&E and other data for adaptive management, linked to preparation of progress reports and development of annual workplans* (one review each year is targeted).

Over this project period, the project objective will be achieved through the implementation of four interconnected components (Components 1 and 4 will be under UNDP as GEF Agency, and Components 2 and 3 under WWF-US, according to their comparative advantages in working with the government of India: UNDP for policy, planning knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation; and WWF for field conservation programmes). The GEF budget allocation across the four components has been adjusted for consistency with the distribution of funds across UNDP- and WWF-administered components of the project stated in the Letter of Endorsement. The expected Outcomes and Components of the Project are given in Table B above, and detailed in Section III of the Project Document, as follows below.

#### **Expected Results:**

**The long-term solution of the project**, namely to put in place an integrated model for wild cat conservation at landscape scale that can be upscaled and replicated nationally and in wild cat landscapes of other range states, will be realized through the achievement of the **Project Objective**: to secure populations and habitats of wild cats subject to habitat encroachment, human-wildlife conflict, poaching and illegal trade in priority landscapes of northern, north-eastern and western India. The reduction of threats to wild cats and their habitats as well as benefits to project stakeholders will be reflected through the Project Objective indicators (see Results Framework for details), showing the number of direct project beneficiaries; the area of terrestrial PAs under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (389,572 ha<sup>[16]</sup>); and the area of landscapes under improved practices benefiting biodiversity (excluding PAs) (100,000 ha)<sup>[17]</sup>.

**Component 1** will put in place a landscape-level approach to wild cat conservation that will guide the revision and implementation of existing policies, plans and programs of government departments and other donor/partner initiatives. This will include the participatory development of landscape-level master plans for wild cat conservation in Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest landscapes; development of national Species Recovery Action Plans for three small wild cat species informed by a national database and atlas on wild cats; development of a monitoring protocol, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and guidelines to guide frontline staff in key subjects; and capacity building of relevant State departments, District Administrations and research institutions for landscape conservation.

**Component 2** focuses on two project landscapes (Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest), putting in place local capacity, collaborations and community stewardship for landscape-scale conservation in globally-significant landscapes that are focused on Key Biodiversity Areas where small cat distribution overlaps with big cat habitats. It aims to support implementation of the landscape conservation master plans through targeted interventions to improve key habitats used by wild cats and their diverse prey including measures such as forest, grassland and wetland habitat management. Finally, frontline staff will be capacitated and equipped to support wild cat conservation, monitoring and enforcement.

**Component 3** aims to build community stewardship and engagement towards the co-management of wild cat habitats in the same two landscapes (Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest). The project will strengthen the governance and capacity of existing community and village-level institutions to take a greater role in wild cat conservation in support of landscape-level strategies. The project will provide training on wild cat habitat management, participatory monitoring and business skills. Community engagement and participation will be enhanced through awareness and outreach programmes for local communities including documentation of related traditional knowledge. A new model for participatory community monitoring of wild cat populations and HWC damage and risks will be operationalized with the support of village-level institutions. Incentives will be provided to support community participation in wild cat conservation and reduce pressure on wild cat habitats through diversification of local livelihoods. Finally, HWC hotspots will be identified and innovative mechanisms for preventing and managing HWC in areas adjacent to PAs and corridors demonstrated.

**Component 4** will build partnerships and platforms for collaborative wild cat conservation. The establishment and operation of a national-level platform for green business including development of a private-sector<sup>[18]</sup> fund will be supported to engage the private sector in small wild cat conservation and facilitate sustainable financing options for community stewardship outside core tiger habitats in PAs. Targeted communications and outreach will be deployed at national/sub-national levels to address threats and build support for project actions in the landscapes. Transboundary and regional collaboration on wild cat conservation will be enhanced through integrating small wild cat concerns into existing agreements (eg on tigers), and strengthening local level collaboration under existing

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agreements[19]<sup>19</sup> for the sharing of knowledge, collaborative training, and joint actions for monitoring, species conservation and combating illegal trafficking. Web-based knowledge platforms and e-networks will be established to facilitate knowledge sharing and information dissemination between landscapes, States and through the GWP, while an effective M&E system will help ensure project impact and adaptive management and adequate consideration of gender mainstreaming and social and environmental safeguards.

The GEF funding requested by the Indian government will be used to achieve the Objective Outcomes through achievement of key results under the following Component Outcomes:

***Outcome 1: Strengthened policy, planning and institutional framework for wild cat conservation in accordance with the National Wildlife Action Plan 2017-2031***

- Landscape conservation master plans for wild cats developed for two globally-significant wild cat landscapes (Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest) with implementation supported by multi-sector partnerships;
- National level Species Recovery Action Plans for Caracal, Fishing Cat and Clouded Leopard informed by a national database and atlas on wild cats;
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for small cat and leopard conservation developed and institutionalized in State and district forest departments;
- Site-specific guidelines on small cat conservation integrated into revised big cat conservation strategies and management plans of tiger reserves and other PAs;
- Improved institutional capacity of relevant government agencies for landscape conservation incorporating wild cat needs, as measured by Capacity Development Scorecard (**Annex 19**), for MoEFCC, Uttar Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh State, District and Municipal Agencies including Forestry, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Medicinal Plants, Tourism, etc) ? from a collective baseline score of 34.2 to 48 by end of project.

***Outcome 2: Improved protection and management of wild cats and habitats in target PAs, corridors and buffer zones in wild cat landscapes***

- Increased management effectiveness of targeted PAs covering 389,572 ha indicate ?sound? management (as measured by the GEF-7 Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) ? see **Annex 10**), covering: Dudhwa Tiger Reserve (220,177 ha) (Baseline 41 / target 81), Pakke Tiger Reserve (137,695 ha) (52/81), Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary (21,700 ha) (54/81), and Sessa Orchid Sanctuary (10,000 ha) (55/82);
- Improved frontline capacity for conservation and management of small wild cats and their habitats, as measured by Small Cats Capacity Development Scorecard (baseline/target scores, see **Annex 18**) for: Dudhwa Landscape (25/77) and Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape (44/85);
- Based on Security Audit jointly conducted by GTF (using WWF guidelines), with approval and guidance of the NTCA, improvements to wild cat habitat management demonstrated in landscapes, including:
  - Dudhwa: Natural grassland and wetland habitats in Sujauli Range of Katarniaghat WS & South Sonaripur Range of Dudhwa TR;
  - Pakke-Eaglenest: Forest connectivity enhanced in critical corridor areas through management and restoration of degraded forest habitats in the ESZ;

***Outcome 3: Enhanced community-based management of wild cats and habitats, with threat reduction including HWC and improved local livelihoods***

- Improved management practices for wild cat conservation and habitat management over 100,000 ha[20]<sup>20</sup> in buffer zones adjacent to PAs and corridors for Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest Landscapes (see **Annexes 16 and 22** for GIS maps of land use in the project landscapes);

- Targeted reduction of locally-specific threats related to community-based management of natural resources for Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest Landscapes;
- Capacity of community and village-level institutions developed for wild cat habitat management, participatory monitoring and institutional management (e.g. financial management, record-keeping);
- Awareness of wild cat conservation raised in local communities (measured by KAP score, see **Annex 21**) and traditional knowledge and practices for wild cat conservation and habitat management documented;
- Village-level institutions actively engaged in participatory community monitoring of wild cat populations and HWC;
- Local livelihood options diversified in targeted communities to reduce pressures on wild cat habitats and as mitigations to any livelihood impacts from habitat management under Component 2;;
- HWC impacts reduced in targeted HWC hotspots through implementation of mechanisms for the prevention and management of HWC adjacent to PAs and corridors.

***Outcome 4: Effective partnerships, communications, knowledge management and M&E for wild cat conservation***

- National green business platform operationalized with Terms of Reference, broad membership and private sector fund supporting investment in project-related activities in each of the three landscapes;
- Improved understanding of values of wild cats and more positive attitudes towards small wild cat conservation among target audiences, as measured by KAP (Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices) score (see **Annex 21** for KAP assessment methodology);
- Improved transboundary cooperation through enhanced incorporation of wild cat considerations in agreements, and strengthened implementation of existing agreements through local-level collaborative actions including staff exchanges, IWT information exchange in support of CITES implementation, cross-representation in events including WWF/GEF-6 Nepal Terai Arc Landscape project;
- At least 20 PAs and institutions share knowledge on small wild cat conservation through regional knowledge platform annually;
- At least 6 project best practices developed, disseminated and used, targeting: integrated management of ESZs to benefit wildlife, management of targeted Wasteland habitats, small wild cat friendly agriculture practices, HWC management in targeted communities, monitoring of small wild cats, gender mainstreaming and traditional knowledge relevant to wild cats / habitats.

**Component 1. Enabling policy, planning and institutional framework for wild cat conservation**

*Outcome: Strengthened policy, planning and institutional framework for wild cat conservation in accordance with the National Wildlife Action Plan 2017-2031*

*[Component 1 will be supported by UNDP as GEF Agency]*

The GEF Alternative for Component 1 will put in place a landscape-level approach to wild cat conservation that goes beyond existing baseline tiger landscape work and which will guide the strengthening and implementation of existing policies, plans and programs of government departments at national and sub-national levels, and other donor/partner initiatives. GEF support will be used to establish landscape-level master plans for wild cat conservation (**Output 1.1**) for Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest landscapes through a participatory process led by NTCA and State Forest Departments involving government agencies, communities and other local stakeholders. These master plans will provide the vision and strategic basis for multi-stakeholder engagement in landscape conservation actions and a framework for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of progress, including demonstration of inter-agency collaboration mechanisms for management of the Environmentally Sensitive Zones (ESZ) that are being established around PAs, and guidelines for specific aspects of wild cat conservation that incorporate climate change adaptation measures. Participatory processes will engage stakeholders and conservation partners at national and subnational levels to fill information gaps on small wild cat conservation and develop national Species Recovery Action Plans for Caracal, Fishing Cat and Clouded Leopard informed by a national database and atlas on wild cats (**Output 1.2**)

? providing a framework for action in support of the landscape master plans and other project activities. Standardized procedures will support the operationalization of landscape conservation master plans, including the development of a monitoring protocol for wild cats, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for HWC management, and strengthening human-rights approaches to wildlife-related law enforcement (**Output 1.3**). Site-specific guidelines on small cat conservation will be developed and integrated into revised big cat conservation strategies and management plans of tiger reserves and other PAs (**Output 1.4**), contributing towards the building of a coordinated action portfolio for wild cat conservation. Landscape conservation priorities for wild cats will be mainstreamed through capacity building of State departments (e.g. Forest, Horticulture, Medicinal Plants, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Tourism, Revenue, Land, Water Management, etc), District Administrations and research institutions for landscape-level conservation (**Output 1.5**). Collectively, this component will result in secure plans for the conservation of globally significant habitats within the targeted landscapes and strengthened State and District level capacity for multi-sectoral engagement, providing the basis for the conservation of targeted wild cat species and a wide range of other globally significant wildlife inhabiting the same landscapes (see landscape profiles in **Annex 16**). Ranthambhore landscape will be included in Outputs 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 only.

***Output 1.1: Landscape-level master plans for wild cat conservation developed and institutionalized into government plans and programs***

**Purpose:** For the Dudhwa (UP) and Pakke-Eaglenest (AP) project landscapes, to develop landscape-level master plans for wild cat conservation that integrate actions for wild cat conservation into existing policies, plans, state and national schemes, and other donor/partner initiatives. The landscape master plans for wild cat conservation will provide the vision and strategic basis for multi-stakeholder engagement and a framework for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of progress. Collectively, this approach will contribute towards the conservation of wild cats across these landscapes, including proposed Eco-Sensitive Zones, and contributing towards the conservation of KBAs (prodoc **Table 6**). The wild cat master plans will provide a detailed roadmap for evolving a mutual complementation strategy through the agreed actions and reciprocal commitments of stakeholder departments and local people.

**Approach:**

**Approach:** The project-led technical assistance for the development of the landscape-level master plans will be provided by GTF as a sub-level Responsible Party under the supervision of the MoEFCC as Implementing Partner. The respective State Forests and Wildlife Departments will lead the planning process with inputs and over-arching approval from NTCA, and Wildlife Division of the MoEFCC. The planning process will be collaborative and involve other relevant institutions such as WII, IIFM, SACON, NCF, Panthera and local NGOs as a source of expertise and to reduce the burden on the Forest Departments. Since the project landscapes encompass parcels of land falling in territorial jurisdictions of more than one department (forest, revenue, etc.) as well as private landholdings, the implementation of prescribed time-bound inputs would be done by respective departments/agencies having jurisdiction over such areas. The overall monitoring of implementation, including course corrections based on annual plans of operations emanating from each master plan would be done by the specially constituted "coordination committee" for each landscape under the senior-most forest functionary of the state.

Preparation of landscape level master plans for wild cats led by the State Forest Departments with inputs and over-arching approval from NTCA. The process will include delineation of the landscape, defining the extent, zonation, review of existing policies, plans, state and national schemes, other donor/partner initiatives, identification, appraisal and engagement of stakeholders, defining clusters, gap assessment, preparation of strategies/portfolio for stakeholder involvement on a *quid pro quo* basis - partially based on the data to be received from components 2 & 3 and primary/secondary data collected through the master-planning process, development of the plans, and institutionalization of each plan. This Output will be led by GTF as a sub-level Responsible Party.

The MoEFCC in the context of introducing eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) management, has prescribed a monitoring committee for each ESZ under the chairmanship of a senior revenue official with the PA manager as its Member Secretary, while including officials from line departments such as the District Panchayat, Public Works Department, Public Health Engineering, experts in the area of ecology and environment, representatives of NGOs working in the field of nature conservation, representatives of town and country planning departments and pollution control boards.

The master planning at the landscape level will have similar contours to ESZs in terms of broad engagement with the line departments operating in the landscape. The landscape master plans may subsume one or more ESZs, consequently, the management regulations in the context of prohibited, regulated, and promoted activities may differ from those prescribed for specific ESZs. Since the overarching purpose of the landscape management is to secure the mainstreaming of biodiversity across key sectors/agencies and the land uses of stakeholders in the landscape which do not have in-situ conservation of wildlife as their primary goal, an MoU of agreed actions among stakeholders is envisaged.

**Steps for master planning:** There is a need for convergence of ongoing initiatives of various departments of the State and other stakeholders in order to factor in the concerns of wild cats and other biodiversity, since these are often not considered among related sectors/stakeholders. There are several players in a landscape whose actions contribute to its ongoing transformation. Since such transformations alter the landscape, there is a need for all ongoing schemes, special projects of the government sectors, and various non-governmental agencies/business groups and local people to incorporate safeguarding actions (retrofitting/mitigatory/compensatory/ameliorative/ or new) in their actions. Such an incorporation amounts to 'convergence', requiring an administrative mechanism drawn from the existing governance system for periodic monitoring towards compliance with reciprocal commitments and progress based on indicators.

The strategy for master planning would broadly involve:

1. Defining limits of the landscape for master planning
2. Categorization of 'altered states' within the transforming wild cat landscape and defining them as:
  - a) Altered State 1: Completely transformed urban/semi-urban areas;
  - b) Altered State 2: Areas with moderate damage with the potential for revival or rehabilitation ? rural / forest interface areas;
  - c) Altered State 3: Areas with comparatively little change: Protected Areas and Community Reserves.
3. Appraisal of drivers of change (environmental, stochastic and anthropogenic), including climate change
4. Identifying sectors operating in the landscape and preparation of land use maps
5. Linking landscape alterations to sectoral/stakeholder actions and climate change impacts
6. Using available data support to prescribe action portfolios for parcels of land within each altered state of the landscape, including climate smart settlements for demonstration
7. Specifying sectoral/stakeholder reciprocal commitments and evolving MoU linked to mutual gains
8. Ensuring the centrality of community stewardship in action portfolios of all altered states based on gains
9. Prescribing an annual schedule of operation, monitoring mechanism and action specific indicators
10. Identifying funding support for master plan implementation (from ongoing schemes, vis-?-vis reciprocal commitments, PES, business models, carbon markets, above and below soil carbon sequestration actions).

The coordination as well as monitoring functions will be conducted by a 'coordination committee', with agreed Terms of Reference (TOR) that will coordinate with different departments, stakeholders, government agencies and institutes and non-governmental organizations that are operating in the landscape, for overseeing and coordinating Master Plan implementation, led by a senior state functionary, with senior nodal officers from state departments, civil society representatives, technical

agency/project agency representatives, and other members as recommended by the state, to ensure the following across the landscape:

- ? Provide strategic direction for preparation and implementation of the master plan through facilitating convergence among relevant departments and other projects in the landscape;
- ? Ensure effective coordination amongst line departments/agencies involved in the landscape;
- ? Monitor progress of master plan interventions, vis-?-vis the approved annual plan of operation, while recommending appropriate courses of action, if necessary;
- ? Facilitate capacity building and training programs, while working with training facilities towards inclusion of landscape level management principles in regular government staff training programs and other ongoing special training/capacity building programs;
- ? Provide guidance and ensure consistency, synergy and convergence of approaches with ongoing development projects and processes in the state including climate change adaptation measures;
- ? Facilitate block, district and sector agency participation in the master planning operations at State level to ensure convergence of manpower and financial resources;
- ? Oversee and support the commitment, funding and other support to the master plan;
- ? Resolve reported implementation issues while recommending mitigation, and/or referring to appropriate authorities, as required;
- ? Monitor utilization of funds by various implementing agencies, vis-?-vis the APO of the master plan;
- ? Ensure support of stakeholder departments/agencies and local people;
- ? Monitor the performance of service providers/consultants, if any;
- ? Disseminate information and publicity for eliciting public support;
- ? Any other tasks agreed by the committee;
- ? The coordination committee would meet every quarter, while updating the State Government on the progress of master plan implementation.

A Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA<sup>[21]</sup>) approach will be integrated and apply in the landscape planning approach and processes to avoid and prevent potential social and environmental impacts linked to development and implementation of landscape master plans. The landscape master plans will be implemented in landscapes with indigenous peoples and communities. If the SESA considerations as part of master plan development determine that Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) would be required to be compliant with UNDP SES then the measures outlined in the WWF IPPF will be followed.

#### **Indicative Activities:**

- 1.1.1 Site level stakeholder assessment workshops - identification and appraisal of stakeholders in the targeted landscapes of Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest, and establishment of the ?coordination committee? for each landscape;
  - 1.1.2 District/State level consultations/workshops for master planning in each landscape including Eco-Sensitive Zones - consultation on existing policies, plans, state & national level schemes, defining clusters at Dudhwa TR, Pakke TR and Eagle Nest WLS;
  - 1.1.3 Master plan preparation for each landscape through Technical Agency/Consultant/Department inputs ? including field team deployment, data collection, community focus group discussions, mapping, assessment, plan preparation, climate change vulnerability assessment and adaptation measures, etc (see **Annex 23** for additional design considerations);
  - 1.1.4 Editing, designing, printing and dissemination of the master plans;
  - 1.1.5 Facilitate the integration of recommendations from master planning process and activities in Components 2&3 into Tiger Conservation Plans and on-going government/partner initiatives Eg: State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, through field level meetings/consultations with Tiger Reserve management/field officials and technical assistance toward integration of master plans into Tiger Conservation Plans and on-going Govt. initiatives;
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1.1.6 Facilitate the integration of inputs from the master planning process into State and District-level development and land use planning processes, including Eco-Sensitive Zone management, wild cat habitat connectivity, community-based sustainable forest management, and climate-smart land use considerations.

***Output 1.2: National level Species Recovery Action Plans developed and implemented for Caracal, Fishing Cat and Clouded Leopard informed by a national database and atlas on wild cats***

**Purpose:** To provide a budgeted framework for systematic conservation actions for the targeted globally significant species of wild cats, informed by compiled data from a range of stakeholders and targeted surveys, enabling gaps to be addressed.

**Approach:** This Output would be led by a Task Force facilitated by experts on wild cats, and would involve extensive stakeholder consultation at national and state levels<sup>[22]</sup> in order to gather relevant information on wild cats to inform conservation assessment, distribution atlas and gap analysis, building on the baseline information and making use of existing resources such as research programmes and WII/NTCA camera trap databases<sup>[23]</sup>. This participatory approach will provide benefits through providing a means of stakeholder engagement and awareness raising regarding the conservation of wild cats. Targeted field surveys supported by Outputs 2.2, 2.3 and 3.3 would provide coverage of key habitats for wild cats within the project landscapes. The atlas will be compiled from the database and is intended for several user groups: forest and wildlife professionals, frontline professionals from other government departments, non-governmental stakeholders, and local people. It is envisaged that the use of the atlas by various stakeholders in a heterogeneous project landscape will raise awareness of the presence of small cat species (which remain poorly known due to their secretive behaviour) and elicit ownership of efforts to protect cat species as indicators of the well-being of local ecosystems. This is a citizen-science initiative that seeks to engage diverse people in providing information on the presence of small cat species, and to motivate their participation in conservation efforts that will directly benefit these target species, as well as their habitats, co-benefiting other globally significant wildlife. The atlas *per se* represents the tangible product of this work, which in itself will be a significant contribution to local, national and international understanding of small cat distribution and status in India, along with information on their habitat status and conservation needs, supporting the proposed national strategy for small cat conservation.

The Species Recovery Action Plans for Caracal, Fishing Cat and Clouded Leopard will identify the key actions required, institutional responsibilities for implementation and budget. The project will support one review of implementation prior to project close, providing lessons and guidance for government and other partners for remaining implementation. This Output will also contribute towards the development of a national strategy for small wild cat conservation, by learning from good practices from across diverse habitats and regions of India that will help to inform an integrated model for small wild cat conservation through this project. The plans will take into account climate change vulnerability of key habitats and species and include adaptive measures. This Output will be led by GTF as a sub-level Responsible Party.

A SESA approach will be integrated and apply in the species recovery planning process for small cat conservation. As part of SESA, a screening procedure will be followed to identify and avoid chances of curtailing of resource management right of Indigenous/Tribal peoples of the project landscapes while formulating operational policies, plans and guidelines for small cat conservation.

**Indicative Activities:**

1.2.1 National and State Consultations/Workshops (5) for inputs from stakeholders and conservation partners to gather data on wild cat distribution, prey base, habitats and threats including climate change vulnerability (including citizen science approach);

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1.2.2 Consultant/Technical agency/consortium for database establishment, data collection, analysis and compilation (see **Annex 23** for additional design considerations). This will include the development of a mobile phone App to support the monitoring of small cats and other wildlife and community-based monitoring of wild cats in Output 3.3 through a citizen science approach to populate the database and atlas, hosted by MoEFCC as the Implementing Partner for the project. Data sharing/accessibility protocols will be developed with key partners in order to secure its value to multiple users and to contribute towards its sustainability. MoEFCC would continue to host and finance the database operation and related App following their own institutional mechanisms after project closure. Further, conservation efforts at field level are already supported in a big way by MoEFCC and respective states (including deployment of frontline and establishment costs, infrastructure, protection etc.). Such financing is resulting in a database emanating from patrolling/monitoring protocols, management plans and tiger conservation plans and working plan implementation. The durability of investment envisaged in the project is thus supported at the formative stage and beyond.

- 1.2.3 Travel and field work for macro surveys and species distribution assessment of targeted regions;
- 1.2.4 Compilation, design, printing and electronic publication of national wild cat distribution atlas;
- 1.2.5 Consultation workshops (3) to determine recovery actions focused on the targeted species;
- 1.2.6 Development of draft national recovery action plans and national strategy for small wild cat conservation including climate change adaptation measures;
- 1.2.7 Stakeholder review and input to drafts;
- 1.2.8 Editing, designing, printing, release and dissemination of action plans.

***Output 1.3: Protocol and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for small cat conservation developed and institutionalized in State and District Forest Departments***

**Purpose:** To strengthen operational management by the State and District Forest Departments on key issues that relate to small wild cats and landscape conservation.

**Approach:** The project will support the development of a Protocol for population assessment and monitoring status for small wild cats, their habitat and prey, as well as SOPs on key issues to facilitate operational management by the Forest Departments at State and District levels and introduce more advanced conservation practices. The SOPs will include the following priorities: i) customization of existing SoP for human-wildlife conflict (HWC) mitigation with a special focus on wild cats; ii) standardized small cat monitoring protocols; iii) human rights-based approach to site-based law enforcement. While the issues listed above are common to all landscapes, a tailored approach will allow them to be adapted to the locally specific conditions, and for specific SOPs on other priorities to be developed and institutionalised for each of the three landscapes (including Ranthambhore) as necessary and as far as project resources allow. This will be assessed through workshops in each landscape. The completed SOPs will be published and distributed and co-financed government efforts will support distribution/rollout of the SOPs nationally through means such as stakeholder workshops. They will support implementation of the National Wildlife Action Plan, Wildlife Protection Act, Forest-dwellers Act, Indian Forest Act, and Biodiversity Act, and community engagement will be integrated in the SOPs.

In order to strengthen the sustainability of protocol and SOP implementation and regular species and habitat monitoring, it will be important to ensure that the site-specific efforts are also integrated into the country level monitoring efforts for species like tiger and leopard. India will be soon implementing the next cycle of *All India Tiger Estimation* across all tiger bearing habitats, and the project management will work with the NTCA and states to ensure that all small wild cat camera captures are stored in a repository. This will be in addition to following the monitoring protocols designed for specific small wild cat monitoring activities led by trained tiger reserve and forest department staff, along with communities and other relevant landscape stakeholders.

This Output will be led by GTF as a sub-level Responsible Party.

A SESA approach will be integrated and apply in the SOP planning process for small cat conservation. As part of SESA, a screening procedure will be followed to identify and avoid chances of curtailing of resource management right of Indigenous/Tribal peoples of the project landscapes while formulating operational policies, plans and guidelines for small cat conservation.

**Indicative Activities:**

- 1.3.1 Convene workshops with scientific institutes and Government agencies to develop a Protocol for population assessment and monitoring status for small wild cats, their habitat and prey;
- 1.3.2 Technical agency/consultant inputs for drafting of Protocol (see **Annex 23** for additional design considerations);
- 1.3.3 Editing, designing, printing and dissemination of Protocol;
- 1.3.4 Convene workshops and consultations with stakeholders and partners for customization of existing SoP for human-wildlife conflict (HWC) mitigation with a special focus on wild cats, SoP on human-rights approach to site-based law enforcement, and other SoPs identified as priorities;
- 1.3.5 Technical agency/consultant/department to customize the SoP on HWC, draft SoP on human-rights approach to site-based law enforcement and other priority SoPs;
- 1.3.6 Editing, Designing and Printing of SoPs;
- 1.3.7 Convene evaluation workshops to confirm best practices and disseminate results (using NTCA Tiger Landscapes as units).

***Output 1.4: Site-specific guidelines on small cat conservation integrated into revised big cat conservation strategies and management plans of tiger reserves and other PAs***

**Purpose:** To build a coordinated action portfolio for wild cat conservation bringing together big cat and small cat conservation through integrating small cat conservation needs into conservation strategies and plans that are mainly focused on tigers.

**Approach:** Site-specific guidelines on small cat conservation will be developed in accordance with the landscape-level master plans developed in **Output 1.1** and integrated into revised big cat conservation strategies, conservation plans of tiger reserves and management plans of other PA types. This will be led by technical experts on small cat conservation working with PA staff, national and landscape government agencies and NGO partners. The guidelines should be coordinated with the SOPs in **Output 1.3** and training for frontline staff in **Output 2.3**, and take account of climate change vulnerability and adaptation needs.

A Social and Environmental Strategic Assessment (SESA) approach will be integrated and apply in the guideline development process for small cat conservation. As part of SESA, a screening procedure will be followed to identify and avoid chances of curtailing of resource management right of Indigenous/Tribal peoples of the project landscapes while formulating operational policies, plans and guidelines for small cat conservation.

**Indicative Activities:**

- 1.4.1 Taking account of the baseline assessment during project preparation (see **Annex 19**), convene a national expert workshop and consultations to determine the priority subjects for guidelines for small wild cat conservation across India and draft a framework based on the outcomes of the national workshop;
- 1.4.2 For each landscape, confirm priority subjects based on the national framework and local consultations, and draft site-specific guidelines focused on key issues for the conservation of small wild cats taking into account the baseline assessment during project preparation (see **Annex 18**). Examples of landscape specific issues are given below;
- 1.4.3 Convene workshops for each project landscape to review the draft guidelines and the process for incorporating them into relevant plans. Determine information gaps and research needs, and responsible parties and coordination required for implementation of the guidelines;
- 1.4.4 Finalize the guidelines and socialize them with staff of the relevant agencies through seminars / training (coordinated with **Output 1.3**);

1.4.5 Coordinate with the Forest Dept, NTCA and other relevant agencies to support the incorporation of the guidelines into relevant work plans, TCPs, Management plans, etc.

#### **Landscape Considerations for Site-specific Guidelines for Small Wild Cat Conservation:**

**Dudhwa Landscape:** Maintaining habitat connectivity for wildlife in the ESZ; Biodiversity-friendly farming methods for sugarcane, rice and other crops; Sustainable forest management with emphasis on biodiversity conservation and connectivity; Grassland and grazing management for small cats and their prey populations; Wetland and riverbank management for fishing cats; Wild cat kitten identification, rescue and care; Free-ranging dog neutering programmes and management; Reduction of road traffic-related mortality; community-based anti-poaching patrols.

**Ranthambhore Landscape:** Maintaining habitat connectivity for wildlife in the ESZ; Biodiversity-friendly farming methods such as 'cat sanctuary areas' in field margins and reduction in use of pesticides/rodenticides/insecticides; Management of 'Wasteland' - arid scrubland, ravine and inactive sandstone quarry habitats to benefit wild cats; Management and restoration of riverbank habitats (for fishing cats); Free-ranging dog neutering programmes and management; Reduction of road traffic-related mortality; community-based anti-poaching patrols; Management of free-ranging cattle carcasses[24]<sup>24</sup>.

**Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape:** Maintaining habitat connectivity for wildlife in the ESZ; Sustainable forest management with emphasis on biodiversity conservation and connectivity; Sustainable land management and farming practices to benefit wildlife and including reduction in use of pesticides / rodenticides / insecticides; Wild cat kitten identification, rescue and care; Free-ranging dog neutering programmes and management; Reduction of road traffic-related mortality; community-based anti-poaching patrols.

#### ***Output 1.5: Capacity of State and District agencies increased for mainstreaming wild cat conservation in landscape management***

**Purpose:** To address existing gaps in institutional capacity and technical skills for planning and implementing landscape conservation including ESZ management among State and District agencies (Forest, Horticulture, Medicinal Plants, Agriculture Animal Husbandry, Veterinary Services, Tourism, Water Management, Rural Development, Land, District Collectors Office, etc.) and to sensitize elected representatives on biodiversity conservation including wild cats. This calls for orientation and training of various agencies operating in the wild cats landscapes.

**Approach:** The capacity assessments for State and District agencies and training needs assessments conducted during project preparation (see **Annexes 18 & 19**) identified gaps and weaknesses that the project will address. The project will develop a set of training modules to support landscape conservation and ESZ management, and will also address locally-specific capacity and training needs through tailored activities (e.g. to address a specific land use issue, reduced chemical use in agriculture, management of free-ranging dog populations in problem areas[25]<sup>25</sup>). Sensitization of targeted stakeholder groups (suggested stakeholder groups and related themes are mentioned below), including elected representatives will aim to strengthen support for landscape conservation. Staff of stakeholder departments will be included in training activities (or assist in their provision) in order to strengthen understanding and collaboration between the Tiger Reserve management and other government bodies involved in the wider landscape.

Capacity building will be conducted at several levels, including forest frontline staff and stakeholders working and operating in the landscape. The training process will involve regular forest guard schools and departmental training institutes. There is ongoing engagement of the GTF, WWF and the

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Government of India which is focusing on refinement of the frontline staff training curriculum regionally and nationally, incorporating inputs and workshops from training institutes across the country. Sharing of knowledge emanating from the current project and the associated training design will utilize such common platforms for engagement, and the modules will be designed for implementation across the landscape and also for covering thematic areas such as monitoring protocols, SOPs and recovery actions nationally. The focus on staff development is a key theme in the government's tiger conservation plans, and will also be incorporated in the landscape master plans to be monitored through a 'coordination committee' in each state with an institutional TOR to be established at the landscape level (provided in output 1.1), and the modules and training outputs/learnings will be shared with state level departmental training institutes for inclusion in their curricula, workshops and state and centre supported capacity building efforts.

The capacity building would include orientation of senior level state officials (cross-sectoral), followed by training of trainers (TOT) in selected revenue and forest training institutions for each state. Special emphasis would be given to building the capacity of landscape level frontline functionaries, who would be mandated for field execution (see also Output 2.2). This orientation as well as TOT would incorporate all indicated thematic areas. Outputs 1.3 and 1.4 will result in a standard operating procedures and guidelines for stakeholders grouped under broad categories. The resulting codification through SOPs and guidelines evolving from the project will form a crucial part of capacity building elements.

An indicative list of Government Departments (State and GOI) and capacity building themes related to the landscape master plans to ensure convergence of efforts towards conservation of wild cats and their habitats is as follows (for scoping purposes):

- Forest and Wildlife ? wildlife protection, habitat conservation, monitoring, livelihoods (PES ), human wildlife interface issues;
- Police ? local enforcement, human wildlife interface issues;
- Protection Agencies ? preventing inter-state/transborder crime and wildlife trafficking;
- Departments handling Rural/Agriculture ? livelihoods, cultivation, natural resource management, waste disposal, wildlife monitoring, ecotourism, prophylactic measures, green buffering for disease prevention and regulation;
- Departments handing urban portfolio ? waste disposal, urban biodiversity, monitoring edge habitats, ecological planning, green buffering, disease regulation;
- Revenue ? green funding support, ecological/green land use planning;
- Linear Infrastructure ? smart green infrastructure, monitoring road/rail corridors passing through wildlife habitats, retrofitting for corridor connectivity;
- Disaster Management ? land use change monitoring, disaster mitigation and readiness, human wildlife interface issues;
- Tourism ? supporting host community ecotourism, sustainable tourism guidelines around protected areas, state-of-the-art communication strategy for marketing and promotion;
- Agencies handling Industry/business engagement ? business models, connecting community produce to national/global markets.

The GTF and WWF India have already conducted capacity building of frontline staff in and around Pilibhit and Dudhwa TRs to address the human-tiger interface, comprising a composite portfolio that includes monitoring and protection, use of modern equipment, forecasting and alerts, chemical immobilisation of aberrant wild animals, livelihoods and micro planning, and other proactive approaches for mitigating human wildlife conflict. In addition, sensitization of stakeholder agencies at the landscape level is being carried out along with training of community stewards for monitoring and reducing human wildlife interface.

#### **Indicative Activities:**

1.5.1 Validate and update baseline capacity scorecard assessments and training needs analyses conducted during project preparation (see **Annexes 18 & 19**) at project inception stage;

1.5.2 Prepare capacity development, training and sensitization plans with related State and District agencies on issues such as key issues such as landscape level monitoring of species and habitat, sustainable agriculture, horticulture using reduced chemical inputs, HWC mitigation measures for agriculture and horticulture, eco-tourism, management of abandoned cattle, management of free-ranging dog populations, 'wasteland' management, among others (see the above scoping list);

1.5.3 Develop training materials appropriate for the targeted trainee groups;

1.5.4 Conduct targeted training workshops, refresher courses and sensitization activities such as seminars and events for line departments and other stakeholders according to the training plans (approx. 30 participants / training workshop; 8 workshops for each landscape);

1.5.5 Conduct evaluations of all training activities using post-training questionnaires for all participants; monitor changes in capacity through capacity development scorecard assessments at mid-term and project completion.

## **Component 2. Strengthened management and protection of wild cat landscapes**<sup>[26]</sup>

*Outcome: Improved protection and management of wild cats and habitats in target PAs, corridors and buffer zones in wild cat landscapes*

*[Component 2 will be supported by WWF as GEF Agency]*

**Components 2 and 3** will be implemented in two project landscapes (Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest), putting in place the required State, District and local capacity, collaborations and community stewardship for landscape-scale conservation in the targeted globally-significant landscapes for wild cats (see **Annexes 1 & 17**). **Component 2** will bring together key government departments with roles to play in wild cat conservation to support the implementation of the landscape-scale master plans. This will help to build a complementary and coordinated action portfolio that brings together big cat and small cat conservation under the guidance and supervision of NTCA. Supporting the implementation of landscape conservation master plans, targeted interventions will be demonstrated to improve or rehabilitate key habitats used by wild cats (**Output 2.1**), focusing on strengthening the ecological integrity of forest, grassland and wetland habitats. This will benefit a wide range of wildlife dependent upon these globally significant habitats. Secondly, frontline staff will be capacitated and equipped to support wild cat conservation, monitoring and enforcement, with a focus on human-rights based approaches (**Output 2.2**). This will include the completion of security assessments and provision of equipment for monitoring and surveillance and training in state-of-the art monitoring protocols (e.g. M-STrIPES 'Monitoring System for Tigers - Intensive Protection and Ecological Status' protocols and software system), and implementation of SOPs for wild cat conservation developed under Component 1 including training in community engagement and delivery of a human rights-based approach to site-based wildlife law enforcement. Overall, this component will result in strengthened frontline staff capacity for the management of habitats and wild cats within the targeted landscapes, also benefiting the other globally significant wildlife inhabiting the same landscapes (see **Annex 16**).

### ***Output 2.1: Targeted interventions to improve wild cat habitat management demonstrated in project landscapes***

**Purpose:** To demonstrate improvements to small wild cat habitats in support of implementation of the landscape conservation strategies.

**Approach:** Baseline assessments during project preparation provided initial information regarding the presence of small wild cat species in each landscape, the main habitats being used, as well as land use management issues, threats and opportunities for habitat conservation and rehabilitation (see landscape profiles in **Annex 16**, and baseline assessments in **Annexes 18 & 20**). Based on this analysis, the project will support targeted interventions for each landscape as described below, which will support implementation of the landscape conservation master plans for wild cats in Output 1.1 (for example, by

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restoring habitat connectivity). In most cases, initial in-depth targeted assessment is required to inform the detailed habitat management and rehabilitation design in order to ensure it is well grounded in ecological science and will yield sustainable results that benefit wild cats, their prey base and other wildlife. This Output will be led by GTF as a sub-level Responsible Party.

#### **Indicative Activities:**

##### **Dudhwa Landscape**

The habitat conservation priorities for Dudhwa Landscape are to restore key habitats for fishing cat, especially the natural grassland and wetland habitats in Sujauli Range of Katerniaghat WS & South Sonaripur Range of Dudhwa TR.

##### ***Sub-output a): Improved management of natural grassland and wetland habitats in Sujauli Range of Katerniaghat WS & South Sonaripur Range of Dudhwa TR***

The improved management of these habitats will directly benefit globally significant species including greater one-horned rhinoceros, Asian elephant, tiger, leopard, fishing cat, jungle cat, barasingha, etc. It will also contribute towards improved condition of degraded grasslands and wetlands that lie within the Global 200 Ecosystem *Terai-Duar Savannas and Grasslands*. All three PAs in the landscape are recognized Important Bird Areas and KBAs (see Landscape and PA Profile in **Annex 16A**).

2.1.1 Collect available baseline data and plans with Forest Dept and other agencies and establish baseline for current management practices for grassland and wetland habitats, describe the hydrological conditions, ecological communities, weed infestation, livestock and wildlife use, and presence of small cats in Year 1;

2.1.2. Expert consultation & capacity building of forest staff on grassland and wetland management (annual workshops)

2.1.3. Preparation of grassland and wetland management plans through consultation with experts and managers;

2.1.4. Facilitate implementation of habitat management under expert supervision, including:

- Vegetation management
- Management of human and grazing access, fencing of grazing exclosures (note ? establishment of goshalas for abandoned cattle and mitigations to access restriction are covered in Output 3.4)
- Soil and water testing and analysis
- Management of water levels
- Nursery development for native species
- Planting of desired vegetation where necessary;

2.1.5. Conduct monitoring of habitat management interventions and fishing cat occupancy, annual reviews of progress in rehabilitation, and end of project documentation and evaluation of the habitat improvement, share lessons learned to inform the management of similar habitats in these landscapes and elsewhere;

##### **Pakke ? Eaglenest Landscape**

The habitat conservation priorities for Pakke ? Eaglenest Landscape are to protect, sustainably manage and rehabilitate key forest habitats for forest-dwelling cats:

##### **Sub-output b): Enhanced forest connectivity through identification of critical corridor areas and participatory management and rehabilitation of degraded forest habitats in the ESZ**

The fragmentation and degradation of forest habitats is an ongoing piecemeal process in this forested foothill region that supports some of the greatest species richness on earth: the project landscape lies in the East Himalayan Biodiversity Hotspot, and is part of the ?East Himalayan Endemic Bird Area?. Its upper reaches are also recognised among the Global 200 Ecoregions as the ?Eastern Himalayan Broadleaf and Conifer Forests? ranked as Vulnerable. Three Important Bird Areas which are also Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) are located in the landscape, namely Eaglenest and Sessa Sanctuaries, Pakke Wildlife Sanctuary, and Shergaon, Mandla - Phudung and Kalaktang. A large part of the landscape also constitutes the Kameng Elephant Reserve (see landscape/PA Profile in **Annex 16C**). Accordingly, the

strengthening of forest connectivity and integrity in critical bottleneck areas will benefit wide-ranging species such as Asian elephant and tiger in addition to the targeted cat species (including clouded leopard, Asian golden cat and marbled cat) and diverse other wildlife species. This sub-output will also contribute towards the sustained integrity of forest condition in targeted areas that are known to be subject to ongoing degradation processes, through stakeholder and community engagement.

2.1.6 Satellite image analysis to map key forest corridor bottlenecks at landscape level (eg Tenga RF and Sessa Orchid Sanctuary) and conduct ground surveys and baseline analysis to determine causes of forest loss and degradation and potential for rehabilitation;

2.1.7 Develop site-specific plans for forest management and rehabilitation to strengthen forest corridors by engaging local communities and other stakeholders, linked to incentives through community conservation agreements (see **Output 3.4**) including cultivation and sustainable harvesting of NTFP such as medicinal plants where appropriate, and to determine scope of intervention, coordination and technical support responsibilities;

2.1.8 Implement forest corridor improvements for critical bottlenecks according to the agreed plans through a participatory approach that engages communities in rehabilitation work (eg assisted natural regeneration);

2.1.9 Support participatory monitoring by communities and District Forestry Office (see **Output 3.3**) and evaluation of the use of improved areas by wildlife including wild cat species occupancy.

### ***Output 2.2: Frontline staff capacitated and equipped to conduct monitoring, surveillance and enforcement***

**Purpose:** To reduce the impact of threats on small wild cats and their habitats across the project landscapes by increasing the effectiveness of PA and buffer zone management.

**Approach:** Based on Security Audit jointly conducted by GTF (using WWF guidelines), with approval and guidance of the NTCA, the project will systematically address the gaps and weaknesses in the capacity of frontline staff that were identified during the capacity assessment for each landscape during project preparation (see the Capacity Development Scorecards in **Annex 18**). Capacity development inputs will focus on training in state-of-the art monitoring protocols (e.g. M-STriPES ?Monitoring System for Tigers - Intensive Protection and Ecological Status? protocols and software system), and implementation of SOPs for wild cat conservation developed under Component 1 including training in community engagement and delivery of a human rights-based approach to site-based wildlife law enforcement. They will also include limited provision of priority equipment for patrolling, monitoring and surveillance tailored to the specific needs identified for each landscape, including monitoring of roadkills of wild cats. Changes in capacity will be monitored through capacity development scorecard assessments at mid-term and project completion.

In order to strengthen the sustainability of training inputs, the training process will involve regular forest guard schools and departmental training institutes. There is ongoing engagement of the GTF, WWF and the Government of India which is focusing on refinement of the frontline staff training curriculum regionally and nationally, incorporating inputs and workshops from training institutes across the country. Sharing of knowledge emanating from the current project and the associated training design will utilize such common platforms for engagement, and the modules will be designed for implementation across the landscape and also for covering thematic areas such as monitoring protocols, SOPs and recovery actions nationally. The focus on staff development is a key theme in the government's tiger conservation plans, and will also be incorporated in the landscape master plans. To ensure the sustainability of training and capacity building towards landscape level efforts, training initiatives will be monitored through the same coordination mechanism/committee with an institutional TOR to be established at the landscape level (provided in Output 1.1), and the modules and training outputs/learnings will be shared with state level departmental training institutes for inclusion in their curricula, workshops and state and centre supported capacity building efforts.

This Output will be led by GTF as a sub-level Responsible Party.

**The overall project approach to capacity development for frontline staff will include the following activities:**

2.2.1 Develop an implementation plan for training provision based on local needs in each landscape and the Security Audit conducted by GTF, with approval and guidance of the NTCA;

2.2.2 Develop training curricula and modules on key subjects including community engagement and gender incorporating a human rights-based approach, field techniques for monitoring small cats, taking account of project-supported SOPs (**Output 1.3**) and guidelines (**Output 1.4**);

2.2.3. Conduct capacity building program for forest staff as per curricula, including short training courses, on-the-job training, and exposure visits of selected staff to other project sites to learn best practices<sup>[27]</sup>;

**In Dudhwa Landscape** this will include facilitating effective implementation of MStrIPES program in Dudhwa TR through refresher training, feedback session, and assistance in analysis and report generation;

**In Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape**, this will include capacity building of Forest frontline staff including on project-related SOPs ? Pakke and Eaglenest: six trainings, 30 persons per training;

2.2.4 Conduct awareness raising on small cat conservation and specialized training of frontline staff through full integration of small cat monitoring in NTCA PHASE IV programs. These trainings will be conducted nationwide in blocks of NTCA-Landscapes (cofinanced by NTCA);

2.2.5 Convene workshops on awareness of legal issues related to small cat conservation and protection for frontline staff, line departments, EDCs and other local stakeholders;

**In Dudhwa Landscape** this will include a sensitization cum coordination programme for other line agencies and related transboundary Nepalese authorities on threats & IWT - for SSB, Police, Agriculture, Revenue Dept, etc - 1 program/year at each site;

**In Pakke ? Eaglenest Landscape** this will include the sensitization of Defence, Police and border security and customs forces: five trainings; and conduct training / sensitization on community engagement, gender and human rights-based approach to enforcement for forest department and army staff;

2.2.6 Provide limited priority field gear and equipment for field staff to enable effective patrolling, monitoring and law enforcement (eg GPS, binoculars, communications equipment);

2.2.7 Conduct capacity development scorecard assessments at mid-term and project completion.

### **Component 3. Community stewardship and human-wildlife coexistence in wild cat landscapes<sup>[28]</sup>**

***Outcome: Enhanced community-based management of wild cats and habitats, with threat reduction including HWC and improved local livelihoods***

*[Component 3 will be supported by WWF as GEF Agency]*

Working in parallel with Component 2, in the same wild cat landscapes and with the same communities, **Component 3** will build community stewardship and engagement towards the co-management of wild cat habitats at targeted locations in each landscape. The project will strengthen the governance and capacity of existing community and village-level institutions (e.g. Gram Panchayats, Women Self-Help Groups, Eco-Development Committees (EDC), Forest Rights Committees (FRC), Tribal Village Councils (Pakke and Eaglenest), cooperatives, etc.) to take a greater role in wild cat conservation, applying the positive lessons from the Bugun Sinchung Village Community Reserve beside Eaglenest WLS (**Output 3.1**). The project will provide training on wild cat habitat management, participatory monitoring and business skills. Community engagement and participation will be enhanced through awareness-raising programmes for local communities including documentation of related traditional knowledge (**Output 3.2**). A new model for participatory community monitoring of small wild cat populations and HWC damage and risks will be operationalized (**Output 3.3**) with the support of village-level institutions, raising understanding of local wild cat population status, the quality and use of habitats within PAs and across the surrounding mosaic of forest and agricultural

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land, and on the extent of threats impacting habitats, as well as HWC, poaching and roadkills. Incentives will be provided to support community participation in small wild cat conservation and reduce pressure on wild cat habitats through diversification of local livelihoods, as well as mitigate any livelihood or access impacts from the habitat management and law enforcement in Component 2, linked to the IPPF (**Output 3.4**). Uptake of more sustainable land and habitat management practices will be supported by value addition to agriculture and livestock products, and establishment/enhancement of tourist facilities and ecotourism programmes (while taking account of COVID-19-related risks, see **Annex 5**). Finally, HWC hotspots will be identified and innovative mechanisms for preventing and managing HWC in areas adjacent to PAs and corridors demonstrated (**Output 3.5**). This will involve the completion of SAFE workshops with communities and local stakeholders applying the WWF SAFE Framework, followed by investment in community-based HWC solutions (e.g. solar electric fencing) that respond to the identified issues. Overall, this component will result in increased capacity and mobilized communities engaging in community-based natural resource management that benefits small wild cats and their habitats within the targeted landscapes, as well as other globally significant wildlife (see landscape profiles in **Annex 16**).

### ***Output 3.1: Capacity developed for community-based management of wild cats and habitats***

**Purpose:** To strengthen the governance and capacity of community and village-level institutions to play a greater role in wild cat and habitat conservation in line with the master plans for wild cat conservation.

#### **Approach:**

This Output will provide the tools and training incorporating gender and social inclusion aspects to build the capacity of local communities for the management and restoration of diverse habitats for wild cat conservation. Training contents and delivery will be tailored to the local context in each landscape, covering: 1) habitat management and restoration with a community-centred safeguard approach towards forest, scrub, grassland, wetland and riverbank management; 2) the identification and monitoring of small wild cat species and their ecological requirements; and 3) administrative procedures, financial management, record-keeping, and effective consultation for village level institutions, such as: Gram Panchayats, Women Self-Help Groups, Eco-Development Committees (EDC), Forest Rights Committees (FRC), Tribal Village Councils (Pakke and Eaglenest), cooperatives, etc. Training modules will be developed for each subject area targeted at local communities, delivered in-situ, and the results evaluated and used to improve the modules and delivery for target areas through an iterative process. The training will support related interventions including community-based approaches to area management, participatory monitoring of small wild cats, habitat restoration pilots, livelihood diversification and HWC response.

In order to strengthen the sustainability of capacity development for local communities, existing structures such as the Eco Development Committees and tiger reserve specific Tiger Conservation Foundations (TCFs) will be engaged for refresher courses evolved around the project themes, with a special focus on community-led monitoring for small wild cats. Scaling up successful capacity building efforts can be done through existing partnerships with state agencies, and forging integration of activities in departmental schemes and goals (as described with National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED) earlier, involvement of animal husbandry, horticulture, skill development department, etc).

#### **The overall project approach to capacity development at community level will include the following activities:**

- 3.1.1 Conduct a Rapid Needs Assessment of the institutional capacity of Eco-Development Councils in project villages - rapid needs assessment of targeted villages in each landscape;
- 3.1.2 Develop community engagement processes for high conservation value (HCV) habitats in Dudhwa as well as Pakke & Eaglenest buffer zones (Rupa Sinchung and Shergaon), taking into account local experiences such as Bugun Sinchung. This will include stakeholder review and agreement to proposed approaches, including Free Prior informed Consent consultations with IP communities at an early stage of the process in line with the project safeguards plans (see Risks section, **Annex 25**

(IPPF). Such HCV habitats are also the subject of rehabilitation efforts in Output 2.1 where they have been degraded;

3.1.3 Develop a capacity development / training programme plan for each landscape based on the training needs analysis during project preparation, taking account of various approaches to community-based monitoring of wildlife and habitats (for example, see the Event Book System approach that has been successful in parts of Africa<sup>[29]</sup>);

3.1.4 Develop training modules for the main subject areas at an appropriate level for local communities (tailored to specific needs), including: habitat management and restoration, identification and monitoring of small cat species, and administration and management of village level institutions;

3.1.5 Provide training to the targeted community groups, as follows:

? Training on institutional strengthening, leadership development and financial management for EDCs and other relevant CBOs

? Training of naturalists from conservation youth groups in targeted villages

? Training on wild cat habitat management- patrolling, monitoring of small cats and prey, habitat

? Training of paravets for care of rescued animals and associated sensitization of community on small wild cat conservation;

3.1.6 Formation and strengthening of community institutions (eg EDCs, CBOs, village committees) to support community-based conservation approaches - community mobilisation, establishment of relevant local committees, preparation of community conservation plans;

3.1.7 Strengthening of Pakke Tiger Foundation Office through needs assessment, financial planning, preparing funding request forms, advocacy at the State and Central level; office equipment (computers), office running costs over 4 years (cofinanced by NTCA);

3.1.8 Evaluate training courses after delivery (questionnaires for participants) and monitor uptake of

3.1.5 participatory monitoring activities by trainees post-training;

3.1.9 Support implementation of financial incentives (eg from States) and recognition at state and national levels (e.g. Ganga Prahri of NMCG<sup>[30]</sup>) to stimulate participation.

***Output 3.2: Awareness-raising and education programmes conducted for local communities on wild cat conservation and habitat management including documentation of related traditional knowledge***

**Purpose:** To enhance community engagement and participation in wild cat conservation by raising awareness and documenting traditional knowledge and practices that support wild cat conservation.

**Approach:**

PPG baseline assessments found that most members of local communities are aware of the existence of the small cats; however, they find it hard to distinguish among the different species. Awareness about different species of small wild cat is high in Pakke- Eaglenest area in comparison to Dudhwa where people use the term *van billar* to categorize all small wild cats. Awareness raising for targeted wildlife species has a spillover effect, improving understanding of the overall ecosystem, flora and other fauna. The project will build on baseline awareness programmes by WWF, TigerWatch, other groups and schools by taking a very targeted approach to awareness raising activities. These will be focused on target areas / communities within each landscape and aligned towards resolving specific issues impacting wild cats and their habitats. Women, youth, ethnic minorities and other vulnerable groups involved in the identified issues will be main audiences. The main delivery mechanisms will be face-to-face contact, such as community workshops, focus groups, field activities, etc. making use of local NGOs, CBOs and schools where possible. The awareness programme will be integrated with other Outputs in this Component, such as livelihood diversification and HWC management, for greater impact and sustainability. National and subnational level awareness raising is covered in **Output 4.2**.

**The overall project approach to awareness raising and education will include the following activities:**

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3.2.1 Develop an awareness raising plan for each landscape together with partners, addressing key conservation issues in specific areas / communities, such as reduction of pesticide use in agricultural areas for wild cats;

3.2.2 Convene workshops with the targeted communities to confirm needs and locally appropriate delivery mechanisms for awareness raising activities (e.g. posters, signboards, meetings, talks);

3.2.3 Prepare education and awareness materials on small cats like photographs with keys for identification of various cats, distribution maps, information on their ecology and their role in maintaining their ecosystems, legal issues related to conservation and protection of cats. This can provide a basis for awareness-raising on small cats across the country to support field training efforts;

3.2.4 Conduct awareness raising and education activities with local partners, including:

- Raise awareness among public, politicians and media on small cat conservation through awareness programs on relevant days with different stakeholders

- Training of women and youth, and their village level groups on small cat conservation (50% participation of women)

- Install awareness signage in targeted villages

- Targeted communications to address illegal hunting, habitat encroachment and other local conservation issues;

3.2.5 Conduct baseline and repeat KAP assessments at the start and completion of each awareness raising programme to measure changes and evaluate its effectiveness;

3.2.6 Conduct workshops in targeted areas/communities in Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest to document traditional knowledge and practices with specific reference to small cats and their habitats (harvest practices, crop cycles, grazing practices etc.), with the aim of compiling and documenting such traditional knowledge, and raising awareness of traditions that support small wild cat conservation efforts.

***Output 3.3: Participatory community monitoring of wild cat populations and HWC operationalized through village-level institutions***

**Purpose:** To develop and operationalize a new model for participatory community monitoring of wild cat populations and HWC damage and risks through village-level institutions. This will raise understanding of local wild cat population status, the quality and use of habitats within PAs and surrounding lands, and the status of local threats to wild cats and their habitats.

**Approach:** Small wild cats are inconspicuous, mainly nocturnal species. Consequently, their distribution and abundance in different habitats and landscapes are poorly known, as are their diets, involvement in HWC, and the main threats facing them (such as roadkill). Consequently, the project will support capacity building programmes for communities (see also **Output 3.1** above) to strengthen the knowledge base on small wild cats, and our understanding of their needs and the threats impacting them. While this aims to mainly build local capacity, the results will be linked to the database and atlas on small wild cats under Output 1.2, that will be hosted and maintained after the project by MoEFCC. Current baseline work mainly involves government and NGO-led camera trapping for tiger monitoring, with some community involvement in Ranthambhore through WWF-India Community Resource Person (CRP?s) along with Forest Department, as well as TigerWatch volunteers, and in the Bugun community in the Eaglenest area. The project will build on this by partnering with established local NGOs and CBOs to build local capacity for participatory monitoring of small cats, their prey and habitat conditions. Community monitoring will be linked to local community benefits in the form of voluntary wardens, anti-poaching groups, etc. and supported by awareness raising and networking. The monitoring will also be linked to existing monitoring of HWC and tiger populations through GTF, and support from the Forest Department in addressing HWC / compensation in **Output 3.5**. This Output will be led by GTF as a sub-level Responsible Party.

**The overall project approach to community monitoring will include the following activities:**

3.3.1 Conduct initial round of consultations with local stakeholders to update baseline and confirm approach to establish a Participatory Community-based Monitoring System ? including training on

biodiversity monitoring, and patrolling for monitoring threats including roadkill; community-based event reporting[31]<sup>31</sup>;

3.3.2 Establish regular patrolling and monitoring teams in targeted communities, involving local youth where possible (as in Pakke TR and Eaglenest WLS) to conduct anti-poaching, patrolling and monitoring activities. This will be introduced to new areas and expanded in areas where already initiated, and groups will be networked to provide a wider sense of engagement in small wild cat conservation;

3.3.3 Provide training to the teams (coordinated with **Output 3.1** above) for each landscape, including:

**Dudhwa:** Provide training on Wild Cat Habitat Management and Participatory Monitoring for EDC members and local youths 4 trainings/year over 5 years; support the ongoing Bagh Mitra programme in the landscape, and build local community capacity for small cat conservation[32]<sup>32</sup>

**Pakke-Eaglenest:** Train women and youth on wild cat habitat monitoring (10 meetings);

3.3.4 Provide site-specific Community-Based Monitoring Equipment (divided between three sites ? Pakke, Eaglenest and Dudhwa): 100 Camera Traps, 15 GPS units, 3 Digital Cameras (advanced point and shoot camera with high zoom, inbuilt geotagging), 9 small cameras, 75 Sherman Traps for live capture of small mammal (prey estimation)[33]<sup>33</sup>, 24 binoculars, other equipment as needed such as GPS, field gear, identification guides and site-specific Mobile Apps;

3.3.5 Develop a financial incentive program for community volunteers (e.g. Bugun tribes incentive programs for patrolling) and a recognition model for local participation (prestige of recognition at State or national level for conservation work as positive motivation);

3.3.6 Establish a community based open data source through supporting development of bio-cultural heritage interpretation centres (culture, biodiversity, heritage)[34]<sup>34</sup> for Pakke and Eaglenest areas;

3.3.7 Develop and review the effectiveness of data and photo sharing from the community teams (including use of mobile apps linked to the database in **Output 1.2**);

3.3.8 Support community volunteers to conduct small wild cat, prey and other wildlife monitoring, anti-poaching patrolling, roadkill monitoring, fire-watching (for the PA as well as the community reserve) via Pakke TR and Shergaon Forest Division.

#### ***Output 3.4: Local livelihood options diversified to encourage reduced pressures on wild cat habitats***

**Purpose:** To provide incentives that will support community participation in wild cat conservation and reduce pressure on wild cat habitats through diversification of local livelihoods in targeted areas, and to provide the livelihood restoration outlined in the IPPF.

**Approach:** Support for the diversification of livelihoods will be targeted on specific areas in each landscape where it is clear that local practices are exerting pressure on habitats used by wild cats, such as cutting trees for firewood or timber, converting forest to vegetable farms, hunting and trading in wildlife or in areas which with intense HWC. These livelihood development support activities will also seek to mitigate any restrictions on access to natural resources that may be identified during safeguards planning. The exact nature of the pressures impacting wild cats and their habitats are locally specific, therefore the interventions in each landscape will respond to the baseline assessment findings while at the same time seeking to benefit the most marginalized and vulnerable groups and proactively engage women and youth. In order to nurture sustainable solutions, the project interventions will coordinate and build on existing efforts by NGOs, CBOs, local institutions such as Gram Panchayats, Women Self-Help Groups, Eco-Development Committees (EDC), Forest Rights Committees (FRC), Tribal Village Councils (Pakke and Eaglenest), cooperatives, etc. and other stakeholders through developing partnerships, and align with or seek to improve relevant government programmes (for example subsidies for LPG for forest dependent communities may be more effective if extended from one to three years). For greater cumulative impact and sustainability, the support for livelihood diversification

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will also be integrated with related actions such as awareness raising, pilot habitat restoration, participatory monitoring of wild cats, and HWC interventions. The choice of cropping and other livelihood measures in Component 3 will be aligned with site-specific requirements, worked out during the inception phase of the project, and mainstreamed with existing Government schemes as per the protected area management plans/Tiger Conservation Plans, and other district/agency plans. The choice of crop and its planting pattern would be selected and spatially adjusted to avoid providing cover that may attract wild animals. There is also potential synergy with the business partnerships proposed under Output 4.1, which could facilitate connections for marketing local produce.

Overall, the livelihood goals include incentivizing engagement in the project's conservation strategies, also compensating for any access restrictions (eg on grazing) that may arise from strengthened conservation measures as part of safeguards mitigation for impacted groups, and also as alternatives to baseline livelihood activities that have negative impacts on habitats and wildlife, with economic improvements as a potential co-benefit of the project. The baselines for livelihood interventions will be assessed during the initial phase of the project, along with review of associated indicators. The interventions will be designed and supported in alignment with the Tiger Conservation Plans of the area, along with existing livelihood schemes in place across the districts. The valuable experiences gained in executing livelihood micro-planning exercises in the state of Sikkim under the GEF-supported SECURE Himalayas project will inform effective engagement of communities in the entire process. Similarly, the GTF is working with the state governments to enhance the capacity of frontline and community groups to develop site specific micro-plans, focusing on livelihoods, with reciprocal commitments to ensure conservation of wildlife and mitigation of human-wildlife interface conflicts to ensure the intended impacts of livelihood actions are visible and sustained as regular practice.

**The overall project approach to livelihood diversification will include the following activities:**

3.4.1 Conduct advocacy to facilitate convergence of project goals with government schemes and to resolve issues with local uptake and effectiveness of such schemes (e.g. in support of handicraft development, community-based ecotourism, MAP cultivation, subsidies for LPG and fuel efficiency, solar power);

3.4.2 Provide sub-grants to support livelihood diversification, including:

- o agricultural value addition such as non-wildlife attracting crops in HWC areas and assistance with processing and marketing agricultural products (market linkages) ? such as peppermint and turmeric in Dudhwa; medicinal plants in Pakke-Eaglenest;
- o livestock management to reduce open grazing in natural areas (including collecting up abandoned cattle and developing and operating care facilities; fencing of vulnerable habitats, fodder improvement, stall feeding, veterinary assistance, with focused support to community members reliant on open grazing);
- o small-scale green enterprise development (e.g. NTFP processing, sustainable timber processing, handicrafts, ecotourism, MAP cultivation), business plan development to incentivize community-based habitat conservation and facilitation of market access, and to mitigate any impacts on livelihood from Component 2 activities;

**Promote and facilitate livelihood diversification and sustainable development based on the following priorities for each landscape through subcontracted packages of technical assistance:**

***Dudhwa Landscape***

3.4.3 Training on better agricultural and livestock management practices for farmers for improving their income, including: exposure visit to Krishi Vigyan Kendra and Agriculture Universities for better production techniques and adoption of scientific agronomic practices; training and technical assistance on improved livestock rearing and management practices; establishment and management of gaushalas for abandoned cattle; and promotion of a Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) and establishing market linkage for value added agriculture products of selected farmers;

3.4.4. Coordinate and engage with district development authorities for leveraging government schemes like toilets, homes, solar lights, safe potable water supply, animal husbandry including cattle vaccination & gaushala management, livelihood support, public health, etc;

3.4.5. Ecotourism promotion with interested beneficiaries - exposure visit, training and support for 10 homestays in Katerniaghat on a pilot basis (note ? while this is a priority area in the State for homestay tourism development, alternatives to homestays will be prioritized, such as camp and basic chalet facilities that allow mitigation of COVID-19 risks such as social distancing);

### ***Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape***

#### ***A) Promotion of community-based ecotourism development***

Assuming some level of COVID-19 recovery and the return of domestic and international tourism in the next years, the Pakke ? Eaglenest buffer zone area has high potential for community-based ecotourism development, owing to its outstanding natural beauty, indigenous communities and exceptional diversity of wildlife and plants. In particular, the area is popular for birdwatching, most notably through the Singchung Bugun Community Reserve that was established as the only known location of the recently discovered Bugun Liocichla. A number of guesthouses, homestays and camps exist, and the project will aim to support expansion of this nascent sector in suitable community locations through sharing best practices from existing businesses and linking ecotourism development with community-based conservation efforts and training for youth on nature-guiding and business skills.

3.4.6 Conduct a review of existing community-based ecotourism development in the Pakke-Eaglenest landscape, including planning and institutional support from government through the newly established Ecotourism Department within the Forest Department and the Tourism Department and tourism market linkages (eg through Incredible India<sup>[35]</sup>); identify priority locations and specific development / recovery needs that allow mitigation of COVID-19 risks such as social distancing);

3.4.7 Build local capacity for community-based ecotourism development (from Year 2 or 3 to allow for COVID recovery), through providing attitudinal and behavioral training on hospitality, publicity and marketing, ecotourism regulation and conservation management (one each for Pakke and Eaglenest); provide training for at least 20 youth in nature guiding; and provide training and seed funding for weaving handicraft designing, marketing and business development for at least 20 women;

#### ***B) Promotion of sustainable agriculture and NTFP-based livelihoods***

In order to sustain forest condition and connectivity in the Pakke-Eaglenest buffer zone, the project will support community-based approaches to sustainable land management focusing on sustainable agricultural practices, agro-forestry and cultivation of NTFPs including medicinal plants. There are local traditions of kitchen gardens that produce a diversity of fruits and vegetables that can be promoted, and investment in medicinal plant production by Patanjali (with little benefit to local people to date). Given significant problems with HWC damaging crops (especially elephants), diversification of produce and increased emphasis on agro-forestry (eg apple, pear, walnut, areca-nut, lemon, NTFPs) and medicinal plants that are not attractive to wildlife will form the basis of project support. This is consistent with **Output 3.5** and overall sustainability. However, such activities also need to be framed within the context of conservation agreements for specific areas to prevent the expansion of cash crops (eg fruit trees) at the expense of natural forest cover.

3.4.8 Conduct stakeholder consultations to review existing traditional practices and constraints, determine locations, participants (with full GESI considerations) and crop selections to demonstrate; compile implementation plans for each target location; ; negotiate community conservation agreements;

3.4.9 Provide training and technical support for participating communities in collaboration with agriculture, horticulture departments and other related government agencies on subjects including business planning and marketing, integrated pest management, agronomic techniques, marketing, etc. ? targeting 250 families (includes cofinancing support from local government agencies);

3.4.10 Continuous monitoring and follow up with adaptive response mechanisms through village level volunteers/point persons.

***Output 3.5: Targeted interventions in HWC hotspots to implement mechanisms for the prevention and management of HWC adjacent to PAs and corridors.***

**Purpose:** To demonstrate innovative and systematic mechanisms for preventing and managing HWC in targeted hotspots adjacent to PAs and wildlife corridors.

**Approach:** Baseline assessments during project preparation identified HWC hotspots in each of the landscapes. The nature of HWC varies between locations, including the wildlife species involved, the impacts on crops, livestock and people, and the socio-economic context for intervention. Consequently, the project response in each targeted area will be participatory and locally-specific, beginning with SAFE System<sup>[36]</sup> workshops with communities to identify the issues and potential solutions, and subsequent investment in community-based HWC solutions identified during the workshops (such as solar electric fencing or lighting, corral reinforcement, etc.). The workshops will emphasize self-help measures to minimize conflict (e.g. clearing of vegetation near homes to reduce leopard attacks). The project approach will be coordinated with existing baseline efforts by NGOs and aligned to support or improve on government schemes. The implementation of HWC response measures will be continuously followed up through village level volunteers/point persons to lead systematic community-based reporting in order to ensure that the response mechanisms are adaptive to changes in the local situation. The project will also provide systemic support towards improving government compensation procedures through advocacy and para-legal assistance to affected communities.

**The overall project approach to HWC prevention and management includes the following activities:**

3.5.1 Confirm the targeted areas and communities impacted by HWC that were identified during the baseline assessment and update the situation assessment for each site. Selection of communities will be based on criteria to be confirmed during project inception, but including: severity of HWC impacts on the community, relevance to small wild cat conservation efforts, feasibility and safety of operational engagement during implementation;

3.5.2 Convene SAFE workshops for two targeted areas in each landscape (see below ? four workshops in total) to review the key species involved, the impacts of HWC, and local context, and to identify strategic, community-based approaches to HWC mitigation, including both preventative and response measures. The workshops will develop local HWC prevention and response plans;

3.5.3 Provide project sub-grants to support the implementation of the local HWC plans (including financing of responses such as solar fencing, alternative crop trials, crop proofing, alarm systems, toilets, etc.); these should coordinate with ongoing efforts by NGOs, align and bring convergence with govt schemes;

3.5.4 Develop and pilot community-based reporting of HWC led by village volunteers and facilitate continuous follow up with adaptive response mechanisms;

3.5.5 Facilitate monitoring and reporting of strayed small cats and assist forest dept in rescue operations (as required);

3.5.6 Provide systemic support towards improving access to and simplifying government compensation procedures through advocacy, para-legal assistance to affected communities, awareness raising on the compensation procedures and government schemes available to provide support for HWC mitigation (eg rural electrification, animal husbandry, etc), and capacity development where necessary<sup>[37]</sup>; this would focus on the targeted villages, but also aim to benefit other affected communities within the project landscapes;

3.5.7 Evaluate the response for each target area and share the lessons learned through project supported knowledge management mechanisms (**Output 4.4**).

**Component 4. Partnerships, knowledge management and M&E**

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***Outcome: Effective partnerships, communications, knowledge management and M&E for wild cat conservation***

*[Component 4 will be supported by UNDP as GEF Agency]*

**Component 4** will build the necessary partnerships and platforms for integrated and collaborative wild cat conservation. The establishment and initial operation of a national-level platform for green business including development of a corporate-sector fund will be supported (**Output 4.1**) to engage the private sector in wild cat conservation and facilitate the identification of sustainable financing options to maintain community stewardship outside the core tiger habitats in PAs. This is expected to include regional dialogues between government, industry and conservation partners operating within the project landscapes and the development of partnerships with agricultural (e.g. sugar production at Dudhwa) and tourism businesses operating within the project landscapes, supporting pilot conservation and livelihood initiatives under Component 3. In contrast to the previous experience with the former Indian Business Council, in this case the Global Tiger Forum, as an implementing arm of the GTI Council and an inter-governmental agency, will facilitate a platform, and will be able to successfully work with multiple confederations, industries, government agencies, as well as find synergies with ongoing government schemes, especially on livelihood and community welfare in wild landscapes. Thus, apart from orienting business leadership, GTF will also provide a platform to handhold and assist the initiatives that these agencies want to support. The MoEFCC's presence as Implementing Partner for the project will also contribute greater sustainability and ownership to the efforts implemented by the business groups, in close coordination with conservation agencies.

Targeted communications and outreach (**Output 4.2**) will be deployed to targeted audiences at national and subnational levels to address threats and build support for project actions at community level in the landscapes. Transboundary and regional collaboration on wild cat conservation, including with tiger range states, will be enhanced through integrating small wild cat concerns into existing agreements (eg on tigers), and strengthening local level collaboration under existing agreements for the sharing of information and knowledge on wild cat conservation, collaborative training activities, and identification of areas of common concern and agreed joint actions for monitoring, species conservation and combating illegal trafficking (**Output 4.3**). This will explicitly support collaboration with the WWF/GEF-6 Integrated Landscape Management in the Terai Arc Landscape of Nepal, and the UNDP/GEF-7 GWP tourism project in Bhutan. Web-based knowledge platforms and e-networks will be established (**Output 4.4**) to facilitate knowledge sharing and information dissemination between landscapes, States and through the Global Wildlife Program, while an effective M&E system (**Output 4.5**) will help ensure project impact and adaptive management and adequate consideration of gender mainstreaming and social and environmental safeguards. With the exception of Output 4.3, the Outputs will cover all three project landscapes including Ranthambhore.

***Output 4.1: National-level Green Business platform developed for enhancing corporate sector engagement for community-based wildlife conservation***

**Purpose:** To engage the corporate sector in conservation initiatives benefiting wild cats and facilitate the development of partnerships and sustainable financing options to maintain community stewardship outside PAs in the demonstration landscapes and elsewhere.

**Approach:** The project will aim to operationalize a national level Green Business platform, with Terms of Reference, broad membership and investment in project-related activities. This will build on earlier experience with the Indian Wildlife Business Council (see above Baseline and GEF Alternative text). Through a process of advocacy, regional dialogues and fostering local ownership based on community needs, the project will facilitate the development of business partnerships in support of the landscape master plans, multi-sector engagement and sustainable financing of community-based conservation programmes. Through these partnerships, the project will facilitate corporate involvement in local level conservation actions for targeted sectors in each landscape, such as sugar production in Dudhwa; horticulture and tourism in Pakke-Eaglenest; and tourism in Ranthambhore. The project will also support the Green Business platform to develop a Corporate Sector Conservation Fund/Financial

Instrument to mobilize funding for local level partnership investment. This Output will be led by GTF as a sub-level Responsible Party.

Further details on the concept and scope of this platform are as follows:

The India Wildlife Business Council was an initiative which explored the possibility of partnerships with industries/private sector to incorporate wildlife conservation concerns into business sectors where this was not a primary goal. While the Wildlife Business Council is no longer functional, this aim remains relevant in that the importance of green business and compliance by business groups/industries has become a necessity owing to long-term business gains as well as legitimacy and need flagged by the government. Lessons learned from the Wildlife Business Council include the following points, which will be taken into consideration in the development of the Green Business platform under the current project:

- Need for codification and mainstreaming of environmental concerns in CSR practices;
- Institutionalizing the exchange of green safeguards/green business practices among business groups to evolve broad SOPs; and
- Use of "bioremediation" techniques in sync with the natural ecosystem as a component of smart green infrastructure/restoration of altered landscapes.

Past experience in the context of the Wildlife Business Council has also highlighted the redundancy of a separate administrative architecture, while emphasizing the need for a steering mechanism/platform involving government agencies and non-governmental organizations, including stakeholders.

The Green Business platform as envisaged under the project would complement or have linkage with other like-minded multi-stakeholder platforms engaged with targets aligned to the CBD and Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework. This would strengthen initiatives for national level actions, vis-a-vis commitments for long term investment, apart from having demonstration value. Broadly, initiatives envisaged in this context include:

- Enhancing outreach towards sensitization of industries operating in green landscapes (garnering support for wildlife conservation);
- Sharing good practices for incorporation in site-specific planning of smart green infrastructure;
- Commitment for innovating micro-business models for gains to community stewardship (village level funds);
- Support for capacity building through state of the art cost-effective technology, as and when required; and
- Landscape level facilitation for evolving green actions (proactive as well retrofitting) to serve as biofilters for safeguarding corridor connectivity.

The Government of India, in its latest National Wildlife Action Plan (2017-2031) prioritizes private sector engagement, while seeking direct corporate support for targeted conservation campaigns. It also promotes 'Corporate Environmental Responsibility' along the lines of 'Corporate Social Responsibility' Programmes. The development of such a green business platform, building on experience gained through the former India Wildlife Business Council would codify and institutionalize a sustainable mechanism through the current project led by the Government of India, MoEFCC, in collaboration with the Global Tiger Forum (GTF), with outreach and partnerships with the private sector secured by WWF and UNDP. Several business groups had expressed interest in the India Wildlife Business Council previously, which will be followed up.

The envisaged platform will enable much needed corporate partnership at a landscape scale, resulting in centrifugal stakeholder involvement, complemented with multiple governmental and non-governmental sectors operating in the landscapes or at national level, with an interest to support in-situ

conservation. Such an endeavour is important for building up the composite portfolio of actions with mutual gains based on reciprocity to achieve the goal of conservation beyond protected areas.

The envisaged 'Green Business Platform' is cardinal to the project objectives owing to its great potential to strengthen environmental and socio-economic sustainability and would broadly carry out the following:

- ? Identify private sector/business groups operating within the project landscapes (eg involved in ecotourism, processing and marketing of eco-friendly agricultural / herbal / medicinal products, etc);
- ? Take steps to mitigate intensive land use actions of industries as 'eco-filters' to prevent biodiversity loss;
- ? Innovate site-specific business models/micro-enterprises with support for reducing the forest resource dependency of local people through assured, eco-friendly livelihood options (socio-economic buffering);
- ? Put in place safeguards against pollution by industries (sanitary buffering);
- ? Support the implementation of the landscape master plans by making available resources from business houses/groups through CSR commitments or village level funds (strengthening existing institutions like eco-development committees or similar structures);
- ? Propagate the experiences gained in the project landscapes to other areas for replication.

No new institutional architecture is envisaged for the green business platform, since it is important to initiate this from the existing institutional framework of the project state, Government of India (MoEFCC), and the GTF by constituting a steering committee as follows:

- Chair ? Representative of MoEFCC (Wildlife Division)
- Representative of project states ? Member
- Representatives of Industries/Business groups/Public enterprises/Industry Consortia/GTI Council/similar bodies
- Project Representatives ? WWF, UNDP
- Member Convenor ? GTF

The above committee will decide its own rules of procedure, including quorum and periodicity of meetings, with the terms of reference aligned with the project objectives.

The scope of the green business platform has been envisioned to encompass contours of:

- Biodiversity conservation
- Safeguarding ecosystem services
- Reduction of forest resource dependency through payment for ecosystem services in the form of community stewardship
- Ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change

As such, it goes beyond 'wildlife' in the context that this project construes wild animal species as indicators of ecological integrity, and securing such integrity would result in obvious gains for wildlife conservation, while ensuring its safeguards against human-wildlife interface problems, targeted killings, and depauperization of habitat values.

Both the business partnerships and investments will be screened for social and environmental risks and an exclusionary process applied for high-risk sectors in accordance with UNDP Private Sector Partnerships policy and UNDP Private Sector Risk Assessment Tool.

#### **Indicative Activities:**

4.1.1 Work with GTF, CII and State authorities to approach heads of business and industry, including corporate bodies that have an interest in supporting wildlife conservation (e.g. Tata group companies, HSBC India, Aircel, etc.) through a series of regional sensitization meetings for raising conservation awareness and promoting Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or direct investments for supporting community livelihoods and income generation. Build support for establishment of the national level Green Business platform and provide input to its design and operations;

4.1.2 Provide technical assistance for the development of a feasibility strategy for a Corporate Sector Conservation Fund/Financial Instrument to be managed by the green business platform. Through this

platform, the project will help in reaching out to corporate bodies and government agencies operating in the landscape to extend support to wildlife conservation, especially on issues like planning of smart green infrastructure, innovative business models for community stewardship, as well as deployment of state-of-the-art cost-effective technology, where required. Once the project team is able to gauge the interest, it will work with the local government and interested industry representatives to facilitate technical support and on-site project development for potential initiatives, while aiming to start pilot initiatives through public-private partnerships;

4.1.3 Facilitate the development of a scheme for the generation and disbursement of small community grants (not from GEF funds) by the Green Business Platform including governance mechanism, prospectus, support for leveraging funds and fund raising activities (through fund-raising events, dialogue with private sector/donor agencies, crowd funding initiatives). Proposed projects will be screened for safeguards and climate change adaptation requirements;

4.1.4 Conduct an advocacy programme to mobilize corporate partnerships and CSR funds, and facilitate the development of business partnerships and implementation of pilot initiatives for relevant sectors, including capacity development for the partners involved<sup>[38]</sup>. The pilot initiatives will support community stewardship, skill development and livelihood based initiatives, through adoption, procurement and marketing of derived products, including local crafts, horticulture and medicinal and aromatic plant cultivation, among others (in all landscapes);

4.1.5 Publicize the benefits of the active business partnerships through local, national and international channels (see **Output 4.4**) in order to attract further investment.

***Output 4.2: Awareness raised for wild cat conservation at national and sub-national levels through communications strategy and action plan implementation***

**Purpose:** To raise awareness among key target groups at national and subnational levels in order to build their support for wild cat conservation.

**Approach:** The communications programme will be based on a communications strategy and action plan that focuses on raising awareness of the diversity of wild cats in India, their cultural and ecological values (eg rodent control), and their conservation status and prevalent threats including poaching, IWT and HWC. This Output will focus on national and landscape-level awareness raising activities that are mutually supportive of the community awareness and education activities in **Output 3.2**. It will target specific groups, including: government agencies and line departments, elected representatives, institutions (academic and research), CSOs, media, private sector, etc.

**Indicative Activities:**

4.2.1 Establish a communications Task Force including WWF, UNDP, GTF and other experts to convene communications planning meetings and lead the development of a communications strategy and action plan that focuses on building support for wild cat conservation and reducing key threats nationally and especially in the project landscapes. The strategy should include the engagement of partners in each landscape for more effective delivery. Update the action plan annually and coordinate and synergize with initiatives and events on wildlife crime, HWC and wildlife conservation conducted nationwide by Govt agencies, institutions and NGOs. Incorporate virtual communications tools and building capacity of the PMU/stakeholders/tools for virtual communications as a backstop to avoid delay in project activities in case face-to-face training/workshops are delayed (COVID-19 mitigation);

4.2.2 Conduct national- and landscape-level campaigns towards the conservation of small cats, aiming to sensitize specific target groups in line with the communications strategy and action plan (with local actions being covered in Output 3.2). These campaigns will connect wild cat conservation with key environment days, tiger conservation events, other public events and traditional festivals in the project landscapes;

4.2.3 Develop educational and awareness materials that address the targeted audiences and messaging identified in the strategy, such as: printed materials, online materials via websites such as short films on website / YouTube channel;

4.2.4 Monitor changes in awareness of targeted groups through use of KAP assessments, where appropriate.

***Output 4.3: Transboundary joint action and collaboration on wild cat conservation***

**Purpose:** To address the Indian side of specific transboundary conservation issues including poaching, illegal wildlife trade and human-wildlife relations that impact the project landscapes and small wild cat conservation.

**Approach:** Dudhwa and Pakke ? Eaglenest landscapes lie on India's international borders with Nepal and Bhutan respectively. There are existing transboundary cooperation agreements concerning wildlife conservation at national level under MoEFCC. In addition, local collaboration with adjacent PAs and administrations takes place on an unofficial basis (eg participation in workshops, joint monitoring and information exchange). The project will develop a roadmap for strengthening implementation of Indian commitments to transboundary cooperation on wild cat conservation in South Asia through consultations based on experience with tiger conservation. These will be conducted through the MoEFCC, recognizing that official mechanisms are addressed at central government level. The main emphasis would be to advocate extending the existing transboundary partnerships in the Tiger Programme to include small wild cats while supporting Indian participation in the South Asian Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) for control of wildlife crime. A social and environmental safeguards screening process will be put in place to assess and manage potential downstream impacts arising from implementation of the transboundary conservation roadmap.

At the landscape level, the project will facilitate Indian collaboration, and information and knowledge exchange under existing agreements in order to strengthen the capacity and collaboration of local PA staff and local level transboundary coordination meetings on HWC, poaching and IWT issues. This will also include collaboration with the WWF/GEF project on Integrated Landscape Management for the Terai Arc Landscape in Nepal, which addresses very similar issues to the current project and is contiguous with the Dudhwa landscape, and the GWP GEF-7 tourism project in Bhutan, which includes Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary on the border adjacent to Eaglenest. This Output will be led by GTF as a sub-level Responsible Party.

**Indicative Activities:**

4.3.1 Conduct consultations with experts and country representatives to identify areas of common concern and possible joint actions for monitoring, species conservation and combatting illegal trafficking, and develop an agreed strategy for Indian support towards transboundary conservation for wild cat conservation in South Asia. This will include Indian inputs on the present distribution of wild cats, priority sites, priority actions, agreement at country level and joint efforts on wild cat conservation in line with existing bilateral instruments;

4.3.2 Conduct advocacy in India to integrate small wild cats into bilateral agreements for tiger conservation via NTCA, their inclusion in the South Asian Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) for control of wildlife crime (eg trade in cat skins and bones) and the forthcoming ICCWC Guidelines for Wildlife Enforcement Networks<sup>[39]</sup><sup>39</sup>, and through international big cat organisations (GTF);

4.3.3 Within the framework of existing transboundary agreements and the proposed roadmap, invite staff from neighbouring PAs in Nepal (Shuklaphanta, Bardia and Banke NPs) and Bhutan (Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary - a project site under the GWP GEF-7 project in Bhutan, providing potential for coordination and knowledge exchange between GWP projects) as well as SSB staff to participate in project activities<sup>[40]</sup><sup>40</sup>,<sup>[41]</sup><sup>41</sup>;

4.3.4 Within the framework of existing transboundary agreements and the proposed roadmap, facilitate local level transboundary coordination meetings on HWC, poaching and IWT between PA

management staff, SSB and local administration leaders to facilitate information sharing and targeting of enforcement operations;

4.3.5 Within the framework of existing transboundary agreements and the proposed roadmap, coordinate with Nepalese Govt /WWF to allow Dudhwa landscape staff to participate in annual TAL stakeholder forums, conduct study visits to Nepal TAL to learn about Community-Based Anti-Poaching Unit operations (CBAPUs), Wildlife Crime Control Bureaus and other related activities of the WWF/GEF Project *Integrated Landscape Management for the Terai Arc Landscape* in Nepal; reciprocal invitation of Nepalese GEF project staff to participate in Dudhwa project meetings and activities.

***Output 4.4: Knowledge management coordinated between landscapes, across India, neighbouring countries and with the Global Wildlife Program, including sharing of best practices and lessons learned***

**Purpose:** To ensure that project results, knowledge, experiences and lessons learned are made available to relevant audiences locally, nationally and internationally to inform conservation efforts elsewhere.

**Approach:** This project is a child project under the GEF-7 Global Wildlife Program, which provides a mechanism for coordination and knowledge sharing. During the PPG, the project was represented at the GWP in-person knowledge exchange event in South Africa in October-November 2019. The project is also well aligned with the Global Tiger Initiative / Global Tiger Forum, providing another avenue for international knowledge sharing further to WWF and UNDP's networks. In addition, the project incorporates activities that will strengthen the country's knowledge management system and capacity. This includes the use of a project website/regional knowledge platform for sharing of news and materials online; the publication of project technical reports, awareness materials and technical briefs, which will form part of a project communication strategy; and annual project meetings for stakeholders at landscape level. Knowledge gained through GWP events will be shared across India including the project demonstration landscapes through regional knowledge platform, IUCN Cat Specialist Group and NTCA and GTF channels.

**Indicative Activities:**

4.4.1 Develop a project knowledge management plan to ensure that project news and results are shared with project stakeholders and related initiatives (e.g. GTI), and updated annually. This will incorporate virtual communications tools and building capacity of the PMU/stakeholders/tools for virtual communications as a backstop to avoid delay in project activities in case face-to-face training/workshops are delayed (COVID-19 mitigation);

4.4.2 Collaborate with and support small cat interest groups for networking and knowledge-sharing;

4.4.3 Develop a project website / regional knowledge platform to share project news, results and information with stakeholders, the wider public in India and international audiences especially across South Asia;

4.4.4 Share technical reports, news articles and awareness materials arising from project activities with stakeholders at all levels through project website/regional knowledge platform, media, etc, and provided to the GWP Secretariat through GWP qualitative reports and coordination meetings;

4.4.5 Develop case studies on key issues relating to landscape conservation for wild cats including stakeholder workshops, and publish them on the regional knowledge platform as technical briefs covering integrated management of ESZs to benefit wildlife, management of targeted wasteland habitats, small wild cat friendly agriculture practices, HWC management in targeted communities, community-based monitoring of small wild cats, gender mainstreaming and traditional knowledge relevant to small wild cats / habitats;

4.4.6 Hold annual project meetings for updating and consulting with stakeholders (government agencies, NGOs, scientists etc.) on project progress, results and lessons learned, including a wrap up/handover meeting in Year 5;

4.4.7 Project participates in GWP virtual and face-to-face knowledge management events, and shares results nationally through the regional knowledge platform, IUCN Cat Specialist Group and MoEFCC/NTCA and GTF channels;

- 4.4.8 Present project results at national/ international conferences (eg CITES COP side events);
- 4.4.9 Publish and disseminate the project terminal report in both hard copy and electronic formats.

***Output 4.5: M&E system incorporating gender mainstreaming and safeguards developed and implemented for adaptive project management***

**Purpose:** To ensure that project implementation meets UNDP, WWF and GEF requirements for Results-based Management, gender mainstreaming, social inclusion and social and environmental safeguards, and is adaptive to changing circumstances.

**Approach:** Key M&E activities will include the annual project implementation review exercises, mid-term and final project review, for each of which there will be one combined process/report for the project, with UNDP as lead GEF Agency for submission to GEF (as UNDP is leading on Component 4, but with equal inputs from WWF). Monitoring and evaluation activities will include the regular review and updating of the project M&E plan with indicators, baselines and targets, annual work plans and budgets and the generation of comprehensive monitoring and progress reports. The project will ensure that gender mainstreaming and SESP requirements are met as an integral part of the project planning, implementation and M&E cycle. Regular Project Steering Committee meetings will enable key stakeholders to be actively involved in the M&E process. Lastly, the project will conduct a Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation to take stock of progress and the implementation process, emerging constraints and (at mid-term stage) to formulate possible remedial measures or adaptive management to ensure optimal implementation efficiency and knowledge generation. Overall, project implementation, monitoring and evaluation will be closely coordinated with the Global Wildlife Program. The project will also build the capacity of project staff for effective project management at all levels of organization through establishment and sharing of clear procedures, orientation and training in line with UNDP and WWF requirements as GEF Project Agencies. Safeguards requirements for UNDP-led Components (1 and 4) are covered here, while those for WWF-led Components (2 and 3) have been incorporated into those sections.

**Indicative Activities:**

- 4.5.1 Review and update M&E plan including results framework baselines during project inception phase;
- 4.5.2 Training for project staff, clarification of stakeholder roles and planning processes at the project Inception workshop;
- 4.5.3 Coordinate the development, implementation and monitoring of UNDP-related safeguards assessments, plans and reports (Note: WWF related safeguards inputs are covered in Components 2 and 3);
- 4.5.4 Conduct annual review/adaptive management sessions to review M&E data and prepare for each coming year, linked to annual work plan preparation (and mid-year reviews) as key tools for adaptive management of project activities;
- 4.5.5 Periodic and joint monitoring visits to field sites;
- 4.5.6 Conduct Mid Term Review and Terminal Evaluation in line with UNDP/GEF requirements, and incorporate recommendations of MTR into revised project plans (management response, including a stakeholder consultation workshop) following Project Steering Committee approval, and monitor their implementation;
- 4.5.7 Project Manager to oversee implementation of the Gender Action Plan (**Annex 8**), appoint Gender Focal Points for all project offices, and recruit a Gender Expert to advise on its implementation;
- 4.5.8 Gender Expert to advise on implementation and monitoring of the Gender Action Plan, train project management staff on gender equality, and provide technical support to integrate gender into project implementation plans, such as bi/annual work plans and processes;
- 4.5.9 Project Manager to develop the protocol for collecting detailed gender information/data including the project affected people, project beneficiaries, participants of each project activity, etc., and subsequently be responsible for interpreting the information.

#### ***4) alignment with GEF focal area strategies***

The proposed approach is aligned with the GEF-7 Focal Area strategies. This project will address a wide range of threats to poorly known and globally threatened small wild cat species and their habitats, including poaching, illegal trade and human-wildlife conflict, and mainstreaming small wild cat conservation at State and landscape level. These efforts will also benefit a wide range of other wildlife including large cats (tiger and leopard), Asian elephant, and greater one-horned rhinoceros co-existing in the same landscapes. As such, the project is aligned to GEF-7 focal area objective *BD-1-2a: Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes through Global Wildlife Program to prevent extinction of known threatened species*, and *BD-2-7: Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and Improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate*.

To ensure strong alignment to BD-1-2a the selection of the project sites/species included consideration of risks from poaching, illegal trade and human-wildlife conflict and proximity to border areas known to have routes for transboundary trafficking of wildlife was also a consideration (e.g. Dudhwa on the Nepalese border, and Pakke-Eaglenest close to Bhutan and China). The prevalence of these threats to wildlife vary markedly within and between the project landscapes, therefore the project will focus on specific known problem areas, such as villages that are experiencing a high level of HWC from particular species (eg human fatalities caused by leopard), illegal hunting in Pakke-Eaglenest, and strengthened collaboration and information sharing across international borders linked to the WWF/GEF- 6 project on the Terai Arc Landscape in Nepal, and UNDP/GEF-7 GWP child project in eastern Bhutan. Project-supported efforts to survey and monitor little known small cat species and the threats they face will enable stronger understanding and more focused responses to conservation issues ? including hunting and HWC impacts, and their involvement in wildlife trade (eg skins of clouded leopard in international trade). Along with efforts to combat threats to wildlife at these sites the project will strengthen management effectiveness of key protected areas for small cat conservation in tiger landscapes and improve frontline PA capacity for conservation and management of small cats and their habitats, in alignment with BD-2-7.

The project's specific alignment and contributions to the Global Wildlife Program framework is shown in Section 1c.

#### ***5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF and co-financing***

The project design is consistent with the incremental cost reasoning presented in the project concept, and this has been elaborated in the Results section of the project document for each project Component. The baseline situation for each Component is presented in the Baseline Analysis section above. The table below summarizes the incremental reasoning for each of the four project components and the global environmental benefits resulting from the overall project.

This project focuses on the integrated management of three landscapes that are of greatest importance for the conservation of wild cat diversity, located within the biotic provinces that are the richest for cat species - the Upper Gangetic Plains of north India (Dudhwa), the Eastern Himalayas of north-east India (Pakke-Eaglenest) and the semi-arid Gujarat Rajputana region of western India (Ranthambhore), which together represent nine out of the eleven small cats that occur in India. Almost all small cats plus leopards have decreasing populations, with Fishing Cat and Clouded Leopard globally Vulnerable, a further three species Near-threatened and a higher level of threat is considered to apply to many small cats at national level (e.g. Caracal). A diverse range of threats are impacting small cat populations, key amongst which is the loss, degradation and fragmentation of forest, scrub, grassland, wetland and ravine habitats within their landscapes, while poaching and human-wildlife conflict can also be locally significant.

The Government of India has put in place a comprehensive raft of policies and laws to implement its National Biodiversity Action Plan, yet important gaps need to be addressed in order to advance the conservation of landscapes for wild cats, beyond the needs of tigers and other flagship species. In particular, poor understanding of the distribution, status, needs and threats impacting small cats and lack of understanding of conservation priorities at the landscape level are key weaknesses, while inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms and capacity for landscape conservation at District and State levels are weak and ineffective, Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZ) around PAs have not yet been fully implemented, and existing govt capacity for the effective management of wild cats and their habitats remains inadequate.

While the Tiger Reserves in each landscape are systematically managed according to their Tiger Conservation Plans, there remain chronic and acute staffing shortages and lack of the necessary skills among PA staff. Technical skills need to be strengthened on monitoring wild cat populations and habitats, applying appropriate management techniques for habitat restoration and connectivity, managing HWC effectively and related subjects, through the development of SOPs and providing appropriate training support. Site-level management is predominant, with little consideration of management at a landscape scale. While some communities have a strong affinity with the natural environment, such awareness is very limited and the successes in traditional sustainable resource use need to be replicated in key landscape areas. In addition, many communities near PAs and forested areas suffer significant HWC losses, with weak government response and inadequate compensation. Overall, incentives for community engagement in conservation remain weak, and community capacity and willingness to apply eco-friendly land uses are variable.

The GEF investment in the Project Alternative will support the Government of India to address these gaps and barriers through a collaborative approach that involves national experts, a wide range of government agencies, NGOs and CBOs, through which an integrated model for wild cat conservation will be put in place at landscape scale that can be replicated nationally and in other range states. This

investment in developing capacity and mechanisms for integrated landscape management that embodies conservation principles is significantly different from baseline national investment, which does little at landscape level, is focused on PAs and flagship species such as the tiger, and has not addressed small cat needs. This project will provide the impetus necessary to demonstrate the landscape approach to conservation and engage diverse state and district level stakeholders, and also to embed small cat conservation within the successful tiger conservation planning process, both of which are unlikely to take place without GEF investment.

The GEF Alternative will develop the necessary plans, technical guidance, capacity and awareness to substantially address the prevalent threats impacting small cats within the project landscapes, especially those related to the piecemeal fragmentation and destruction of habitats under strong population pressures and sectoral-based governance with little consideration for biodiversity conservation. The limited environmental awareness and involvement of local communities and other local stakeholders in nature conservation, including poor knowledge of wild cats, will be improved through proactive engagement at the targeted sites, with locally severe HWC problems addressed and support provided for sustainable livelihoods. Overall, through engagement at local, landscape, state and national levels, supported by improved knowledge sharing on small cat distribution and habits through citizen science-led efforts and systematic conservation planning, the project will contribute towards arresting declines in India's small wild cats and the improved management and conservation of their landscapes.

Baseline	GEF Alternative ? Incremental Reasoning	Global Environmental Benefits
<i>Component 1 - Enabling policy and institutional framework for wild cat conservation at landscape level</i>		Integrated and coordinated

<p>India's National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) 2008 guides investment and resource allocation for biodiversity conservation at the national level. A comprehensive raft of policies and laws has been put in place to implement the NBAP, yet important gaps need to be addressed in order to advance the conservation of landscapes for wild cats, beyond the needs of tigers and other flagship species. First, the current poor understanding of the distribution, conservation status, needs and threats impacting small cats and lack of understanding of conservation priorities at the landscape level are key weaknesses. Secondly, while tiger conservation planning has stimulated a landscape approach to conservation in India, this remains very focused on tigers and protected areas, while the integration and harmonization of conservation with multiple land uses in the production lands outside PAs remains a challenge. Related to this, the inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms for landscape conservation at District and State levels are weak and ineffective, with conflicting land use policies.</p> <p>Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZ) around PAs have only been partially identified, with most still at proposal stage, and largely untested implementation procedures.</p> <p>There is weak integration of conservation plans for species, protected areas and issues such as climate change adaptation and control of invasive alien species. With regard to small cat conservation, there are no guidelines or national species action plans to guide conservation, and a lack of technical protocols to guide responsible agency staff.</p> <p>Existing govt capacity for landscape conservation and PA management for each project landscape is below that required to meet the needs of coordinated cross-sectoral planning and land use, and the professional requirements for the effective management of wild cats and their habitats.</p>	<p>Landscape conservation master plans for wild cats developed for two globally-significant wild cat landscapes (Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest) with implementation supported by multi-sector partnerships, and the mainstreaming of small cat conservation into strategies and work plans of other sectors.</p> <p>National level Species Recovery Action Plans for Caracal, Fishing Cat and Clouded Leopard informed by a national database and atlas on wild cats;</p> <p>Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for small cat and leopard conservation developed and institutionalized in State and district forest departments support increased understanding of their conservation status and improved effectiveness of conservation actions;</p> <p>Site-specific guidelines on small cat conservation integrated into revised big cat conservation strategies and management plans of tiger reserves and other PAs;</p> <p>Improved institutional capacity of relevant government agencies for landscape conservation incorporating wild cat needs for MoEFCC, Uttar Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh State, District and Municipal Agencies including Forestry, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Medicinal Plants, Tourism, etc).</p>	<p>management of globally-significant wild cat landscapes in northern and north-eastern and western India contributing towards ecoregion conservation.</p> <p>Improved management of 389,572 ha of PAs in Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest landscapes, including strengthened conservation of nine associated KBAs.</p> <p>Improved management of an estimated 100,000 ha of agricultural and forest mosaic that buffers and connects PAs and provides important habitats for small cats.</p> <p>Stable and improved populations of globally-significant small wild cats including clouded leopard (VU) and fishing cat (VU); large cats - tiger (EN), leopard (VU) will also directly benefit together with a wide range of other threatened species sharing the same landscapes.</p> <p>Arrested declines of small cat populations for species currently listed as globally near-threatened (rusty-spotted, marbled and golden cat), but reaching vulnerable status globally and at higher</p>
<p><b>Component 2 - Strengthened management and protection of wild cat landscapes</b></p>		

<p>While the Tiger Reserves in each landscape are systematically managed according to their Tiger Conservation Plans and evaluated through the national Management Effectiveness Evaluation, there remain chronic and acute staffing shortages, lack of the necessary skills among PA staff and lack of opportunity for staff professional development. In addition, the living conditions for field staff at Dudhwa pose health and safety challenges, and there are needs for improved facilities and equipment in all landscapes. Technical skills need to be strengthened on monitoring wild cat populations and habitats, applying appropriate management techniques for habitat restoration and connectivity, managing HWC effectively and related subjects, through the development of SOPs and providing appropriate training support.</p> <p>Ineffective conservation at landscape level contributes towards increasing threats to small wild cats and their habitats, while conservation programmes are typically restricted to iconic big cats such as tiger with no dedicated programmes for small cats. Site-level management is predominant, with little consideration of management at a landscape scale.</p>	<p>Increased management effectiveness of targeted PAs covering 389,572 ha indicate sound management, covering: Dudhwa Tiger Reserve (220,177 ha), Pakke Tiger Reserve (137,695 ha) Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary (21,700 ha) and Sessa Orchid Sanctuary (10,000 ha);</p> <p>Improved frontline capacity for conservation and management of small wild cats and their habitats for Dudhwa Landscape and Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape;</p> <p>Based on a Security Audit jointly conducted by GTF (using WWF guidelines), with approval and guidance of the NTCA, improvements to wild cat habitat management demonstrated in landscapes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Dudhwa: Natural grassland and wetland habitats in Sujauli Range of Katarniaghat WS &amp; South Sonaripur Range of Dudhwa TR;</li> <li>-Pakke-Eaglenest: Forest connectivity enhanced in critical corridor areas through management and restoration of degraded forest habitats in the ESZ.</li> </ul>	<p>risk within India.</p>
<p><b><i>Component 3 - Community stewardship and human-wildlife coexistence in wild cat landscapes</i></b></p>		

<p>In some cases, communities and tribal groups have a strong affinity with the natural environment, traditional knowledge, customs and beliefs that foster a respect for nature, and where opportunities have arisen they have embraced conservation initiatives. However, such awareness and opportunities are very limited and the successes need to be replicated and upscaled in key landscape areas to foster sustainable land uses and habitat conservation and to reduce threats from hunting, IWT and HWC.</p> <p>While certain government initiatives have also had positive effect, such as the LPG cylinders provided through the Ujwala Yojna scheme and National Livelihood Rural Mission support for backward districts<sup>[42]</sup> at Dudhwa, there remains much to be done to align such rural development schemes with conservation objectives and to improve their uptake and effectiveness. There is also poor linkage of livelihoods to market access, constraining their sustainability.</p> <p>Many communities near PAs and forested areas suffer significant HWC losses, including locally severe impacts from leopard attacks, elephant crop damage and widespread damage from animals such as wild boar. The trauma involved, lack of HWC response support and current government compensation systems that are slow, complicated and only partially redress losses incurred, often cause negative local attitudes towards wildlife and PAs.</p> <p>Overall, incentives for community engagement in biodiversity conservation remain weak, and community capacity and willingness to apply eco-friendly land uses that will support wild cat conservation are variable and not always supportive. Further there is a lack of technical capacity in community institutions to support habitat and wild cat conservation.</p>	<p>Capacity of community and village-level institutions developed for wild cat habitat management, participatory monitoring and institutional management (e.g. financial management, record-keeping), allowing communities to act as stewards for wild cat landscapes, adopting eco-friendly land management that provides livelihood benefits, improves quality, extent and condition of wild cat habitats and promotes human-wildlife coexistence;</p> <p>Improved management practices for wild cat conservation and habitat management over 100,000 ha in buffer zones adjacent to PAs and corridors for Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest Landscapes;</p> <p>Targeted reduction of locally-specific threats related to community-based management of natural resources for Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest Landscapes;</p> <p>Awareness of wild cat conservation raised in local communities and traditional knowledge and practices for wild cat conservation and habitat management documented;</p> <p>Village-level institutions actively engaged in participatory community monitoring of wild cat populations and HWC;</p> <p>Local livelihood options diversified in targeted communities to reduce pressures on wild cat habitats and as mitigations to any livelihood impacts from habitat management under Component 2;</p> <p>HWC impacts reduced in targeted hotspots through implementation of mechanisms for the prevention and management of HWC adjacent to PAs and corridors.</p>
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<b><i>Component 4 - Partnerships, knowledge management and M&amp;E</i></b>	
<p>Awareness of the status and conservation needs of small wild cats is generally low amongst national and state-level stakeholders. However, several small cat species are globally threatened and others are of national concern or poorly known. Therefore the lack of awareness and scientific understanding of these species and the threats affecting them is an issue for conservation.</p> <p>While there are some partnerships in place in the landscapes (eg government-NGOs; NGOs-local communities), these are insufficient to address landscape conservation needs for small cats. In addition, the corporate sector is largely not involved, despite strong potential for engagement in conservation action and financing for conservation programmes.</p> <p>Finally, transboundary collaboration for landscape and species conservation, including reduction of poaching and trafficking of wildlife / wild cats (e.g. clouded leopard skins), and to support knowledge exchange and transfer, is limited and needs to be strengthened especially at the local level. Current global / regional tiger conservation initiatives do not currently cover small cat species, which could be incorporated through minor changes and capacity development regarding small cat monitoring and research, etc. Relevant transboundary IWT enforcement issues relating to small cats need to be documented and raised bilaterally or through SAWEN.</p>	<p>National green business platform operationalized with Terms of Reference, broad membership and private sector fund supporting investment in project-related activities in each of the three landscapes;</p> <p>Improved understanding of values of wild cats and more positive attitudes towards small wild cat conservation among target audiences;</p> <p>Improved transboundary cooperation through enhanced incorporation of wild cat considerations in agreements, and strengthened implementation of existing agreements through local-level collaborative actions including staff exchanges, IWT information exchange in support of CITES implementation, cross-representation in events including WWF/GEF-6 Nepal Terai Arc Landscape project;</p> <p>PAs and institutions share knowledge on small wild cat conservation through regional knowledge platform annually;</p> <p>Project best practices developed, disseminated and used, targeting: integrated management of ESZs to benefit wildlife, management of targeted Wasteland habitats, small wild cat ? friendly agriculture practices, HWC management in targeted communities, monitoring of small wild cats, gender mainstreaming and traditional knowledge relevant to wild cats / habitats.</p>

**GEF Trust Fund financing:** There has been change in budget allocation among components compared to Project Concept stage. See Table B above and ProDoc Total Budget and Workplan section for details. In order to facilitate fund management during project implementation, the division of funds

between the two GEF Agencies (UNDP and WWF-US) established in the Letter of Endorsement from the GEF OFP (dated 13 March 2019) has been followed<sup>[43]</sup> with project Component and PMC allocations (UNDP total of USD 1,975,000; WWF total of USD 2,525,000).

The division of components between the two GEF Agencies aligns with their comparative advantages and experiences on government policy/planning/knowledge management/M&E vs field-based interventions, maximizing their potential to leverage this experience and partnerships by working together on this project. The changes from the GEF budget in the Project Concept are as follows:

**Component 1** on the enabling policy, planning and institutional framework for wild cat conservation has increased from USD 800,000 at PIF stage to USD 881,000 currently. Project Concept Output 2.1 on site-specific guidelines on small cat conservation has been moved to Component 1 as these are supportive for implementing the landscape master plans, protocol and SOPs, accounting for the increase in funds.

**Component 2** on strengthened management and protection of wild cat landscapes has decreased from USD 1,100,000 to USD 802,200 in line with the above-mentioned Output move to Component 1.

**Component 3** on community stewardship and human-wildlife coexistence in wild cat landscapes ? the budget has been slightly reduced from project concept stage, from USD 1,736,000 to USD 1,655,000 in order to address the balance in distribution of funds in the Letter of Endorsement.

**Component 4** on Partnerships, knowledge management and M&E has increased in funding from USD 650,000 at PIF stage to USD 947,800. This increase is necessary to support five Outputs including additional resources for business partnership development (Output 4.1) and M&E (Output 4.5) commensurate with a complex multi-level project spanning dispersed landscapes; and increased funding to support the development of a platform for corporate investment in community-based conservation partnerships in the project landscapes and elsewhere.

**Co-financing:** Overall co-financing has increased by USD 27,623,733 to USD 55,845,733 from Project Concept stage (USD 28,222,000). The main increase was in government cofinancing (from USD 24,400,000 to USD 53,932,733). The alignment of the project landscapes to tiger landscapes and aim to

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integrate small cat conservation with tiger conservation provides significant co-financing potential due to the large investment of the Government of India in tiger conservation. The government co-financing estimate at concept note stage was conservative and under-estimated this potential government co-financing which has now been more clearly calculated. The project concept estimated some USD 1 million from private sector sources, however it has not been possible to secure such commitments at CEO Endorsement stage due to COVID-19 economic impacts and uncertainty. However, letters of intent to collaborate have been obtained from a number of private sector entities active in the demonstration landscapes, showing the interest that remains among private sector despite the inability to provide formal co-financing letters at this stage (see Section 4. Private Sector Engagement). See Table C of this document, and ProDoc section VII Financial Planning and Management for more detail.

#### ***6) global environmental benefits (GEFTF)***

The global environmental benefits that will result from the GEF Project Alternative include 'mainstreaming biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes through the Global Wildlife Program to prevent extinction of known threatened species' and 'addressing direct drivers to protect habitats and species and improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate'. These will be achieved through the integrated and coordinated management of globally-significant wild cat landscapes in northern, north-eastern and western India; the improved management of 389,572 ha<sup>[44]</sup> of PAs in Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest landscapes, including improved conservation of associated KBAs (see **Tables 3 & 6**); and improved management of an estimated 100,000 ha<sup>[45]</sup> of agricultural and forest mosaic that buffers and connects PAs and provides important habitats for small cats. These benefits are reflected in the GEF 7 Core Indicators in **Annex 12**. In addition, the project will contribute directly towards the conservation and sustainable management of globally significant ecoregions. Dudhwa landscape is located in the Global 200 Terai-Duar Savannas and Grasslands ecoregion; Ranthambhore falls in the Kathiawar-Gir dry deciduous forests Ecoregion; and Pakke-Eaglenest landscape lies in the East Himalayan Biodiversity Hotspot<sup>[46]</sup>, and is part of the 'East Himalayan Endemic Bird Area'<sup>[47]</sup>; its upper reaches are also recognised among the Global 200 Ecoregions as the 'Eastern Himalayan Broadleaf and Conifer Forests' ranked as Vulnerable<sup>[48]</sup>. Each of these landscapes supports small wild cat populations such as fishing cat (VU) and clouded leopard (VU) (see **Figure 1** and **Annex 18**), as well as a diversity of other globally significant species including important populations of tiger (EN), leopard (VU), Asian elephant (EN), greater one-horned rhinoceros (VU), hog deer (EN), Barasingha (VU), gharial (CR), Gangetic dolphin (EN), swamp francolin (VU), Bengal florican (CR) Bugun liocichla (CR), and white-rumped, red-headed and Oriental white-backed vultures (all CR) (see the landscape profiles in **Annex 16**). The effective protection and management of such species, together with other species such as Indian (EN) and Chinese (CR) pangolins, Himalayan black bear (VU) and turtles that have been significantly targeted by poaching and the illegal wildlife trade, will contribute towards the goals of the GEF-7 Global Wildlife Program in addition to the supporting GEF-7 Biodiversity programs.

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## ***7) innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up***

These aspects of project design remain consistent with the project concept. The project approaches are strongly aligned with the National Wildlife Action Plan as well as other plans and institutional priorities (e.g. Wildlife Division, NTCA, State Governments) and therefore have strong chances of sustainability through government funding, as well as high potential for up-scaling to other wild cat landscapes in India, as well as neighbouring countries and wild cat range States, including through the international networks and programmes of the Global Tiger Forum.

*Innovation:* Project strategies are based on a novel approach of multi-stakeholder engagement and stewardship that have not been adequately applied before in India for integrated conservation of wild cats at the landscape scale. The project will engage communities in wild cat conservation by empowering community-level institutions in co-management and by creating economic incentives for the adoption of wild cat-friendly land and habitat management techniques in the forest and agricultural mosaic surrounding key PAs and corridors; apply a holistic landscape approach that considers the interconnectedness of landscape elements and actors and integrates conservation actions for individual species into a coordinated action portfolio; and engage stakeholders from different administrative units (e.g. States, districts, individual PAs), institutional mandates (e.g. Departments of Forest, Agriculture, Land Resources) and functions (e.g. government, non-government, civil society, community) in wild cat conservation. While India has strongly managed protected areas, the effective management of buffer zone and corridor areas under multiple jurisdictions through a coordinated landscape planning approach will be a new contribution, with particular value in demonstrating how the Eco-Sensitive Zones can be managed in practice.

*Sustainability:* long-term ownership over project outputs will be achieved by institutionalizing project plans and approaches (e.g. landscape master plans, SOPs, guidelines) within national (Wildlife Division and NTCA, under MoEFCC), State, district and local-level institutions, mainstreaming wild cat conservation into the policies and plans of other sectors; integrating project outputs within existing government programs (e.g. conservation plans for tiger reserves and management plans for other PAs) and by creating the economic incentives and public-private partnerships needed to sustain community participation beyond project close. It will demonstrate sustainable land management practices and habitat restoration as part of the management of Eco-Sensitive Zones that are currently being introduced as buffer areas for all PAs.

Capacity building will be conducted at several levels, including forest frontline staff and stakeholders working and operating in the landscape. The training process will involve regular forest guard schools and departmental training institutes. There is ongoing engagement of the GTF, WWF and the Government of India which is focusing on refinement of the frontline staff training curriculum regionally and nationally, incorporating inputs and workshops from training institutes across the country. Sharing of knowledge emanating from the current project and the associated training design will utilize such common platforms for engagement, and the modules will be designed for implementation across the landscape and also for covering thematic areas such as monitoring protocols, SOPs and recovery actions nationally. The focus on staff development is a key theme in the government's tiger conservation plans, and will also be incorporated in the landscape master plans to be monitored through a ?coordination committee? in each state and thus, its implementation across agencies will ensure its sustainability.

To roll out protocol and SOP implementation and regular species and habitat monitoring, it will be important to ensure that the site-specific efforts are also integrated into the country level monitoring efforts for species like tiger and leopard. India will be soon implementing the next cycle of *All India Tiger Estimation* across all tiger bearing habitats, and the project management will work with the NTCA and states to ensure that all small wild cat camera captures are stored in a repository. This will be in addition to following the monitoring protocols designed for specific small wild cat monitoring activities led by trained tiger reserve and forest department staff, along with communities and other relevant landscape stakeholders.

For the local communities, existing structures such as the Eco Development Committees and tiger reserve specific Tiger Conservation Foundations (TCFs) will be engaged for refresher courses evolved around the project themes, with a special focus on community-led monitoring for small wild cats. Scaling up successful capacity building efforts can be done through existing partnerships with state agencies, and forging integration of activities in departmental schemes and goals (as described with NAFED earlier, involvement of animal husbandry, horticulture, skill development department, etc).

*Scaling up:* The project approaches are strongly aligned with the National Wildlife Action Plan as well as other plans and institutional priorities (eg NTCA) and therefore have high potential for up-scaling to other wild cat landscapes in India, as well as neighbouring countries and wild cat range States. The inclusion of the Global Tiger Forum as a sub-level Responsible Party for implementation of this project opens considerable opportunity for mainstreaming small cat conservation into international programmes in support of tiger conservation. The project's efforts to ensure effective knowledge management and transfer will identify and disseminate best practices and lessons learned across India, neighbouring countries and the Global Wildlife Program to facilitate this scaling up, as well outputs to strengthen bilateral partnerships and coordinated action with neighbouring countries.

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[1] Efforts were made to obtain these data during the PPG, but permission has not yet been received from NTCA

[2] Thatte et al. 2017: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0006320717307346>

[3] [http://conservationcorridor.org/cpb/Ministry-of-Forests-and-Soil-Conservation-Nepal\\_2015.pdf](http://conservationcorridor.org/cpb/Ministry-of-Forests-and-Soil-Conservation-Nepal_2015.pdf);  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B9780815515708000104>

[4] [http://www.tropecol.com/pdf/open/PDF\\_48\\_2/05%20Wangchuk.pdf](http://www.tropecol.com/pdf/open/PDF_48_2/05%20Wangchuk.pdf)

[5] In line with the ESZ Guidelines of 9 February 2011

[6] Noble, I.R., S. Huq, Y.A. Anokhin, J. Carmin, D. Goudou, F.P. Lansigan, B. Osman-Elasha, and A. Villamizar, 2014: Adaptation needs and options. In: Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Part A: Global and Sectoral Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Field, C.B., V.R. Barros, D.J. Dokken, K.J. Mach, M.D. Mastrandrea, T.E. Bilir, M. Chatterjee, K.L. Ebi, Y.O. Estrada, R.C. Genova, B. Girma, E.S. Kissel, A.N. Levy, S. MacCracken, P.R. Mastrandrea, and L.L. White (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA, pp. 833-868.

[7] <https://www.thegef.org/publications/combating-illegal-wildlife-trade-2015>

[8] <https://www.thegef.org/project/global-wildlife-program>

[9] i.e. they are not Reserved Forests, National Parks or Sanctuaries.

[10] See: <https://pmawards.gov.in/public/List-of-Backward-Districts.pdf>

[11] Indian Wildlife Business Council: Case Studies of Interventions by Industry

<https://cii.in/PublicationDetail.aspx?enc=lop5Lo8/fAGuPzaCOn5LRUSzYgTXWm3GcIqYbN4weLFTAFWPbNJBZaciX9Fy3JltfiD21mwGuxKNhTN/K5o0Ane+CpVrOjLRPeZuoBWmNs96dXnpO1ZjDRgeMZKDZOuY9lnrX/VR/GJZKP3IXEMVDAldt+cyl+OKE1JlxEtP2EVNvFEIB6nkScyXxopV5wK9>

[12] National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), 2019. Biodiversity Finance Plan (Working Document). GoI-UNDP project on Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN).

[https://www.biodiversityfinance.net/sites/default/files/content/knowledge\\_products/Biodiversity%20Finance%20Plan%20Report%20Updated%20and%20Final%20%28Digital%20Presence%20-%20Low%20resolution%29%2008-07-2019.pdf](https://www.biodiversityfinance.net/sites/default/files/content/knowledge_products/Biodiversity%20Finance%20Plan%20Report%20Updated%20and%20Final%20%28Digital%20Presence%20-%20Low%20resolution%29%2008-07-2019.pdf)

[13] <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Day%201%20-%20Session%202.2%20-%20India%20PPP.pdf>

[14] <https://scroll.in/article/901975/fishing-cat-researchers-are-trying-to-shed-light-on-the-little-known-felines-that-swim-for-food>

[15] SAWEN provides a platform for its member countries to cooperatively work together in the fight against wildlife crime. It focuses on harmonization of policies and laws; strengthening institutional capacity; sharing of knowledge, experiences and technologies among the member countries; and promoting collaboration with national, regional and international partners to enhance the wildlife law enforcement in the region. See: [www.sawen.org](http://www.sawen.org)

[16] Core and Buffer Areas of Pakke TR, Eaglenest WS, Sessa Orchid Sanctuary, Dudhwa TR. Excludes ESZ of Eaglenest WS (5,588 ha) and Ranthambhore TR (141,128 ha). Project Concept target was 520,949 ha.

[17] Note ? the total landscape areas are much larger than this ? Dudhwa 4,639km<sup>2</sup>, Pakke-Eaglenest 2,928km<sup>2</sup>, Ranthambhore 3,974km<sup>2</sup>

[18] Note ? while referred to as private sector here, government-linked corporations are also an important component and are included in this definition

[19] For example, the transboundary conservation agreements on tigers under NTCA ? see: [https://projecttiger.nic.in/content/52\\_6\\_Nepal.aspx](https://projecttiger.nic.in/content/52_6_Nepal.aspx)

[20] Reduced from 200,000 ha at Project Concept stage: the project has scaled down from 4 to 2 landscapes with pro rata adjustment of this target

[21] Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) refers to a range of analytical and participatory approaches that aim to integrate social and environmental considerations into policies, plans and programs and evaluate the interlinkages with economic and social considerations.

[22] The focus would be on the three project landscape states (including Ranthambhore/Rajasthan), with other Indian states within the species distribution range included to the extent that budget and cofinancing allow

[23] See: Planning a national level strategy on conservation of small cats in India. Research Priorities. UNDP, New Delhi, and Institute of Environment Education and Research, Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University, Pune. Unpublished report. March 2020.

[24] Most of these carcasses are fed on by feral dogs during the day and several wild carnivore species at night (shown by camera trap images), exacerbating risks of disease transmission between feral dogs and wildlife (Source: WWF India). This issue may also apply to Dudhwa landscape.

[25] NTCA have issued several Advisories relating to disease threats to wildlife including canine distemper (3 Oct 2018) and services of vet doctors to support PA management (28 Nov 2019)

[26] Note ? Component 2 only covers Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest landscapes ? Ranthambhore is not included

[27] Participants from Bhutan/Nepal will join training activities when these are in line with the transboundary roadmap-identified areas for collaboration.

[28] Note ? Component 3 only covers Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest landscapes ? Ranthambhore is not included

[29] Stuart-Hill et al. 2005. The Event Book System: A Community-based Natural Resource Monitoring System from Namibia. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10531-005-8391-0>

[30] Ganga Prahari (Guardians of Ganges) program of central government is a useful model. Volunteers are recruited, a monthly honorarium is paid. But additionally the recognition by the government of exemplary service, a certificate a meeting with the minister, invitation to attend national workshops etc., are all greatly valued by the volunteers.

[31] Participants from Bhutan/Nepal will join training activities when these are in line with the transboundary roadmap-identified areas for collaboration.

[32] WWF-PATA Bagh Mitra Awards are given to honour persistence, courage & conviction demonstrated by forest department staff, community members and organisations working towards tiger conservation.

[33] This would be mainly for inventory and also for a relative estimate of abundance. Crucial because we have very little understanding of what happens to prey populations of small cats with climate change or land use change. All live trapping would be conducted with the necessary government permissions.

[34] See for example: <http://eaglenestmemoryproject.in/>

[35] <https://www.incredibleindia.org/content/incredibleindia/en.html>

[36] WWF Tigers Alive initiative has developed the SAFE System concept, see: [http://zeropoaching.org/pdfs/HWC\\_concept\\_note.pdf](http://zeropoaching.org/pdfs/HWC_concept_note.pdf) It has been piloted in Bhutan, see: [http://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/final\\_report\\_hwc\\_safe\\_system13\\_feb\\_for\\_printing\\_2.pdf](http://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/final_report_hwc_safe_system13_feb_for_printing_2.pdf)

[37] Participants from Bhutan/Nepal will join training activities when these are in line with the transboundary roadmap-identified areas for collaboration.

[38] Capacity building for corporate managers, local community partners and other duty bearers on wildlife conservation business operation of corporate sector bodies.

[39] See: [https://cites.org/eng/Wildlife\\_enforcement\\_networks\\_from\\_around\\_the\\_world\\_meet\\_to\\_further\\_strengthen\\_collaborative\\_efforts\\_against\\_wildlife\\_crime\\_26082019](https://cites.org/eng/Wildlife_enforcement_networks_from_around_the_world_meet_to_further_strengthen_collaborative_efforts_against_wildlife_crime_26082019)

[40] This may include participation in WWF-led activities, for example in Output 2.2 (training of frontline staff), Output 3.3 (monitoring of small wild cat species) and Output 3.5 (HWC management)

[41] Note: Nepal TAL Project Output 3.3.2 will provide training and operational support to government staff for wildlife crime management. This will target Banke and Bardia national park staff, District Forest Officers, rangers, Wildlife Crime Control Bureaus, and government investigation officers. It includes: Transboundary coordination, including travel to India to exchange information on wildlife crime issues.

[42] See: <https://pmawards.gov.in/public/List-of-Backward-Districts.pdf>

[43] The fund flow process is described in the Governance and Management Arrangements section of the Prodoc. There are significant constraints as a result of GEF rules and Indian Government rules that do not permit much flexibility, therefore the overall division of GEF funds between the Components led by the respective GEF Agencies is necessary.

[44] Core and Buffer Areas of Pakke TR, Eaglenest WS, Sessa Orchid Sanctuary, Dudhwa TR. Excludes ESZ of Eaglenest WS (5588 ha) and Ranthambhore TR (141,128 ha). Project Concept target was 520,949 ha.

[45] Reduced from 200,000 ha at Project Concept stage: the project has scaled down from 4 to 2 landscapes with pro rata adjustment of this target

[46] Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF). 2005. Ecosystem Profile: Indo-Burman Hotspot, Eastern Himalayan Region. WWF US-Asian Program.

[47] Stattersfield, A. J., Crosby, M. J., Long, A. J. and Wege, D. C. (1998) Endemic Bird Areas of the World: Priorities for Biodiversity Conservation. BirdLife International Series No. 7. BirdLife International, U.K. PP Sultana, A. and Khan, J. A. (2000) Birds of Oak forests in the Kumaon Himalaya, Uttar Pradesh, India. Forktail 16: 131-146.

[48] Olson, David M., and Eric Dinerstein. "The Global 200: Priority Ecoregions for Global Conservation." Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden 89, no. 2 (2002): 199-224. doi:10.2307/3298564.

#### **1b. Project Map and Coordinates**

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

See **Annex E** for details

#### **1c. Child Project?**

**If this is a child project under a program, describe how the components contribute to the overall program impact.**

The project aligns to the GWP Theory of Change in the following ways: i) implementation of landscape-level conservation management plans integrated across existing species and site plans and programmes will support improved management of PAs, improve biodiversity management across landscapes and support healthy wildlife populations; ii) increased frontline capacity for patrolling and surveillance activities will improve PA management and support stabilization of wildlife populations with reduced poaching; iii) effective HWC management strategies and the provision of financial incentives to communities will support community participation in wild cat conservation and bring about more positive attitudes towards wildlife and human-wildlife co-existence; iv) targeted awareness, advocacy and social mobilization can achieve a shift in attitudes and behaviours that encourage support for wild cat conservation and reduce participation in poaching and illegal trafficking of wild cats and other co-existing species. The project will make the following contributions to the GEF-7 Global Wildlife Program (see **Table 2** below).

**Table 2. Alignment of the project with the GEF-7 Global Wildlife Program framework**

<b>GWP Component</b>	<b>Relevant GWP program outcomes</b>	<b>Key project contributions to relevant GWP outcomes</b>	<b>Key project targets</b>
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<p><b>1: Conserve wildlife and enhance habitat resilience</b></p>	<p>a) Stabilization or increase in populations of, and area occupied by, wildlife at program sites</p> <p>b) Areas of landscapes and terrestrial/ marine protected areas under improved practices and management effectiveness (METT for PAs)</p> <p>c) Formal agreements signed to increase connectivity of landscapes and establish transnational conservation areas</p> <p>d) Strengthened long-term partnerships, governance, and finance frameworks for PAs</p> <p>e) Increased revenues for protected areas and landscapes</p>	<p>a) The overall project objective is to <i>Secure populations and habitats of wild cats subject to habitat encroachment, human-wildlife conflict, poaching and illegal trade in priority landscapes of northern, north-eastern and western India</i>, therefore all project outcomes will contribute towards this GWP outcome</p> <p>b) The project will directly contribute towards the enhanced management of wild cat landscapes including tiger reserves, PAs and wildlife corridors, with a provision of using other types of management units under appropriate laws of the country through planning, capacity development, community engagement and a range of interventions aiming to strengthen species and habitat management (Project Outcomes 1,2,3)</p> <p>c) Landscape conservation master plans for wild cats will be developed for two globally-significant wild cat landscapes (Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest) with implementation supported by multi-sector partnerships (Project Outcome 1)</p> <p>d) Partnerships, procedures and institutional capacity for landscape management and wild cat conservation within and outside PAs will be strengthened (Project Outcomes 1 and 2), as well as improved knowledge management (Project Outcome 4)</p> <p>e) Public-private-partnerships and private sector funds will support investment in project-related activities in the project landscapes (Project Outcome 4)</p>	<p>-Landscape conservation master plans for wild cats developed for two globally-significant wild cat landscapes (Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest) with implementation supported by multi-sector partnerships</p> <p>-Tiger Conservation Plans within project landscapes incorporate specific requirements for small wild cat conservation;</p> <p>-Improved management of 389,572 ha<sup>[1]</sup> of PAs in Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest landscapes indicate ?sound? management (as measured by METT scores)</p> <p>-Improved management of an estimated 100,000 ha of agricultural and forest mosaic that buffers and connects PAs and provides important habitats for small cats</p>
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<b>2: Promote wildlife-based and resilient economies (WBE)</b>	a) Additional livelihood activities established  b) Increased Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) strategies and site interventions deployed	a) Capacity development for sustainable livelihood interventions supported by demonstration activities for targeted communities to reduce pressures on wild cat habitats and HWC, including: sustainable livestock management, nature-based tourism, NTFP marketing, agroforestry (Project Outcome 3)  b) Innovative solutions for preventing and managing HWC deployed at identified hotspots within wild cat landscapes, and increased adoption of land use and habitat management techniques to minimize potential for conflicts (Project Outcome 3)	-60% reduction in annual incidence of HWC impacting crops, livestock and people in four targeted communities
<b>3: Combat wildlife trafficking</b>	a) Improved enforcement, judicial, and prosecutorial institutional capacity to combat wildlife crime (site-based law enforcement)  b) Decreased number of target species poached (i.e. use of SMART tools)	a) Frontline training and equipment for monitoring and surveillance of wild cats and poaching-related activities, strengthening site-based anti-poaching and enforcement capacity (Project Outcome 2)  b) Communication initiatives and outreach to minimize local community engagement in poaching, retaliatory killing and illegal trade in wild cats and their body parts, helping build human-wildlife coexistence (Project Outcome 3)	-Improved frontline capacity for conservation and management of small wild cats and their habitats, as measured by Small Cats Capacity Development Scorecard (see Annex 18 for Scorecard baselines) for: Dudhwa Landscape and Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape  -Targeted 20% reduction in key threats to wild cat populations and their habitats, as measured by patrol reporting/ MSTRIPES  -Improved frontline capacity for conservation and management of small wild cats and their habitats, as measured by Small Cats Capacity Development Scorecard
<b>4: Reduce demand</b>	n/a. <i>This project does not aim to reduce demand for wildlife products; however, it will aim to raise awareness of wildlife protection law and the impacts of wildlife crime on wildlife populations; see Component 5.</i>		

<b>5: Coordinate and enhance learning</b>	a) Enhanced understanding of wildlife as an economic asset  b) Strengthened public-private partnerships for promoting wildlife-based economies  c) Enhanced upstream sector engagement (governance, fiscal, finance, and trade)  d) Improved coordination among countries, donors and other key stakeholders engaged in the implementation of the GWP	a) Improved understanding of values of wild cats and more positive attitudes towards small wild cat conservation among target audiences (Project Outcome 4)  b) National green business platform operationalized and PPPs and private sector funds supporting investment in project-related activities in each of the three landscapes (Project Outcome 4)  c) Business and governance partners engaged through green business platform and PPPs, landscape governance platforms and annual stakeholder forum meetings  d) Knowledge management to identify, document and share project best practices and lessons learned between project landscapes, across India and other wild cat range countries and across the Global Wildlife Program; and enhanced regional cooperation between India and neighbouring tiger range States and agreed coordinated action portfolio (Project Outcome 4)	-Improved understanding of values of wild cats and more positive attitudes towards small wild cat conservation among target audiences including national and state government line agencies (Forest and Wildlife, Environment, Agriculture, Revenue, Rural Development, etc) and concerned NGOs, as measured by KAP (Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices) score  - National-level green business platform operational with TOR, membership of at least 20 corporate bodies, and actively investing through at least one partnership activity in each project landscape  - Best practices developed, disseminated and used, targeting: integrated management of ESZs to benefit wildlife, management of targeted Wasteland habitats, small wild cat ? friendly agriculture practices, HWC management in targeted communities, community-based monitoring of small wild cats, gender mainstreaming and traditional knowledge relevant to wild cats / habitats
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[1] Core and Buffer Areas of Pakke TR, Eaglenest WS, Sessa Orchid Sanctuary, Dudhwa TR. Excludes ESZ of Eaglenest WS (5588 ha) and Ranthambhore TR (141,128 ha). Project Concept target was 520,949 ha.

## 2. Stakeholders

Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase:

**Civil Society Organizations** Yes

**Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities** Yes

**Private Sector Entities** Yes

**If none of the above, please explain why:**

**Please provide the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent assessment.**

See Project Document **Annex 7B**

In addition, provide a summary on how stakeholders will be consulted in project execution, the means and timing of engagement, how information will be disseminated, and an explanation of any resource requirements throughout the project/program cycle to ensure proper and meaningful stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement during the project preparation period followed a PPG Stakeholder Engagement Plan consistent with UNDP and WWF requirements (see prodoc **Annex 7A**), listing the consultations required for each stakeholder and a description of the stakeholder engagement process. See Annex 02 of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (prodoc **Annex 7B**) for details of community consultations, and prodoc **Annex 17** for a record of all stakeholder consultations conducted during the Project Preparation. Based on these consultations during PPG phase, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan for Full Project implementation was developed (see prodoc **Annex 7B**), which provides details of the different groups of stakeholders, the proposed methods and topics of engagement, and the timing and frequency of such engagement. The plan aims to:

? Establish mechanisms that ensure a high level of ownership across project partners, affected and interested parties throughout the project life cycle to align with the multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder project approach.

? Facilitate close engagement and grievances mechanisms of stakeholders in the further development and throughout implementation and closure of the project.

? Establish time frame and methods that ensure stakeholder consultation and disclosure of project information through the project life cycle; and

? Establish and manage communication and engagement mechanisms across partners, affected, and interested parties in a transparent, timely, and clear manner.

The stakeholders identified for this project (see Stakeholder Engagement Plan) are clustered into the following groups:

**Government:** Includes Ministries, Regulatory Authorities and Agencies, Local Government Authorities at Regional and District level, and Research Institutes with either mandate or interest in delivering the interventions related to the project. These include the principle project partners, responsible for implementing activities, and working directly with local communities in the project sites.

**Local Communities:** The engagement plan will mostly focus on local communities, given that the project will affect either directly or indirectly all members of the communities. The local communities cited here are the populations currently residing and permanent residence in the project landscapes (Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest).

**Indigenous Communities:** The project landscapes are inhabited by Indigenous/Tribal communities, including potentially vulnerable groups that might not have stable land rights arrangements. Indigenous/Tribal communities in project landscapes include the Monpas, Sherdukpens, Buguns, and Nyishi in Arunachal and the Tharu in Uttar Pradesh.

**Women:** Women in India share an extrinsic relationship with the forest, wildlife, and other natural resources. Their traditional knowledge of forest and wildlife management would help sustainable wildlife management and community stewardship promotion.

**Civil Society Organizations (CSOs):** This constitutes non-state actors both locally and internationally working in project areas or interventions related to the project objectives. Like the Government in terms of potential role, most CSOs will be partners to the project for implementation, thus directly engaging with the local communities in the project sites.

**Private Sector:** Corporate bodies in India play a significant role in industrial development, agriculture, trading, infrastructure, services sector, and small-scale cottage industries. The project aims to engage the private sector in wild cat conservation and facilitate the identification of sustainable financing options to maintain community stewardship outside the core tiger habitats in PAs.

These stakeholders will be informed and engaged in the project as per the Stakeholder Engagement Plan. The process of identifying and reflect on the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders is a continuous process. The list of stakeholders, their interests and influence on the project, will be treated as a living document for the purpose of selecting changing social, economic and political environments throughout the project cycle.

The main strategies to be deployed by the project to achieve stakeholder engagement are as follows.

#### **Proposed Strategy to incorporate views of women and other relevant groups**

The project will use the following methods to ensure that the views of women and vulnerable groups are included in the project design, planning, and implementation of activities at the community level:

? A combination of methods will be used when consulting and engaging local communities while respecting all participants' views and knowledge, including focus group discussions using various criteria depending on the situation (per economic activity, age group, gender, geographical locations, etc.); critical informants discussions (e.g., to understand the historical perspective of certain activities, gender perception, and realities, etc.). In pursuing these methods, the project will ensure that there is enough time, flexibility (e.g., due to disability, some may come from far) to ensure participation of all intended members of communities. This will avoid the risks of vulnerable groups being excluded from taking part due to being banned from public gatherings due to their disability, gender orientation, economic activity, religion, or tribalism.

? In consulting and engaging women and other relevant groups, communication will be simplified to ensure that it fits the local context and helps build confidence. In all meetings, the local language will be used, and where necessary, the translation will be used to tribal languages using members of the communities. Community members and officials will lead the discussions at the community level from the district government.

? A register will be kept (recording the institution/group/village/district government office etc rather than names of all individuals, and recording number of participants and gender), updated regularly, and feedback systems developed to ensure that women and other relevant groups (minorities, elderly, young other marginalized groups) are fully included in consultations, benefit from the project, and informed on the progress project.

#### **Proposed methods to receive feedback and to ensure ongoing communications with stakeholders**

The following approaches will support communications with stakeholders:

? All stakeholders that have been consulted and identified will be kept in the register (recording the institution/group/village/district government office etc rather than names of all individuals, and recording number of participants and gender) and updated regularly. These stakeholders will be kept

abreast of information on project implementation reports and encouraged to provide feedback by individuals taking part in implementing the project through various means, including phone calls, emails, and informal meetings, among others. Almost all stakeholders identified by the project have an interest in the project areas that will facilitate engagement and outreach throughout the project cycle.

? National ministries and agencies that are primary partners to the project will be invited to provide feedback on the project through meetings (or workshops), including the various technical and steering committees set up under the project to design and implement activities throughout the project cycle. The primary partners will also provide feedback through direct engagement with the PMU during the development and execution of activities throughout the project cycle.

? The institutional project arrangement has allocated responsibilities for all parties to monitor and collect feedback from communities and other stakeholders throughout the project cycle. This set-up will allow for collection, analysis, follow-up, accountability, and integration of feedback provided.

? The PMU, executing partners, and partners will take notes during community meetings, interviews, and focus group discussions when exercising their communities' responsibilities. These field notes will be used to write and analyze field reports and monitoring reviews to provide feedback to the project implementation. Notes and reports will be filed.

? As appropriate, regional and local government authorities will be invited to provide feedback through speeches during officiating workshops, the launch of reports, and forums. The politicians will also be engaged and consulted to provide their input through visits to the district and regional offices during the execution of various project activities.

? As it has been done during the project's design process, all other stakeholders that have already been identified will be invited to workshops and meetings as per thematic topics and their interests to provide inputs and feedback during designing activities, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the project. These stakeholders will be involved through individual consultation (phone calls, emails), sharing reports (workshops, monitoring) where feedback can be provided to PMU.

? The national-level government ministries, agencies, and members of PMU will also represent the project in various local and international multi-stakeholder meetings, forums, and workshops where feedback can be provided. This engagement will allow for input from various invited stakeholders, forge new partnerships, and identify new stakeholders beyond that have been identified.

#### **Other engagement activities for the stakeholder engagement plan**

Other engagement activities for the plan will include the following:

? Engagement with women's groups and youth for promoting community stewardship- Women are at the forefront in the fight for natural resource rights and collecting NTFP, fuelwood from the forest, human-wildlife conflict and hence, it would be essential to engage with youth and women groups to increase their awareness on small cat conservation, forest, and biodiversity protection.

? Increased awareness for small cat conservation: According to community members, watchers, and local guides shared that use of posters, signboards can be used for building awareness of community and other stakeholders on small cats.

? Creating a learning and sharing platform at the national level and across the border for sharing of best practices- Many wildlife NGOs working in the Pilibhit area have experience on camera trapping of small cats and running a public campaign community stewardship for conservation issues. But, largely, there is a lack of general knowledge and information regarding the small cat population, habitat, and conservation. Hence, it would be essential to create a national level and cross-border learning and sharing platforms to document, share, and replicate best practices for small cat conservation. It will also help increase the project's outreach to benefit other landscapes not covered under this project.

? Training and capacity building across project partners affected and interested stakeholders. The project will also build capacity on existing multi-stakeholder processes and established forums to provide room for partnerships and consultation with stakeholders beyond those directly affected by the project.

? In all meetings (individual, site visits, workshops, focus group discussions, key informants), records will be kept and documented for analysis, and various reports will be prepared. The

documentation will also be used to keep stakeholders informed at different levels on progress, challenges, risks, and emerging opportunities.

? The district and communities will design, make a decision, and provide feedback throughout the project cycle. The identified district and community level state and non-state actors are beneficiaries (or effected parties) and partners to the project.

### **Resources and responsibilities for stakeholder engagement**

In terms of the resources and responsibilities for implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, the project will be executed by the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and Global Tiger Forum, through the Project Management Unit and Landscape Units. Overall, MoEFCC will be responsible for the development, execution and monitoring of all safeguards plans prepared as per the WWF Environment and Social Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP) and UNDP policies. The Executing Agency, MoEFCC, has the overall responsibility and oversight to carry out stakeholder engagement activities which include consultation and disclosure. Their role, apart from overall responsibility and an oversight, will include supporting the PMU at national level in:

- Disclosing and providing project implementation reports and other key documents on agreed timeline and in transparent way.
- Managing and authorizing disclosure of information related to the project on all communication methods.
- Leading national consultation level processes for national activities with project partners.

Other resources to enable implementation of this plan will include the following:

- In this engagement plan, the role of WWF and UNDP will be to make sure the project complies with policies and requirements of those of GEF, UNDP and WWF; to monitor the project in accordance with the proposed stakeholder engagement plan and provide recommendations for improvement; and facilitate disclosure and publication of information and reports from the project as authorised by MoEFCC.
- Monitoring of this plan, as defined further below, will be the responsibility of MoEFCC, and carried out by the PMU's M&E Officer
- In implementation, some activities may be commissioned out to independent agencies (and/or consultants) to avoid bias, ensure transparency and credibility, and enable feedback to improve grievance mechanisms. The role of independent agencies (and/or consultants) will include providing an independent view of the progress of the engagement plan; collecting, documentation and ensuring that concerns by affected parties are incorporated throughout the project cycle; facilitate and support MoEFCC and the PMU in implementing this plan in an independent way but adhering to GEF policies on safeguards and stakeholder engagement.

A minimum total[1] of **USD 667,732** of the GEF project budget has been allocated to support implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan (see budget table in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan for details).

The project investments have been planned through stakeholder interactions, as well as regular inputs and feedback from the sites has been incorporated throughout the period (beyond 2019 through 2020).

Regular interactions, at the field level by existing programmes, virtual meetings with state representatives to firm up priority activities for small cat conservation, and validation workshops/face to face project meetings convened by the implementing agency, and partners, WWF and UNDP (in 2020) have ensured regular flow of information for project development and refinements, as and when suggested. The project document has been reviewed by the states and agencies at several levels, including during the issuance of the co-financing commitment of the government. Furthermore, landscape projects of WWF in partnership with stakeholders have been implemented in all the three project geographies over long time periods, with most intensive focus in the Terai/Dudhwa landscape, followed by Ranthambhore and Arunachal Pradesh (Pakke-Eaglenest landscape). Conservation outcomes related to efforts for wild cats like the tiger also overlap with small wild cat habitat protection, including initiatives towards reduction of pressure on landscapes, addressing human wildlife conflict issues, among others. During the start-up phase, the PMU will identify specific intervention sites and adapt project activities as needed for the Annual Work Plan and budget ? FPIC consultations, safeguards mitigation planning for specific sites ? these are all needed and will take account of the time lapse between design and the onset of implementation.

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[1] Note ? it is not possible to fully determine all budget inputs that may be considered as contributing towards stakeholder engagement, because this is a cross-cutting operational issue that is integrated across project staff and activities. Therefore the identified budget is presented as an estimated minimum contribution.

**Select what role civil society will play in the project:**

**Consulted only;** Yes

**Member of Advisory Body; Contractor;** Yes

**Co-financier;** Yes

**Member of project steering committee or equivalent decision-making body;** Yes

**Executor or co-executor;** Yes

**Other (Please explain)**

**3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

**Provide the gender analysis or equivalent socio-economic assesment.**

See the Gender Analysis and Action Plan in Project Document **Annex 8**.

The MoEFCC, UNDP and WWF are committed to mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment as well as social inclusion, to ensure that women and men have equal access to, and control over, resources for development, benefits, and decision-making at all stages of development processes, projects, programs or policies. The aim of the gender analysis and stakeholder consultations carried out during project formulation was to develop and implement a Gender Action Plan (see Prodoc **Annex 8**).

The objective of the gender analysis and gender mainstreaming action plan is to provide a framework for the project implementation team to ensure that women and men will be equally involved in the project and receive equitable social and economic benefits. Its overall strategy is to ensure the equal participation and benefits of women during project implementation, with the support of the gender specialists and assigned gender focal points, and the collection of detailed sex-disaggregated data on project beneficiaries and participants.

Gender mainstreaming involves examining the relationships of men and women in the context of the project - both as actors in the process and as beneficiaries. The gender analysis involved analyzing how social and cultural norms impact the lives of both men and women differently by assigning different job roles, putting differential values on different jobs which translate into wage rates. The gender analysis also explored the structural and cultural barriers that women and men face to challenge gender roles; and tools that can help to break these norms to benefit all target groups.

The gender analysis and mainstreaming action plan was developed in accordance with the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2021, UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (2014)<sup>[1][2]</sup>, the UNDP Guidance Note on Gender Analysis<sup>[3]</sup>, GEF 2020 Strategy, GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming (2012), the GEF's Gender Equality Action Plan (2014), GEF policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards (2015), GEF Policy on Public Involvement in GEF Projects (2012) and Guidelines for the Implementation of the Public Involvement Policy (2014).

Some of the key objectives of the gender analysis and gender action plan for this project were to:

- Understand gender divisions of labor, differential access to natural resources and other basic services to assess the impacts of human-wildlife conflict on women's workload, livelihood, and well-being;
- Assess key livelihood activities and the differential roles of men and women in livelihood activities to understand the impacts of the project;
- Explore traditional knowledge, attitudes and practices of local communities regarding biodiversity conservation and small wild cat population and habitat management;
- Understand social and cultural norms related to small wild cats, women's role in hunting / care of the wild cats and other animals.

The gender analysis and action plan were prepared by drawing lessons from primary and secondary assessment, including review of literature regarding women's roles in wildlife management, the status of women in the landscape areas, and existing gender-specific challenges to build location-specific

understanding and to inform the preparation of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) questionnaires. FGDs and semi-structured interviews were held with women and men, different government department staff, Civil Society Organizations and activists working in the landscapes to understand gender divisions of labor, gender-specific challenges, gender differential needs, and the different roles that men and women play in relation to the conservation of wild cats. Visits were made to each of the three project landscapes (Dudhwa, Ranthambhore and Pakke-Eaglenest) during the period from mid-July through September 2019 in order to conduct the stakeholder consultations and review the situation on the ground (see Prodoc **Annex 17** for details of the stakeholder meetings held).

The Gender Action Plan includes the following main strategies:

- Institutional Capacity for Gender Integration*: Gender sensitization of the implementation team is crucial for integrating gender in the project. A gender integration module should be prepared and all the implementation team should be trained. An online gender module can be created and made compulsory for the implementing team, monitoring and evaluation team.

- Gender Responsive Monitoring and Evaluation*: Monitoring and review process are significant in achieving set objectives. Allocating gender specific indicators against project outputs and outcomes and making the team accountable to report on all the indicators will help to integrate gender concerns in the project. In addition, targeted indicators that reflect progress in the empowerment of women are required beyond simple gender disaggregation of indicator targets.

- Gender-Disaggregated Data Collection*: Sex-disaggregated data is first step in integrating gender concerns in the system as it helps to understand the existing participation level of women on various trainings and processes. Suggested improvements include the addition of indicators such as the numbers of the female headed households engaged in the project, numbers of female and male participants in the training Programme. Gender assessment of the training programmes and collected MIS data of training participants should be conducted regularly to understand factors affecting women's participation in the training programmes. Hence, integrating gender concerns in the monitoring and review indicators and process will be key to encourage women's participation in the designing, planning and implementation of the project activities.

- Gender-Responsive Annual Workplans and Budget*: During project implementation, as an integral part of the team that develops the annual workplans, the gender expert will lead on the provision of inputs to ensure that annual workplans are gender-responsive to ensure proper implementation of this gender action plan. Specific annual budget allocation and annual gender budget reporting should be ensured for the achievement of gender goals. Further, communication and documentation process should be gender sensitized to capture gender stories highlighting achievement of both gender strategic and practical needs. The budget aims to support the inputs of a gender specialist on the project team to implement the gender action plan and provide related training for staff etc, produce communications materials and lead the gender-related M&E reporting, inter alia.

The Gender Action Plan sets out specific activities designed to ensure the mainstreaming of gender into project Outputs and activities, including the following key actions to maximize equal participation in and benefits from the project:

- The project will recruit gender experts to advise and support implementation of the gender action plan
- Appointment of one staff for each project landscape to act as gender focal point to record, collect and report implementation of this gender mainstreaming and action plan
- Appointment of one staff for each project landscape to act as gender focal point to record, collect and report implementation of this gender mainstreaming and action plan
- Active participation of women and youth in habitat management and rehabilitation interventions, monitoring, and sharing of lessons learned

- Sensitization of forest staff on gender and social concerns of local communities for improving their engagement (organizing one gender and FPIC training in each landscape area)
- Establishment and strengthening of women-based and women-led community institutions (eg SHGs) and ensuring their participation in decision-making roles in other community based institutions such as EDCs, BMCs to support community-based conservation approaches - community mobilisation, establishment of relevant local committees, preparation of community conservation plans in participatory manner
- Women are also most involved in domestic chores such as collection of firewood, fodder and water, and primarily responsible for cooking, therefore they should play a prominent role in consultations regarding such interventions (eg review of LPG subsidies, water supply, alternative energy and energy-efficient stoves, etc.)
- Inclusion of gender and social concerns in awareness raising plans for each landscape
- Provision of training on improved agricultural and livestock management practices for women farmers
- Promotion of handicraft-making, ecotourism and other livelihoods with womens? groups including technical assistance such as provision of training inputs and materials, and linkages for market access, etc.
- Prioritised engagement of women in developing HWC responses through the SAFE workshops are of great significance (eg electrification of villages, provision of solar lights, electric fencing, etc.)
- Sharing of gender sensitive best practices for knowledge management purposes.

Gender disaggregated indicators and targets are provided in the project Results Framework (Section IV), including Indicator 1 (number of direct beneficiaries), Indicator 13: Improved understanding of values of wild cats and more positive attitudes towards small wild cat conservation among target audiences, as measured by KAP, and Indicator 15: No. project best practices developed, disseminated and used, targeting:gender mainstreaming and traditional knowledge relevant to wild cats/habitats.

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[1] Dated 24 April 2020

[2] UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (SES), June 2014.

[3] UNDP, How to Conduct a Gender Analysis, A Guidance Note for UNDP Staff, 2016

**Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment?**

Yes

**Closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources;**

**Improving women's participation and decision making** Yes

**Generating socio-economic benefits or services or women** Yes

**Does the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?**

Yes

**4. Private sector engagement**

### **Elaborate on the private sector's engagement in the project, if any.**

See Stakeholder Engagement Plan in Project Document **Annex 7B**.

Public and private sector corporate bodies in India play a significant role in industrial development, agriculture, trading, infrastructure, services sector, and small-scale cottage industries. India's National Biodiversity Action Plan (2019) encourages the participation of the private sector in biodiversity conservation. In addition, the learnings from the UNDP-led Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) can guide the project in identification of sustainable financing options for conservation and in leveraging resources through the private sector. The BIOFIN methodology shall be used to identify potential finance mechanisms, actors, and opportunities for further developing a resource mobilisation plan for wild cat conservation. The Confederation of Indian Industry is a key player in catalysing the engagement of Indian businesses in sustainable practices through the CII-ITC Centre for Excellence for Sustainable Development (CESD). Component 4 of the project aims to enhance private sector[1] partnerships in addition to knowledge management and M&E. The establishment and initial operation of a national-level platform for green business including development of private-sector fund will be supported (**Output 4.1**) to engage the private sector in wild cat conservation and facilitate the identification of sustainable financing options to maintain community stewardship outside the core tiger habitats in PAs. This is expected to include regional dialogues between government, industry and conservation partners operating within the project landscapes and the development of partnerships with agricultural (e.g. sugar production at Dudhwa) and tourism businesses operating within the project landscapes, supporting pilot conservation and livelihood initiatives under Component 3. By the end of the project, a national-level green business platform will be operational with TOR, membership of at least 20 corporate bodies, and actively investing through at least one partnership activity in each project landscape. *The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) -ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development*[2] will be a key partner in supporting this Output. Letters of willingness to collaborate on the project have been obtained from a number of potential private sector partners that are active in the demonstration landscape and have expressed initial interest in the Wildlife Business Council, including North Star Asia/Glaxo Smith Kline South Asia, Power H2O water technologies, Sanofi and Tremac Snack Food. It is expected that this will translate into materialized private sector co-financing by project mid-term as the Wildlife Business Council is established and private sector partnerships in wildlife and habitat conservation in the project landscapes strengthened.

The proposed green business platform will build on the former India Wildlife Business Council, which explored the possibility of partnerships with industries/private sector to incorporate wildlife conservation concerns into business sectors where this was not a primary goal. While the Wildlife Business Council is no longer functional (see Component 4 baseline for further information), this aim remains relevant in that the importance of green business and compliance by business groups/industries has become a necessity owing to long-term business gains as well as legitimacy and need flagged by the Government, and this project can provide the necessary institutional and technical assistance on the biodiversity side to connect business more effectively to wildlife conservation concerns. The Government of India, in its latest National Wildlife Action Plan (2017-2031) prioritizes private sector engagement, while seeking direct corporate support for targeted conservation campaigns. It also promotes 'Corporate Environmental Responsibility' along the lines of 'Corporate Social Responsibility' Programmes. The development of such a green business platform, building on experience gained through the former India Wildlife Business Council would codify and institutionalize a sustainable mechanism through the current project led by the Government of India, MoEFCC, in collaboration with the Global Tiger Forum (GTF), with outreach and partnerships with the private sector secured by WWF and UNDP. Several business groups had expressed interest in the India Wildlife Business Council previously, which will be followed up. The envisaged platform will enable much needed corporate partnership at a landscape scale, resulting in centrifugal stakeholder involvement, complemented with multiple governmental and non-governmental sectors operating in the landscapes or at national level, with an interest to support in-situ conservation. Such an endeavour is important for building up the composite portfolio of actions with mutual gains based on reciprocity

to achieve the goal of conservation beyond protected areas. GEF investment will facilitate the development and promotion of the green business platform among interested business communities, development of a feasibility strategy for a Corporate Sector Conservation Fund/Financial Instrument to be managed by the green business platform; facilitate the development of a scheme for the generation and disbursement of small community grants (not from GEF funds) by the Green Business Platform; conduct an advocacy programme to mobilize corporate partnerships and CSR funds; and facilitate the development of business partnerships and implementation of pilot initiatives for relevant sectors, including capacity development for the partners involved.

Private sector engagement is also envisaged in Component 1 as partners in the Landscape Master Plan development and operation (Output 1.1) and potential contributors to species recovery plan implementation (Output 1.2); in Component 2 private sector may be positioned to support community engagement in habitat conservation measures in the project landscapes ? potentially through linkage with Output 4.1. In Component 3, the diversification and technical support for sustainable livelihoods (Output 3.4) also offers opportunities for business involvement in sectors including ecotourism development / recovery, and the production and marketing of agricultural products and NTFPs from the landscapes.

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[1] Note that government-linked corporations are an important component, included in usage of ?private sector? here.

[2] <https://www.sustainabledevelopment.in/>

## 5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

**Elaborate on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, the proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation.(table format acceptable):**

The risks for the project have been collectively assessed and identified according to the division of responsibilities for this joint GEF Agency project. Under this arrangement, UNDP is GEF Agency for Components 1 and 4, following the standard UNDP approach towards assessing and managing risks (see below). Similarly, the risks for Components 2 and 3 were assessed following the WWF GEF Agency procedures (see below). The identified project risks, their overall rating and the mitigation actions required during project implementation are given in prodoc **Annex 5**. The assumptions on which these project risks depend are listed in the project's Theory of Change (**Table 1**), with assumptions applied to the project indicators also described in the Monitoring Plan for the project Results Framework (**Annex 3**). Risks are only shown if their rating is considered to be Moderate or High, with the exception of risks identified in the Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP, prodoc **Annex 4**) which are all described. As per standard UNDP requirements, the Project Manager will monitor risks quarterly and report on the status of risks to the UNDP Country Office. The UNDP Country Office will record progress in the UNDP ATLAS risk log. Risks will be reported as critical when the impact and probability are high. For WWF, risks, including safeguards risks identified in the IPPF, will be monitored by the GEF Agency via quarterly budget and issue reports, six-monthly project progress reports (which include attention to risk identification and mitigation) and the yearly supervision missions. Management responses to critical risks will also be reported to the GEF in the annual PIR. While risk management measures have been comprehensively

included in the project design, it needs to be stated up front that no resettlement will take place with the use of GEF financing under this project.

*COVID-related risks to the project:* The most significant direct risks concern first, the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic affecting project implementation (#13), most significantly through government movement restrictions that would impact meetings and interrupt field activities. Secondly, the economic impacts of the pandemic could cause exchange rate fluctuations or economic recession that impact the GEF budget available to support implementation, while strategic shifts in government spending priorities could affect the delivery of cofinancing commitments for project implementation. In addition, the movement control orders in India as well as in tourist origin countries have significantly reduced tourist visitation, with a risk of undermining project plans to support ecotourism development, although the government and tourism operators are looking towards tourism recovery measures. HWC and hunting could increase locally due to COVID19-induced movements of people (eg returning to villages from cities(#6)); changes in government priorities related to COVID19 may favour regional development plans that take precedence over conservation (#7); COVID19 impacts on local economies could also exacerbate the risk that livelihood incentives are insufficient to change behaviour towards achieving conservation outcomes (#9).

*Potential mitigation measures:* Project start up could be delayed if necessary and flexibility has been provided in the project budget through allowing a six-month buffer at each end. Implementation may be paused if necessary in affected areas and resumed at a later time if feasible. The Project Steering Committee will guide project responses remotely as required, recognizing that revision of the project workplan may be necessary, and an extension request may be required if implementation is substantially delayed. Some adaptive adjustment may be needed to project strategy (e.g. on ecotourism development, business partnerships, or local hunting issues) if necessary ? for example, by shifting emphasis towards other forms of sustainable livelihoods support. Project support will be provided for PPE and IT communications to facilitate remote working. Financial impacts will be addressed through review of the GEF budget during project inception to address any shortfalls occurring before project start up, while annual budget reviews should track and respond to subsequent fluctuations. The Project Steering Committee should monitor and address any significant financial constraints arising due to exchange rate fluctuations and any delays or failures in the delivery of government cofinancing and business partnership financing delivery.

*Potential opportunities identified:* The project's support for sustainable livelihood development and reduction of HWC impacts will contribute towards the resilience of local communities to increased economic stresses related to the pandemic. The government's interest in supporting post-pandemic tourism recovery may align well with project plans for ecotourism development. The overall thrust of the project towards integrated landscape management should also contribute towards more resilient governance through the landscape master plans and related capacity development that takes into account the value of ecosystem services underpinning the local economy, ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change, and sustainable natural resource use.

Of the fourteen project risks listed in prodoc **Annex 5** that are not related to the SESP or IPPF, two are rated High, three are Substantial, five are Moderate and four are Low. Two High risks and one Moderate risk are directly related to potential impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as follows:

*Risk #12 (Moderate): Risk of COVID-19 impacts undermining project plans to support ecotourism development in project landscapes.* Project plans for ecotourism development and recovery support will continue in tandem with other livelihood diversification efforts. These intervention plans should be reviewed on a regular basis once implementation starts in consultation with national and state tourism authorities, and if necessary, other options for sustainable livelihoods considered in the event that the economic viability of ecotourism development in the project landscapes is considered a major risk. Support for ecotourism development will prioritize alternatives to homestays, such as camp and basic chalet facilities that allow mitigation of COVID-19 risks through measures such as social distancing);

*Risk #13 (High): Risk of ongoing or new human disease outbreaks such as the COVID-19 Pandemic affecting project implementation.* The project will comply with government directives in order to reduce

health risks to project staff and stakeholders. Project start up could be delayed if necessary due to ongoing health risks and operational constraints caused by social distancing, self-isolation and other measures. Flexibility has been provided in the project budget through allowing a six month buffer at each end for project start-up and completion delays. Implementation may be paused if necessary in affected areas while government disease prevention or control measures are implemented, and resumed at a later time if feasible. The Project Steering Committee will guide project responses through email correspondence for ongoing situations, as required. Revision of the project workplan may be necessary, and an extension request may be required if implementation is substantially delayed. Some adaptive adjustment may be needed to project strategy (eg on ecotourism development, business partnerships, or local hunting issues). Project support for PPE and IT communications to facilitate remote working will be provided through Outputs 4.2 and 4.4.

*Risk #14 (High): Impacts of exchange rate fluctuations on the budget available to support implementation plans, and global economic recession impacting delivery of cofinancing commitments for project implementation.* The delivery of government co-financing support for the project may be impacted by government prioritization of support for COVID19 response measures, in terms of the flow of funds through the consolidated fund of Government of India following the National Implementation Modality has the potential to cause delays during the implementation of the project. The budget will be reviewed during project inception and any necessary measures taken to address any shortfalls due to exchange rate fluctuations between the GEF approved budget and project start up. Annual budget reviews should track and respond to subsequent fluctuations. Changes in the scope or timing of planned activities may be necessary through workplan adjustments. The Project Steering Committee should monitor and address any significant financial constraints arising due to exchange rate fluctuations and any delays or failures in cofinancing and business partnership financing delivery.

An additional two Substantial and two Moderate risks may be exacerbated by COVID-19 impacts, therefore additional mitigation measures have been incorporated: Risk # 6 (Substantial): *Increasing human populations combined with increasing wildlife populations in PA, buffer and corridor areas will increase the prevalence of HWC, potentially exacerbated by COVID-19-induced movements of people;* Risk #7 (Substantial): *Regional development priorities for settlements, agricultural and irrigation schemes, transportation infrastructure, hydropower and industry take precedence over conservation and NRM plans supported by the project, potentially exacerbated by changes in government priorities related to COVID-19 recovery;* Risk #9 (Moderate): *Risk that livelihood incentives are insufficient to change behaviour towards achieving intended conservation outcomes, potentially exacerbated by COVID-19 impacts;* and Risk #10 (Moderate): *Risk that targeted communities are not motivated to participate in sustainable livelihood activities that support landscape conservation for the benefit of small cats and other wildlife, potentially exacerbated where increased access to natural resources is important to buffer livelihood impacts due to COVID-19.*

The other risks identified as Substantial were: #3: *Complex fund flow mechanisms and low capacity to disburse project funds efficiently;* while other Moderate risks were: #1: *Lack of ownership and support of different levels of government institutions could obstruct project implementation;* and #4: *Institutions governing PA buffer areas, Eco-Sensitive Zones and adjacent production landscape areas have inadequate capacity or resources for integrated natural resource planning and management.* See **Table 3** below for further details and mitigation measures.

### **Social and Environmental Safeguard Risks**

Potential social and environmental risks for **Components 1 and 4** are captured under the UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP). The SESP was finalised during project preparation, as required by UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards (SES). The SESP identified 10 risks for Components 1 and 4 of this project that could have potential negative impacts in the absence of safeguards, all of which are rated as Moderate. **Therefore, the overall SESP risk categorization for the project is Moderate.** The following safeguards are triggered: Human Rights; Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment; Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management; Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation; Community Health, Safety and Working Conditions; Displacement and Resettlement; and

Indigenous Peoples. The Moderate risks related to Components 1 and 4 of the project that will be supported by UNDP as GEF Agency are described as follows (see prodoc **Annex 4** for additional details).

*Risk 1: Upstream risk of restriction of access/use of natural resources and displacement of IPs/ tribal communities through preparation of landscape-level master plans including management of ESZ for wild cat conservation.* A Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) approach will be integrated and apply in the landscape planning approach and processes to avoid and prevent potential social and environmental impacts linked to development and implementation of landscape master plans. If the SESA considerations as part of master plan development determine that Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) would be required to be compliant with UNDP SES then the measures outlined in the WWF IPPF will be followed (after confirmation that they adhere to UNDP SES requirements). A comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) (prodoc **Annex 7B**) along with Project-specific grievance redress mechanism will be followed during all phases of the project. The master planning process under Output 1.1 will follow a participatory approach engaging District/State level stakeholder in each landscape including Eco-Sensitive Zones with consultation on existing policies, plans, state & national level schemes, defining clusters at Dudhwa TR, Pakke TR and Eagle Nest WLS. The planning process will also include primary data collection using community focus group discussions, participatory mapping and assessment through deployment of field teams.

*Risk 2: Risk of curtailing of customary natural resource management rights of tribal communities in project landscape through operational policy and plans for wild cat conservation.* A targeted SESA approach will be integrated into the policy development/revision and planning process for small cat conservation to identify and consider potential social and environmental risks linked to implementation of the different operational plans and policies. In parallel, the project will include capacity development activities to support the effective implementation of operational policies and SOPs. This is included under Output 1.5 for areas relevant to landscape management. Supported by WWF as GEF Agency, Output 2.2 includes training for frontline staff including community engagement and gender, delivery of a human rights-based approach to site-based wildlife law enforcement, field techniques for monitoring small cats etc. Further, evaluation workshops will be conducted to confirm best practices in implementation and identify lessons learned for implementation of guidelines and SOPs.

*Risk 3: Risk of low capacity to implement project activities which could impede compliance with UNDP social and environmental safeguards.* Capacity assessment of implementing agencies for components 1 & 4 has been integrated into project design/preparation and will be considered while doing implementation planning. Capacity development programs are included in Output 1.5 on landscape management considerations, in Output 2.2 under WWF as GEF Agency for frontline staff, and under Output 4.1 for private sector engagement and sensitization. The PMU has a National Safeguards and M&E Officer that will support these processes and provide sensitization training on SES requirements and ensure adequate consideration of SES within these activities.

*Risk 4: Project may exclude marginalized/vulnerable groups from participatory processes and/or project benefits due to lack of effective community engagement and support. A participatory process and stakeholder engagement plan will be in place as an integral part of project planning and implementation.* The stakeholder engagement plan will be implemented, and regularly reviewed and updated as needed. The master planning process under output 1.1 will follow a participatory approach including community focus group discussions, participatory mapping and assessment through deployment of field teams. Capacity of the implementing agencies will be developed for effective and inclusive community engagement including engagement of local and indigenous communities and vulnerable groups (e.g. Outputs 1.5, 2.2).

*Risk 5: Project activities and approaches to landscape-level planning, operational policy updates, capacity building and corporate sector engagements might not fully incorporate or reflect views of women and girls and ensure equitable opportunities for their involvement and benefit.* A gender analysis based on specific consultations with women and girls in the demonstration landscapes and review of literatures has been conducted during the PPG (see prodoc **Annex 8**). The Gender Action Plan (prodoc **Annex 8**) will be implemented with proposed activities to ensure project opportunities and benefits flow to women and girls.

The SEP (prodoc **Annex 7B**) along with Project-specific grievance redress mechanism will be followed during all phases of the project.

*Risk 6: Project landscapes could be impacted by the Supreme Court's ruling that over a million claims of Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers are not valid and shall be evicted from forests by July 2019.* Though the court later stayed its order to give states more time to examine the rejected land claims, this could potentially result in conflict in demonstration landscapes and disrupt project implementation. This risk is not related to the project or any of the co-financing but if the Supreme Court's ruling was strictly implemented it may trigger conflicts between State governments and Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers which could disrupt project implementation. The SEP (prodoc **Annex 7B**) along with Project-specific grievance redress mechanism will be followed to minimize the possible disruption if created due to Supreme Court's decisions.

*Risk 7: Entry of the private sector in conservation (enhancing corporate sector engagement for community-based wildlife conservation) could result in risk through partnership with private sector entities that have poor SES track record or risk altering traditional patterns of natural resource use and social power due to market orientated motives.* Any corporate partnerships will be screened and due diligence and an exclusionary process applied for high-risk sectors in accordance with UNDP Private Sector Partnerships policy and UNDP Private Sector Risk Assessment Tool. In addition, the activities under Output 4.1 to develop partnerships and implement pilot initiatives with private sector (e.g. Green Business Platform/investment fund/CSR fund/grants etc. made available through private sector investment) will include a screening process to ensure consideration of social and environmental impacts, adherence to SES and exclusion of potential high-risk activities. The SEP (prodoc **Annex 7B**) along with Project-specific grievance redress mechanism will be followed during all phases of the project.

*Risk 8: Risk of the project supporting private sector entities that could be noncompliant with national and international labor standards (i.e. principles and standards of ILO).* Screening/exclusionary process for partnering with private companies will be a part of project planning and designing of private sector investment in accordance with UNDP due diligence for private sector partnerships (see above risk), including risk of potential noncompliance with ILO standards. Any activities proposed by private sector investment linked to the project will be subject to screening processes and an exclusionary process will apply to ensure that grants/grantees do not cover activities that would be in noncompliance with UNDP SES. Compliance with private sector due diligence will be monitored during implementation by the National Safeguards and M&E Officer in the PMU.

*Risk 9: The intended outcomes of (Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 and 4.1) of the Project could be sensitive or vulnerable to potential impacts of climate change and variability, and natural disasters.* A climate risk screening has been completed and is included as Annex 26. The potential climate change impacts/vulnerabilities will be considered while selecting corporate investments and designing master planning process for landscape conservation through:

1. Screening of climate change vulnerabilities for all corporate sponsored projects in Output 4.1 and master planning process (1.1), preparation and implementation of recovery action plans (1.2), protocol and standard operating procedures (SOPs) (1.3) and Site-specific guidelines for small cat conservation (1.4).

2. Integration of inputs from Eco-Sensitive Zone management and climate-smart land use considerations. The project's landscape conservation approach will incorporate climate vulnerability assessment and adaptation measures as far as possible, to identify potential climate change impacts and incorporate both ecosystem-based adaptation and disaster risk reduction considerations into master planning process, preparation and implementation of recovery action plans, protocol and standard operating procedures (SOPs) and Site-specific guidelines for small cat conservation and corporate sponsored projects. This will consider, for example, increased climatic variability, increase in frequency and intensity of natural disasters such as droughts and floods, and ecological shifts.

*Risk 10: Risk that coordination and knowledge exchange actions on transboundary conservation could perpetuate potential safeguards risks linked to law enforcement.* A screening process will be put in place to identify and avoid potential safeguards impacts of the 'roadmap' developed for transboundary coordination on law enforcement for conservation. As needed mitigating measures such as need for

capacity development and agreement on law enforcement approaches and standards will be captured in the roadmap development.

Potential social and environmental risks for **Components 2 and 3** were determined through the **WWF GEF Agency safeguards assessment procedure**. A framework approach to risk and impact assessment and mitigation has been adopted for these components, since specific intervention sites within the landscapes (targeted buffer zones and corridors) where activities will be financed will be chosen during project implementation. Mitigation plans such as Indigenous Peoples Plans (IPPs) and Livelihood Restoration Plans (LRPs) are usually prepared upfront if the exact location and activities are confirmed and known. Thus, an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework / Process Framework (IPPF/PF) has been prepared and disclosed before GEF Agency approval (prodoc **Annex 25**). IPPs/ LRPs (if needed to support access to other resources/livelihoods) will be prepared as necessary during implementation, when specific details on exactly where interventions will be executed and which communities are involved are known.

The IPPF (prodoc **Annex 25**) provides guidance for the screening and assessment of impacts on indigenous peoples along with requirements and processes to obtain FPIC from affected indigenous and tribal peoples and for the preparation of IPPs for components 2 & 3 subprojects/ activities that are identified and prioritized during project execution. The Process Framework (PF) describes a process to be established by which members of potentially affected communities (due to restriction of access to resources) participate in designing, implementation and monitoring of relevant project activities to mitigate the impacts.

The IPPF/ PF has identified the steps for detailed screening and assessment for the project's potential social and environmental risks including project restriction of access to resources and livelihood, and for preparing and approving the required management plans for avoiding, and where avoidance is not possible, reducing, mitigating and managing these potential adverse impacts. The screening, social assessment, planning and implementation of the management plans (IPPs and LRPs) and their monitoring and evaluation will be the responsibilities of the PMU using the project budget allocated for Components 2 and 3.

Community and stakeholder engagement during the project preparation period followed a PPG Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) consistent with WWF requirements, listing the consultations required for each stakeholder and a description of the stakeholder engagement process. The PPG team members conducted site visits to each of the project landscapes and carried out community and stakeholder consultations between mid-July and late September 2019. The inputs received from the consultations provided basis for the selection of the targeted intervention areas within the proposed landscapes. Similarly, three community consultations in Dudhwa and Pakke- Eaglenest landscapes were organized as part of preparation of IPPF and PF. The objectives of consultations were mainly to:

- inform affected indigenous/tribal communities about project objectives and activities;
- discuss and assess possible adverse impacts and collect their views to avoid or mitigate them;
- discuss and assess potential project benefits and how these can be enhanced; and
- develop a strategy for Indigenous/Tribal People's participation during project design and implementation and to ascertain communities' broad support for the project.

All the concerns, comments and feedback provided by the participants of each consultation meeting have been noted and reflected in the **IPPF/PF (section 7.2)** prepared for the project (prodoc **Annex 25**). Most of the issues raised have been incorporated under project-related livelihood development and other opportunities proposed under Component 3, Output 3.4. In the case of project restriction of access and impact on livelihood, participants in Pakke Eaglenest landscape in particular, demanded for an agreement on alternative arrangements to support livelihoods and continue access. For this, they requested for MoU in their language. The ?MoU? between project and IP/Tribal communities should be understood to be in the spirit of FPIC, and the project will obtain it accordingly. The participants demanded for income generating activities, livestock shed improvement and community-based insurance scheme for livestock and crops. These demands along with other eligible and genuine concerns emerged during screening and social assessment will be addressed through IPP and LRP mechanisms. It should be noted that the livelihood development planned and budgeted under Output 3.4 has taken consideration of such needs to mitigate any potential restriction of access to natural resources.

A comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been prepared (see prodoc **Annex 7B**), incorporating the project's grievance redress mechanism and will be implemented during designing and implementation of the project.

Table 3. Project risk register

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
1	Lack of ownership and support of different levels of government institutions could obstruct project implementation	Operational	Overlapping mandates of central government units, and challenges in cooperation during project preparation indicate that there is a risk of non-cooperation due to institutional mandate and other factors.  <b>Moderate</b> L= 3 I= 3	Project Steering Committee to promptly review and decide on any such issues arising during implementation.	Project Manager
2	Government staff turnover may impede project implementation: inexperienced staff may therefore have to lead on some activities.	Operational	Regular staff turnover is a normal feature of the Government of India civil service. As a consequence, staff that have gained knowledge, played important coordination roles or taken part in training activities may be transferred to a role that does not allow their experience to be gainfully applied. The project would then have to repeat such orientation and training with replacement staff.  <b>Low</b> L= 3 I= 2	The project generally aims to build capacity within the government agencies involved in landscape conservation and related issues, and will train staff from each competent authority, as well as other related agencies. This will increase the depth of experience and skills available both for the project and future work.	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
3	Complex fund flow mechanisms and low capacity to disburse project funds efficiently	Operational	<p>Government mechanisms for the receipt, disbursement and accounting of international funds are bureaucratic and inefficient, carrying the risk of substantial delays and possible failures in implementation</p> <p><b>Substantial</b> L= 3 I= 4</p>	Project fund flow has been arranged through GTF to facilitate efficient transfer (see Governance and Management Arrangements section). Project Steering Committee to promptly review and propose solutions to any significant problems or delays impacting disbursement and progress of planned activities.	Project Manager
4	Institutions governing PA buffer areas, Eco-Sensitive Zones and adjacent production landscape areas have inadequate capacity or resources for integrated natural resource planning and management	Strategic	<p>Local level institutions have received little support in the past for landscape level conservation including inter-sectoral coordination and the technical skills to address unsustainable land management practices.</p> <p><b>Moderate</b> L= 3 I= 3</p>	The project will enhance capacities of gram panchayats, villages, community groups and District level government staff for sustainable, community-based approaches for landscape conservation. This will involve building institutional and community capacity to implement interventions to reduce deforestation and habitat degradation, and providing technical training and resources for community based approaches to wildlife conservation.	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
5	Intended project outcomes for landscape conservation, ecosystem management and restoration and CBNRM are undermined by climate change and variability, and natural disasters.	Environmental	<p>The three project landscapes are geographically and climatically distinct, yet all are subject to stresses associated with climate change, including droughts, floods and erratic monsoon rains. These short term events can have serious local impacts on wildlife including direct mortality and dispersion into human-dominated areas. Longer term trends affect ecological zones, species distribution, phenology, occurrence of IAS etc.</p> <p><b>Low</b> L= 3 I= 2</p>	The project's landscape conservation approach will incorporate climate vulnerability assessment and adaptation measures as far as possible, to identify potential climate change impacts and incorporate both ecosystem-based adaptation and disaster risk reduction considerations into planning for habitat management, community livelihoods and land management practices. This will take into account, for example, increased climatic variability, increase in frequency and intensity of natural disasters such as droughts and floods, and ecological shifts.	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
6	Increasing human populations combined with increasing wildlife populations in PA, buffer and corridor areas will increase the prevalence of HWC, potentially exacerbated by COVID-19-induced movements of people	Strategic	<p>Wildlife populations in and around PAs are increasing as a result of conservation efforts, while at the same time human population density and development is increasing in the production landscapes around the PAs (see night-time photo sequences in landscape profiles, <b>Annex 17</b>). This increasing interface inevitably results in the increased occurrence of HWC, which may be locally severe. Movements of urban workers back to their home villages due to COVID-19 impacts on employment may swell rural populations, increase dependency on natural resources, and increase HWC</p> <p><b>Substantial</b> L= 3 I= 4</p>	Build capacity of local government to respond to HWC through a strategic approach that: reduces opening of new farmland and settlement in HWC sensitive areas; reduces existing HWC in targeted hotspots through locally appropriate preventive measures and technologies; facilitate the simplification of compensation processes for fair settlement of legitimate claims. Increase awareness of the risk of zoonotic disease transmission between wildlife and people to encourage reduction of the human-wildlife interface. Factor in local COVID-19 related impacts in HWC mitigation planning.	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
7	Regional development priorities for settlements, agricultural and irrigation schemes, transportation infrastructure, hydropower and industry take precedence over conservation and NRM plans supported by the project, potentially exacerbated by changes in government priorities related to COVID-19 recovery	Strategic	<p>The central and State governments have a mandate for development that does not always address impacts on biodiversity, ecosystem integrity and the provision of ecosystem services. This often drives the fragmentation of forested landscapes and wildlife populations, direct loss of wildlife habitats and roadkill mortality. New government programmes supporting post-COVID economic recovery may shift priorities and/or over-ride normal planning processes</p> <p><b>Substantial</b> L= 3 I= 4</p>	<p>This is a systemic problem requiring the mainstreaming of environmental and biodiversity safeguards into development planning. This is a complex issue that requires substantial resources to address across three States. The project will support this as far as possible through awareness raising, development of landscape conservation strategies, capacity development for key sectors and engagement of all sectors in project planning and implementation. Project awareness raising will emphasize the importance of ecosystem services and sustainable use of natural resources in increasing the resilience of COVID-affected communities.</p>	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
8	Improvements to agriculture, livestock management and other livelihood improvements increase pressures on land and natural resources	Strategic	<p>Project supported livelihood improvements may increase production and intensity of land use, and attract local population growth. This might create additional pressure on the environment</p> <p>Low L = 2 I = 2</p>	The project activities are carefully designed and will require careful implementation and monitoring to ensure that the intended effects of improving the sustainability of land use and reducing environmental damage result from the planned activities ? in addition to benefiting local communities.	Project Manager
9	Risk that livelihood incentives are insufficient to change behaviour towards achieving intended conservation outcomes, potentially exacerbated by COVID-19 impacts	Strategic	<p>The project will support a range of livelihood diversification activities with the aim of reducing unsustainable land uses that impact natural habitats, but these may not be sufficient or sustainable, especially in view of potentially increased economic hardship associated with COVID-19 impacts</p> <p>Moderate L=3 I=3</p>	Incentives and technical assistance for livelihood diversification will be targeted in specific areas where there are clear issues to resolve, including support for COVID-19 affected communities. Proposals for livelihoods will be based on consultation and agreement of local communities, and socialized before uptake. As far as possible these incentives and TA will be mainstreamed within government programmes and conducted with line agency support for greater sustainability.	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
10	Risk that targeted communities are not motivated to participate in sustainable livelihood activities that support landscape conservation for the benefit of small cats and other wildlife, potentially exacerbated where increased access to natural resources is important to buffer livelihood impacts due to COVID-19	Operational	<p>The project will target certain communities in key areas of the project landscapes to conduct livelihood diversification activities, small cat monitoring, habitat restoration and other activities. Some communities may not wish to participate if they feel that their access to natural resources may be affected.</p> <p>Moderate L=3 I=3</p>	<p>Consultations during the PPG covered many communities in the project landscapes, including assessment of their potential for engagement. A number of communities stressed concerns that access to natural resources should not be affected, also reflected in the social safeguards assessments by UNDP and WWF. To counter this risk, the project will follow a consultative process including FPIC with the concerned communities, and any activities will only be conducted with the full agreement of the communities. The project will emphasize livelihood support to COVID-19 affected communities.</p>	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
11	The joint GEF agency oversight may pose a risk of confusion and conflict in safeguard management responsibilities	Operational	<p>Management of potential adverse social and environmental impacts associated with activities of the UNDP and WWF supported GEF funded Project will be done in line with the requirements of the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (SES) and WWF's Environment and Social Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP) respectively. For safeguards purposes, Component 1 and 4 will be implemented by UNDP GEF Agency and components 2 and 3 will be implemented by WWF GEF Agency. Such joint oversight responsibilities may create confusion and chances of overlooking could be high, particularly when issues/risks are equally applicable for all components.</p> <p>Low L=2 I=2</p>	<p>Clear division of responsibilities has been agreed for management of E&amp;S Safeguards. UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards (SES) will apply to activities funded under component 1 and 4 whereas WWF's Environment and Social Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP) will apply to activities funded under component 2 and 3.</p> <p>In addition, coordination between two GEF agencies will be put in place. The National Safeguards and M&amp;E Officer in the PMU has the specific role of ensuring coordination on safeguards oversight and monitoring between the two GEF Agencies. The two GEF Agencies will also maintain regular coordination on the issue and potential escalation of safeguard risks or emergence of new risks will be assessed in a coordinated way through the annual PIR process that will be led by UNDP.</p>	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
12	Risk of COVID-19 impacts undermining project plans to support ecotourism development in project landscapes	Strategic	In Q1-2 of 2020, COVID-19 has had a massive impact on tourism globally and nationally. It is unclear how quickly and to what extent the industry will recover. Moderate L=3 I=3	Project plans for ecotourism development will continue in tandem with other livelihood diversification efforts. These intervention plans should be reviewed on a regular basis once implementation starts in consultation with national and state tourism authorities, and if necessary, other options for sustainable livelihoods considered in the event that the economic viability of ecotourism development in the project landscapes is considered a major risk. Support for ecotourism development will prioritize alternatives to homestays, such as camp and basic chalet facilities that allow mitigation of COVID-19 risks through measures such as social distancing).	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
13	Risk of the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic and other human disease outbreaks affecting project implementation	Operational	<p>During project preparation, the COVID-19 pandemic halted all international travel and social distancing measures prevented PPG stakeholder meetings taking place from March 2020. At the time of writing (May 2020), the scale, duration and impact of this pandemic upon project implementation cannot be confirmed, but it has the potential to be High. MoEFCC Wildlife Division issued an advisory for National Parks, Sanctuaries and Tiger Reserves staff on 6 April 2020 on response to COVID-19.</p> <p>I=5, L=4 High</p>	<p>The project will comply with government directives in order to reduce health risks to project staff and stakeholders. Project start up could be delayed if necessary due to ongoing health risks and operational constraints caused by social distancing, self isolation and other measures. Flexibility has been provided in the project budget through allowing a six month buffer at each end for project start-up and completion delays. Implementation may be paused if necessary in affected areas while government disease prevention or control measures are implemented, and resumed at a later time if feasible. The Project Steering Committee will guide project responses through email correspondence for ongoing situations, as required. Revision of the project workplan may be necessary, and an extension request may be required if implementation is substantially delayed. Some adaptive adjustment may be needed to project strategy (eg on ecotourism</p>	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
14	Impacts of exchange rate fluctuations on the budget available to support implementation plans, economic recession and changes in government priorities impacting delivery of cofinancing commitments for project implementation	Financial	<p>The early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic in the first quarter of 2020 have seen the greatest disruption of financial markets and currencies in recent decades. This has strengthened the USD against local currencies, with exchange rates extremely dynamic at the time of writing (March 2020) adding uncertainty to the budgeting of activities. There is a significant risk of global economic recession impacting national economies, and changes in government priorities for COVID-19 response that may cause delay in government cofinancing and delivery of business partnership financing for project implementation.</p> <p>I=5, L=4 High</p>	<p>The budget will be reviewed during project inception and any necessary measures taken to address any shortfalls due to exchange rate fluctuations between the GEF approved budget and project start up. Annual budget reviews should track and respond to subsequent fluctuations. Changes in the scope or timing of planned activities may be necessary through workplan adjustments. The Project Steering Committee should monitor and address significant financial constraints arising due to exchange rate fluctuations and any delays or failures in the delivery of government cofinancing and business partnership financing delivery that may have been impacted by changes in priorities due to COVID-19.</p>	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
1	Upstream risk of restriction of access/use of natural resources and displacement of IPs/ tribal communities through preparation of landscape-level master plans including management of ESZ for wild cat conservation.	Social	Tribal/indigenous communities may be excluded from the master planning processes and/or project benefits and access to basic services or resources may be restricted while implementing species recovery action plans. I = 3 L = 3 Moderate	See SESP for details (entries are long)	Project Manager
2	Risk of curtailing of customary natural resource management rights of tribal communities in project landscape through operational policy and plans for wild cat conservation.	Social	Although the project doesn't have any direct impact on community rights, the activities under Outputs 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 are intended to strengthen wild cat conservation, which could potentially include regulations / restrictions on management rights / access to and use of resources through the updating of operational policies, plans and guidelines. Thus, the rights of tribal/indigenous peoples may be curtailed while developing or updating these operational policies, plans and guidelines, or improper application of policies and plans could result in unintended impacts and restrictions. I = 2 L = 3 Moderate	See SESP for details (entries are long)	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
3	Risk of low capacity to implement project activities which could impede compliance with UNDP social and environmental safeguards.	Social	<p>This risk applies for multiple outputs under components 1 and 4. Officials of State and District Forest Departments including technical agencies/consultants under these department have limited capacity to apply SOPs, particularly for HWC management, and strengthening human-rights approaches to wildlife-related law enforcement under Output 1.3, activities 1.3.4 and 1.3.5. These specific SOPs must be compatible with SES requirements. Risks of limited capacity of State and District agencies also applies to implement Site-specific guidelines (Output 1.4) and Capacity development for mainstreaming wild small cat conservation in landscape management (Output 1.5). Similarly, issues of low or limited capacity such as lack of knowledge regarding small cats and their conservation, human rights and economic rights of local community, sustainable natural resource management may limit the success of implementation of output 4.1 (development of National-level Green Business platform for enhancing corporate sector</p>	See SESP for details (entries are long)	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
4	Project may exclude marginalized/vulnerable groups from participatory processes and/or project benefits due to lack of effective community engagement and support	Social	The findings of community consultations conducted during PPG suggest that marginalized groups including tribal, scheduled caste and youth have limited access to information and awareness of their rights and entitlements, and therefore there is a risk that they might not be aware of or included in project consultations and activities. I = 3 L = 3 Moderate	See SESP for details (entries are long)	Project Manager
5	Project activities and approaches to landscape-level planning, operational policy updates, capacity building and corporate sector engagements might not fully incorporate or reflect views of women and girls and ensure equitable opportunities for their involvement and benefit.	Social	Despite participatory processes for planning in Component 1, the risk of exclusion of women and girls while developing the national-level green business platform for enhancing corporate sector engagement for community-based wildlife conservation (Output 4.1) still exists due to the existing gender divisions of labor, gender-specific challenges, gender differential needs, and the different roles that men and women play in relation to the conservation of wild cats. I = 3 L = 3 Moderate	See SESP for details (entries are long)	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
6	The project landscapes could be impacted by the Supreme Court's ruling that over a million claims of Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers are not valid and shall be evicted from forests by July 2019. Though the court later stayed its order to give states more time to examine the rejected land claims, this could potentially result in conflict in demonstration landscapes and disrupt project implementation.	Social	This risk is not directly related to the project or any of the co-financing. If the Supreme Court's decisions will be strictly implemented, it may trigger conflicts between State governments and Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers which could disrupt project implementation. I = 4 L = 2 Moderate	See SESP for details (entries are long)	Project Manager
7	Entry of the private sector in conservation (enhancing corporate sector engagement for community-based wildlife conservation) could result in risk through partnership with private sector entities that have poor SES track record or risk altering traditional patterns of natural resource use and social power.	Social	This risk is related with project output 4.1 (promotion of corporate sector engagement for community-based wildlife conservation. This may expose risk on potential partnerships with private sector entities that do not have a good SES/CSR track record or risk to indigenous and tribal communities? traditional resource use and access to lands if conservation activities are not delivered in a way that identifies and mitigates potential SES impacts. I = 3 L = 2 Moderate	See SESP for details (entries are long)	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
8	Risk of the project supporting private sector entities that could be noncompliant with national and international labor standards (i.e. principles and standards of ILO).	Social	<p>Implementation of pilot initiatives of conservation business (output 4.1) will comprise a number of interventions targeted on specific sectors that involve hiring of staff and works. Development of business partnerships and implementation of pilot initiatives on the identified areas of interest and other interventions may also require additional workforce. These initiatives will also help in escalating the development activities around the project site which will demand a constant supply of labor for many sectors.</p> <p>I = 3 L = 2 Moderate</p>	See SESP for details (entries are long)	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
9	The intended outcomes of (Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 and 4.1) of the Project could be sensitive or vulnerable to potential impacts of climate change and variability, and natural disasters.	Environmental	<p>The three project landscapes are geographically and climatically distinct, yet all are subject to stresses associated with climate change, including droughts, floods and erratic monsoon rains. These short-term events can have serious local impacts on wildlife including direct mortality and dispersion into human-dominated areas. Longer term trends affect ecological zones, species distribution, phenology, occurrence of IAS etc.</p> <p>I = 2 L = 3 Moderate</p>	See SESP for details (entries are long)	Project Manager

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
10	Risk that coordination and knowledge exchange actions on transboundary conservation could perpetuate potential safeguards risks linked to law enforcement.	Social	A ?roadmap? for transboundary coordination on law enforcement will be developed based on the framework of existing transboundary agreements and the roadmap will identify the areas for collaboration. Nepal, Bhutan and India may have different legislative measures and approaches of law enforcement for conservation and transboundary coordination and differing levels of capacity and there is the risk that the roadmap could include activities or actions that could result in perpetuation of potential safeguards risks linked to law enforcement if sufficient measures, norms and capacity are not in place. I = 2 L = 3 Moderate	See SESP for details (entries are long)	Project Manager

## 6. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination

**Describe the institutional arrangement for project implementation. Elaborate on the planned coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.**

The project will be implemented following UNDP's national implementation modality, and for WWF the GEF project funds will be executed through government and partners (no self-execution is sought).

The Implementing Partner for this project is the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.

**For UNDP:** The Implementing Partner is the entity to which the UNDP Administrator has entrusted the implementation of UNDP assistance specified in this signed project document along with the assumption of full responsibility and accountability for the effective use of UNDP resources and the delivery of outputs, as set forth in this document.

The Implementing Partner is responsible for executing this project. Specific tasks include:

- ? Project planning, coordination, management, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. This includes providing all required information and data necessary for timely, comprehensive and evidence-based project reporting, including results and financial data, as necessary. The Implementing Partner will strive to ensure project-level M&E is undertaken by national institutes and is aligned with national systems so that the data used and generated by the project supports national systems.
- ? Risk management as outlined in this Project Document;
- ? Procurement of goods and services, including human resources;
- ? Financial management, including overseeing financial expenditures against project budgets;
- ? Approving and signing the multiyear workplan;
- ? Approving and signing the combined delivery report at the end of the year; and,
- ? Signing the financial report or the funding authorization and certificate of expenditures.

The Global Tiger Forum (GTF) will play the following roles during project implementation, defined respectively for UNDP and WWF as follows:

•**For UNDP:** The Global Tiger Forum will be a sub-level responsible party under this project, acting in accordance with the IP's rules and regulations, through agreement with MoEFCC. GTF will serve as the lead technical partner for implementation of Components 1 and 4 of the project, operating the National Project Management Unit and implementing work packages that will include direct inputs to Outputs 1.1 (developing landscape master plans), 1.2 (national level species recovery action plans), 1.3 (protocols and SOPs for wild cat management), 4.1 (establishing a mechanism to strengthen private sector engagement and investment) and 4.3 (providing a platform to support field implementation and transboundary engagement with neighbouring tiger range States).

•**For WWF:** WWF proposes that the Global Tiger Forum (GTF) become an executing partner for the WWF-led Components 2 and 3 of the project, acting in accordance with the IP's rules and regulations. GTF will serve as the lead technical partner for execution of Components 2 and 3 of the project, executing work packages that will include direct inputs to Output 2.1 (for activities relating to habitat management plans, facilitate rehabilitation and monitoring in Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest Landscapes), Output 2.2 (plan and deliver training for frontline staff in Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest Landscapes), and Output 3.4 (capacity development and technical assistance for livelihoods and sustainable development in the field of agriculture, livestock and ecotourism in Dudhwa Landscape). In parallel, GTF will host the National PMU that will coordinate with the States and landscapes for implementation of Components 2 and 3.

As such, the GTF will be an Executing Agency and will be responsible for execution of project activities for all project components in the field through an agreement with the MoEFCC and in coordination with landscape level stakeholders. GTF will also host the national Project Management Unit that will coordinate with the States and landscape level units for smooth implementation of project activities.

The GTF is an inter ? governmental, international organization. India is a Founder Member of the GTF, which is headquartered in New Delhi. It is a body established with members from willing countries to embark on a global campaign to protect the endangered wild tiger. Based on bilateral/regional instruments of cooperation, related policies, technical expertise, good practices, scientific modules and other appropriate programmes, the GTF is focused on strengthening efforts of tiger range countries (TRCs) for conserving the wild tiger across its natural range. The GTF has an overarching mandate endorsed by Tiger Range Countries (TRCs) to implement the Global Tiger Recovery Program (GTRP), as committed in the St. Petersburg Declaration of 2010.

The GTF is working closely with several Indian states and partners towards preparation of management plans and tiger conservation plans, as well as climate-smart landscape level master plans. Within India, the

GTF has collaborative partnerships with agencies like the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), Wildlife Institute of India (WII), World Wildlife Fund, UNDP, Wildlife Conservation Trust, USAID, Indian Institute of Forest Management, among others. It has also forged an alliance with the U.S Tiger University Consortium (comprising of Clemson, Auburn, Missouri, and Louisiana) for promoting knowledge sharing, research and academic programs on tiger conservation.

In addition to the above, ongoing initiatives of the GTF in India include implementation of Conservation Assured Tiger Standards (CATS) across all tiger reserves in the country and tiger habitats outside tiger reserves in India; refinement of the forest frontline training curriculum in close collaboration with state level training institutes and the Government of India; addressing human wildlife interface issues through community stewardship and state of the art field measures in the Dudhwa/Pilibhit landscape, facilitating security audit of tiger reserves; high altitude tiger habitat conservation (including master planning for big cat landscape in the State of Sikkim under the UNDP/GEF SECURE Himalaya project, and action planning for high altitude tiger conservation across Bhutan, India, and Nepal in collaboration with the IUCN, NTCA, and Tiger Range Country Governments). It is in the process of developing an innovative partnership with Government agencies, such as National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India towards setting up of Farmer's Producers Organizations (FPOs) in selected landscapes for income enhancement and ensuring reciprocal commitments for conservation and conflict mitigation.

The GTF has also implemented several regional capacity building programs across tiger range countries with support from multiple agencies, including the World Bank and the USAID on thematic areas like wildlife monitoring, habitat/prey/tiger recovery, ecosystem services valuation, landscape level conservation planning etc. Engagement with Tiger Range Countries (TRCs), broadly includes technical mission visits to range countries of South Asia, South-East Asia, and Russia; site-specific scientific tiger conservation planning in Myanmar, apart from inputs for National Tiger Action Plans and facilitating delegation of senior officials of tiger range countries for exchange programs and capacity building, viz. Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, apart from Cambodia for active management towards tiger reintroduction. GTF regularly convenes international/bilateral events such as ministerial conferences, senior officers' meetings and trans-border consultations between range countries for strengthening joint cooperation.

#### **National Project Management Unit**

The National Project Management Unit (NPMU) will be established in the GTF offices. It will comprise a National Project Director, Project Manager (PM), Administrative and Finance Officer and other technical and administrative staff as relevant. The NPMU, in collaboration with the MoEFCC, national Project Steering Committee and State Steering Committees will have overall management and administrative responsibility for facilitating stakeholder involvement and ensuring increased provincial level ownership of the project. The NPMU staff will be located in Delhi to ensure coordination among key stakeholders at the federal level and state level during the project period.

#### **State Steering Committees**

In order to govern the project at the State level for the two project landscapes, a State Steering Committee under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary/Additional Chief will be formed for each of the two States (Uttar Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh). These State Steering Committees will be subordinate to the National Project Steering Committee. The Chief Wildlife Warden /State Project Director will be the Member Convener of each Committee. This committee will be composed of ? Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and a senior member from the Wildlife/Forest Department (2); Chairman of State Biodiversity Board (1); elected representative of the region (1); representatives from relevant line departments (4); and members from participating NGOs and research and development Institutions (2); representatives of UNDP and WWF India; and individual experts. Landscape staff will join respective State PSC meetings to provide update reports. The key function of the committee will be to take policy decisions related to program implementation, finance, human resources and operations of project implementation at State level. The State Steering Committees will provide guidance and ensure consistency, synergy and convergence of approaches with other ongoing development projects and processes in the State, and support annual workplan development, implementation and progress reporting. The State Steering Committees would also facilitate block, district and sector agency participation in the landscape level planning operations at village

level to ensure convergence of manpower and financial resources. At the State level, oversight and coordination will be the responsibility of a State Project Director - a senior officer of the Wildlife Department (cofinanced position). The national PMU will provide coordination support for the State Steering Committees along with support for coordination of activities at State level.

#### **Landscape Level Advisory Committees**

In each project landscape, a Landscape Advisory Committee will be established, chaired by the District Collector or a senior officer equivalent to his rank. The Committee will have members from relevant line departments, heads of Gram Panchayats, community-based organizations, community level Institutions, other relevant stakeholders, UNDP and WWF India.

#### **Landscape Planning and Management Unit (LPMU)**

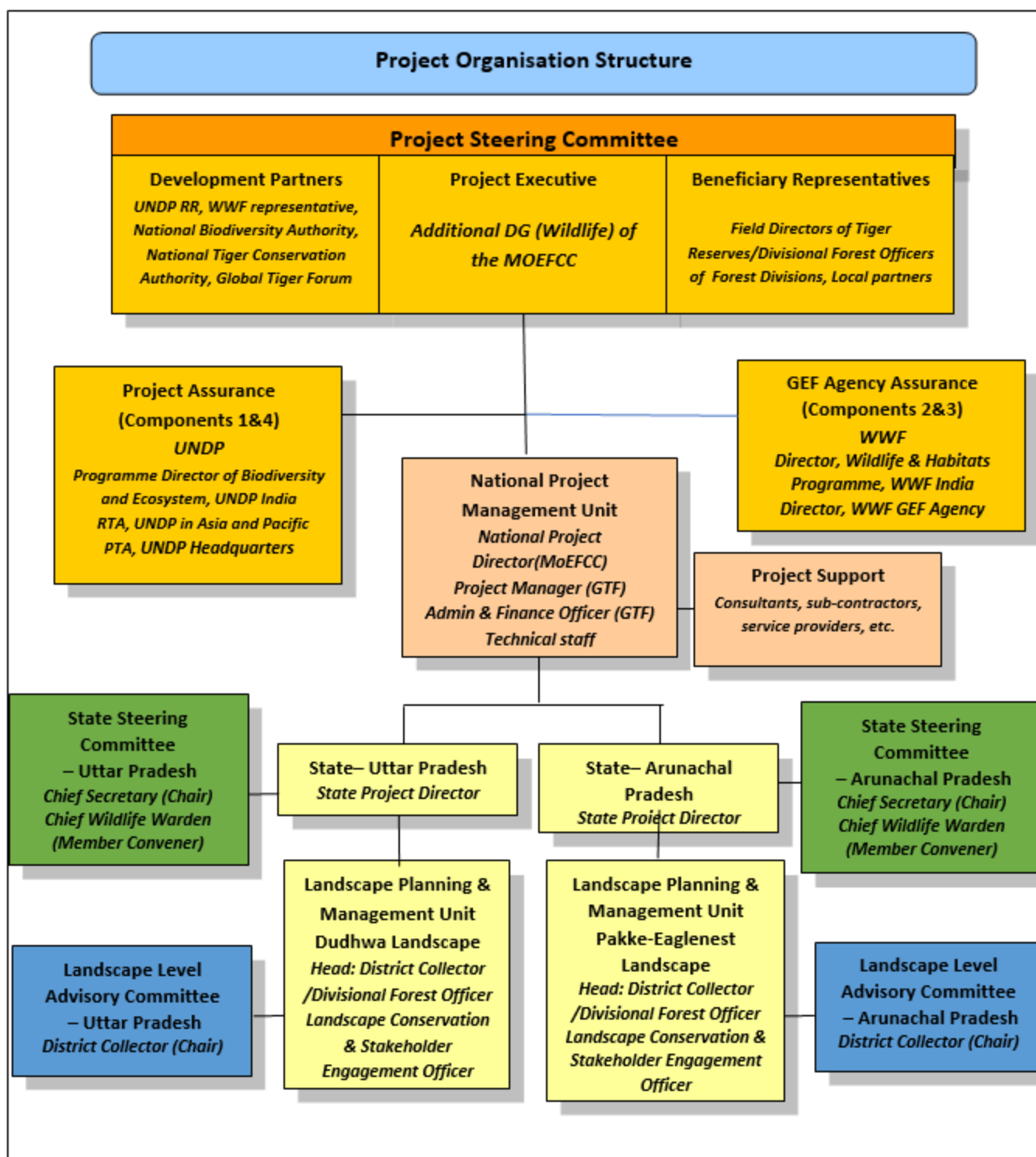
In each project landscape, there will be a Landscape Planning and Management team headed by the District Collector/Divisional Forest Officer or an officer of equivalent rank from the Forest Department. The DFO/other officer will be supported by landscape level staff including technical experts and specialists. Functioning of landscape project units will be coordinated by the national PMU.

**For UNDP:** UNDP is accountable to the GEF for the implementation of Components 1 and 4. This includes oversight of project execution to ensure that the project is being carried out in accordance with agreed standards and provisions. UNDP is responsible for delivering GEF project cycle management services comprising project approval and start-up, project supervision and oversight, and project completion and evaluation. UNDP is also responsible for the Project Assurance role of the Project Steering Committee.

**For WWF:** WWF is accountable to the GEF for the implementation of Components 2 and 3. This includes oversight of project execution to ensure that the project is being carried out in accordance with the Project Document and the Grant Agreement. WWF will coordinate with UNDP for: the PIR and other reporting requirements, provision of no-objections as needed, supervision missions, MTE and TE, and project close out.

#### **Project organisation structure:**

The project organization structure is shown in **Figure 3** below.



**Figure 3. Organogram of the project governance and management structure**

Project Steering Committee (PSC): The Project Steering Committee is responsible for taking corrective action as needed to ensure the project achieves the desired results. In order to ensure UNDP's ultimate accountability, PSC decisions should be made in accordance with standards that shall ensure management for development results, best value money, fairness, integrity, transparency and effective international competition.

**For the UNDP-supported project covering Components 1 and 4:** In case consensus cannot be reached within the PSC, the UNDP Resident Representative (or their designate) will mediate to find consensus and, if this cannot be found, will take the final decision to ensure project implementation is not unduly delayed.

**For the WWF-supported project covering Components 2 and 3:** In case consensus cannot be reached within the PSC, the WWF India CEO (or their designate) will mediate to find consensus and, if this cannot be found, will take the final decision to ensure project implementation is not unduly delayed.

- Specific responsibilities of the Project Steering Committee include:

- ? Provide overall guidance and direction to the project, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints;
- ? Address project issues as raised by the Project Manager;
- ? Provide guidance on new project risks, and agree on possible mitigation and management actions to address specific risks;
- ? Agree on project manager's tolerances as required, within the parameters set by UNDP-GEF and WWF GEF, and provide direction and advice for exceptional situations when the project manager's tolerances are exceeded;
- ? Advise on major and minor amendments to the project within the parameters set by UNDP-GEF and WWF GEF;
- ? Ensure coordination between various donor and government-funded projects and programmes;
- ? Ensure coordination with various government agencies and their participation in project activities;
- ? Track and monitor co-financing for this project;
- ? Review the project progress, assess performance, and appraise the Annual Work Plan for the following year;
- ? Appraise the annual project implementation report, including the quality assessment rating report;
- ? Ensure commitment of human resources to support project implementation, arbitrating any issues within the project;
- ? Review combined delivery reports prior to certification by the implementing partner;
- ? Provide direction and recommendations to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily according to plans;
- ? Address project-level grievances;
- ? Approve the project Inception Report, Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation reports and corresponding management responses;
- ? Review the final project report package during an end-of-project review meeting to discuss lesson learned and opportunities for scaling up.

The composition of the Project Steering Committee must include the following roles:

- ? **Project Executive:** Is an individual who represents ownership of the project and chairs the Project Board. The Executive is normally the national counterpart for nationally implemented projects. The Project Executive is: *Additional DG (Wildlife) of the MoEFCC*
- ? **Beneficiary Representative(s):** Individuals or groups representing the interests of those who will ultimately benefit from the project. Their primary function within the board is to ensure the realization of project results from the perspective of project beneficiaries. Often civil society representative(s) can fulfil this role. The Beneficiary representative (s) is/are: *Field Directors of Tiger Reserves; Divisional Forest Officers of Forest Divisions; Local partners (TBC ? e.g. Community reps from each landscape ? Eco-Development Committees (Dudhwa), Tribal Councils (Pakke/Eaglenest)*
- ? **Development Partner(s):** Individuals or groups representing the interests of the parties concerned that provide funding and/or technical expertise to the project. The Development Partner(s) is/are: *UNDP Resident Representative, WWF representative, National Biodiversity Authority, National Tiger Conservation Authority, Global Tiger Forum*

? Project Assurance: UNDP and WWF respectively for Components 1/4 and 2/3 performs the quality assurance role and supports the Project Steering Committee and Project Management Unit by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. This role ensures appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed. The Project Steering Committee cannot delegate any of its quality assurance responsibilities to the Project Manager. UNDP provides a three ? tier oversight services involving the UNDP Country Offices and UNDP at regional and headquarters levels. Project assurance is totally independent of the Project Management function. WWF provides similar support via the WWF GEF Agency staff in WWF US and the staff in WWF India.

The PSC will have high level, cross-sectoral representation including representatives of the MoEFCC, as the key governmental agency in charge of natural resources and environment and will ensure that other relevant governmental agencies are involved as per their mandate. Representatives of UNDP and WWF will participate in PSC meetings, and the PSC may also include representatives of other national or participating state representatives, non-government organizations, experts and community representatives.

Other participants can be invited into the PSC meetings at the decision of the Chair of the Steering Committee, as and when required to enhance its efficacy. It will meet at least twice a year or as needed. The National Project Management Unit will serve as the Secretariat of the Project Steering Committee and the National Project Director (NPD) will take responsibility for calling its meetings, preparation of agenda, documentation and distribution of minutes and ensuring that decisions of the Committee are implemented in letter and spirit.

**Coordination between the GEF Implementing Agencies:** A Coordination Committee will be set up involving representatives of UNDP, WWF, GTF, representatives of the States and the Project Management Unit to ensure effective coordination and communication between the two IAs. The Committee will have monthly meetings to track the progress of the project and to address issues and concerns as and when required.

#### **Partnerships and coordination with related projects**

The overall coordination of the GEF project will be led by the MoEFCC as the Implementing Partner for the project, through its Wildlife Division. In view of the fact that Tiger Reserves form the main protected areas within each project landscape, the NTCA will play an important role in mainstreaming wild cat conservation into existing tiger conservation plans and processes. Similarly, GTF will facilitate wild cat conservation through its role nationally and internationally in tiger conservation. Given the project's landscape conservation approach and the relatively large geographical areas included in the project's demonstration landscapes in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh, it will engage with a wide range of government agencies and other stakeholders at all levels, and will both build on the results of, and intersect with several significant initiatives.

At the landscape level, implementation will be led by State Project Management Units under the State Wildlife Department working in close collaboration with the District Forest Divisions, the Tiger Reserves and other PAs located in the landscapes. Engagement with State line agencies, NGOs and institutes, as well as WWF and UNDP will take place through the State Steering Committees, and with local stakeholders including relevant line departments, heads of Gram Panchayats, Community based organizations and Community Level Institutions through the Landscape Level Advisory Committees led by the relevant District Collector.

The GTF is working closely with the central and state governments for implementing landscape level plans across tiger/wildlife habitats, including the terai region of Uttar Pradesh, which includes the Dudhwa landscape under its ongoing engagement with the state, NTCA and WWF India to reduce human wildlife interface in the state. Regular coordination and project update meetings are held at NTCA (national level), state headquarters, district headquarters, and the field/landscape level interactions and training. This engagement also includes a detailed capacity building component for frontline and community stewards, thus the activities in the current project will be aligned with ongoing work in the state with due coordination at all levels. Similarly, work across national level deliverables and other landscapes of the project will be ensure through due coordination and synergy between ongoing GTF led initiatives.

The outputs, learnings and conservation benefits of the project will be shared across project meetings, monitoring and coordination workshops/consultations on ongoing initiatives and national/state/international level events such as:

- Tiger Range Country level ministerial and senior officers meeting
- Regional capacity building programmes
- Bilateral dialogues/Regional Tiger Range Country meetings
- Standing Committee/General Assembly meeting of the GTF
- Refinement of the ranger training curriculum across India, with a special focus on strengthening wildlife protection
- National level tiger initiatives such as the implementation of Conservation Assured Tiger Standards (CA|TS) and Security Audit, among others
- Global/National/State/District level events with GTF as special invitee/committees etc.
- Cross-learning and sharing of best practices between other ongoing GTF initiatives under UNDP-GEF projects, including the big cat master planning collaboration under the SECURE Himalaya project and conservation of high altitude tiger habitats under the Integrated Tiger Habitat and Conservation Program (ITHCP) of the IUCN.

The GTF is in the process of firming up strategic partnerships to ensure livelihood and productive green business models for farming communities, with agencies like the Government-owned National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) and like-minded corporations in and around tiger landscapes, especially in high wildlife human interface conflict habitats. It is pertinent that such partnerships are extended in the current project landscapes, and monitored through the existing framework of ongoing projects.

The existing programmes and governance structures across the project states and the central government will be regularly apprised of the activities of the current project, as well as through other regular consultations and initiatives as mentioned above to facilitate coordination and synergies.

#### *GEF Projects*

The current GEF project is a child project of the GEF-7 Global Wildlife Program, its contributions to which are described in **Table 2** above. As such, it will participate in GWP knowledge sharing events and platforms in Component 4 to disseminate lessons learned and project results and experiences globally. At the national level, coordination will be established with the following GEF biodiversity projects.

*UNDP/GEF SECURE Project ? Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (2017-2024).* This project takes a landscape approach to the conservation of Himalayan ecosystems, focusing on KBAs, buffer zones, corridors and areas outside traditional protected areas that are of importance for snow leopard are managed in tandem with sustainable use of natural resources and diversification of local livelihoods. As a child project of the GWP, the SECURE project is designed in full accordance with both the GWP and the GEF-supported Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP, 2013) a collaborative program involving the governments of 12 Snow Leopard range states. Consequently, its approach is similar to the current project and although the target landscapes are in different states and at higher altitudes, there are commonalities that would benefit from knowledge exchange. The SECURE project has experiences on implementation of a landscape approach, multi-level project governance (national, State, landscape-level PMU), impacts of COVID-19 on local communities and livelihoods, and on knowledge management and communications from national to local level that have informed the design of this project and will be helpful during inception as COVID-19 impacts on project landscapes are identified in more detail. The current project will draw on experiences and learnings from the SECURE Himalaya project especially on the landscape-based approach to conservation. Both projects are national child projects under the Global Wildlife Programme and anchored with the Wildlife Division of the MoEFCC. Coordination and convergence will be ensured through cross-representation on the Steering Committees at the national level, and representation of the SECURE Himalaya project in the inception workshop, knowledge events and workshops and quarterly and annual review meetings (organized by the UNDP CO).

*UNEP/GEF Integrated Management of Wetland Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IMWBES) Project* (July 2015 – June 2020). The project aims to complement and build on the existing policy and practice frameworks in order to improve the management effectiveness of nationally and internationally important wetlands in India and to secure the socio-economic and environmental benefits through wetland wise use. Its components address national wetland biodiversity knowledge management, national scale capacity building for applying integrated wetland management, and demonstration of integrated wetland management at sites in Bihar, Kerala and Punjab sites. Its main relevance to the current project concerns the conservation of wetlands for fishing cat nationally, and improved management of Terai wetlands in Dudhwa landscape. However, the wetland project will close before implementation starts later in 2020.

*FAO/GEF Transforming Indian agriculture for global environmental benefits and the conservation of critical biodiversity and forest landscapes* (2018-2025). This project aims to mainstream biodiversity, climate change, and sustainable land management objectives and practices into the Indian agricultural sector. Its overall objective to 'catalyse transformative change of India's agricultural sector to support achievement of national and global environmental benefits and conservation of critical biodiversity and forest landscapes'. In addition to national mainstreaming, harmonized multi-sectoral approaches to mainstreaming environmental and resilience considerations into agriculture and land use will be implemented at five landscapes in five States of India: in i) Madhya Pradesh (Chambal landscape – riverine wetlands), ii) Mizoram (Dampa Tiger Reserve), iii) Odisha (Simlipal Tiger Reserve and Asian Elephant Habitat), iv) Rajasthan (Desert National Park) and v) Uttarakhand (Corbett and Rajaji Tiger Reserve and Asian Elephant Habitat). The landscapes selected in these States are anchored around at least one protected area that has significant biodiversity of global importance. Given that three tiger reserves are included in the landscapes, there is potential for exchange of experiences and knowledge between these two projects, especially regarding wild cat-friendly agricultural practices in buffer zones outside protected areas.

*WWF/GEF Integrated Landscape Management for the Terai Arc Landscape (Nepal)* (2020-2026). This project in Nepal has a similar landscape conservation approach to the current project, and addresses very similar issues and threats to Dudhwa, which is located in the Indian side of the Terai Arc Landscape, right on the Indian-Nepalese border. As such transboundary collaboration on issues such as anti-poaching patrols, combatting IWT and HWC, and movements of wildlife such as tigers and elephants across the border has been included in both projects and direct cooperation between project PMUs and relevant government authorities is anticipated. WWF will facilitate coordination between the projects as GEF Agency for the Nepal TAL project and joint GEF Agency for the current project, ensuring that linkages are considered during the development of workplans and meetings for the Dudhwa landscape.

*UNDP/GEF Global Wildlife Program Phase 2 Child Project: Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into the tourism sector in Bhutan* – this project is also at PPG stage, with Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary as one of the project sites. Sakteng is immediately adjacent to Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary across the Bhutan-Arunachal Pradesh border, therefore transboundary collaboration between these two projects through direct cooperation between project PMUs and relevant government authorities is anticipated.

*GEF Small Grants Program India*<sup>[1]</sup> - SGP India has been recognized as one of the upgraded country programmes. As such, SGP India supports vulnerable communities through people-led approaches towards environmental conservation and livelihood enhancement with special focus on thematic areas such as Biodiversity, Climate Change, Land Degradation, International Waters and Persistent Organic Pollutants. SGP India is being implemented by UNDP in partnership with the MoEFCC. The Centre for Environment Education acts as the National Host Institution (NHI) and has been coordinating and facilitating SGP in India since 2000. 443 community based action projects have been supported by SGP. The grants are given to CBOs and NGOs for promoting innovation-led rural programmes that are connected to environment and energy conservation, poverty alleviation, sustainable livelihood, gender mainstreaming and inclusive community empowerment. To date, SGP benefits have reached more than 600,000 people across India. Coordination with SGP India to build on completed SGP projects and achieve synergy in community-level actions in the project landscapes will be important for Component 3 in particular. The project will ensure coordination with the SGP through representation of the host institution on the Steering Committee at the national and landscape level. The CSOs engaged under the project shall also be consulted to draw learnings on the innovative low-cost grassroots solutions for conservation and promoting nature-based livelihoods.

Recently closed GEF Biodiversity projects of relevance include the *UNDP/GEF project Developing an effective multiple-use management framework for conserving biodiversity in the mountain landscape of the High Ranges, the Western Ghats, India* (2013-2018), and *UNDP/GEF Mainstreaming conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plant diversity in three Indian states* (2008-2015) ? which is relevant to the potential cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants as a livelihood and response to HWC problems, especially in NE India.

#### *Other Initiatives*

*World Bank India Ecosystems Service Improvement Project (P133803)* (2017 ? 2022)[2]. With MoEFCC as the IA, the project aims to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Department of Forestry and community organizations to enhance forest ecosystem services and improve the livelihoods of forest dependent communities in Central Indian Highlands (in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Goa). The project components will strengthen capacity and skills of government institutions for Effective Delivery of Forestry and Land Management Programs; improving forest quality and productivity; and scale up integrated SLEM approaches for reducing land degradation and desertification. As such the WB project is somewhat relevant to the project intervention in the Pakke-Eaglenest landscape, which consists of forested foothills and highlands, although the monsoonal evergreen tropical forest there has different characteristics. Coordination of efforts will primarily occur through MoEFCC as the IA for both projects, including representation of the WB project during the project inception workshop and coordination meetings.

*USAID/India Forest-Plus 2.0 (Forest For Water And Prosperity)* was launched in September 2019. Under the joint program, USAID will provide technical assistance to MoEFCC to improve management of forested landscapes in the states of Bihar, Kerala, and Telangana. The program will focus on developing tools and techniques to strengthen ecosystem-based management and the inclusion of ecosystem services in forest landscape management, and to enhance the inclusive economic opportunities that emerge from improved landscape management. While working in different landscapes from the present project, there is scope for adopting best practices in inclusive forest management practices, especially for the NE India landscape, where there is a need for strengthening community-based SFM practices. Coordination of efforts will primarily occur through MoEFCC as the IA for both projects, including representation of the USAID project during the project inception workshop and coordination meetings.

*USAID's Tiger Matters project* with the Wildlife Conservation Trust (WCT) shows how a focused project can have wide impacts in rural development. For example, WCT identified the corridors tigers use to move between tiger reserve areas in the central India, and this has enabled the Government of India to establish new tiger conservation areas and select villages for rural development programs. Tiger Matters, in partnership with the Global Tiger Forum, also builds capacity in the tiger range countries in Asia and supports transboundary efforts to stop illegal wildlife trade and trafficking. The WCT-USAID project is focussing on the Central Indian Landscape that includes the states of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chattisgarh. The scope of work includes: Training of mid-level and senior-level park management in patrolling strategies and crime control; Monitoring of tiger corridors using remote sensing; Monitoring tiger populations along vital corridors using Camera Trapping; Multi-stakeholder Consultations in the CIL, Sundarbans (Indo-Bangladesh) and Terai region (Indo-Nepal); Development and distribution of training material for frontline forest staff; Equipping Anti-Poaching Camps in various Protected Areas; and building capacity among field staff to tackle conflict situations and rescue animals: A fully-equipped and staffed WCT Rapid Response Unit will be moving through the CIL training forest officials in wildlife rescue and conflict mitigation. This project is highly relevant to interventions in the Ranthambhore landscape, and also has some connection to Dudhwa in the Indian Terai Arc Landscape. WCT and other partners associated with the USAID project will be consulted and engaged in technical workshops and meetings of the project to draw on the learnings and experiences on landscape level planning and combating IWT. Coordination and convergence will also be ensured through WCT representation in key events and workshops ? inception workshop, technical committee meetings at the state level and national level and implementation review meetings.

*WWF India's landscape conservation programme* - In 2002-03, the landscape approach to conservation was adopted by WWF-India to revolutionize the overall conservation strategy to one that harmonized the needs of wildlife with the needs of local communities. The new approach represented a paradigm shift in focus from one that was selective in its focus only on Protected Areas to one that encompassed vast regions represented by a string of Protected Areas connected through Reserve Forests and human dominated areas. Within and around these critical landscapes, WWF-India has aimed to involve local communities, NGOs and government agencies as major stakeholders in its overall conservation goals. Currently, WWF-India is addressing species conservation through field level activities in different landscapes as well as through direct interventions aimed at conserving a particular species. These programmes focus on threats to wildlife and the issues surrounding these threats. Prominent among these are poaching, human-wildlife conflict, trade in wildlife parts, habitat destruction and legal support. The project activities are carried out at field as well as policy levels. The overall objectives under which these activities are undertaken include the conservation of tiger, elephant and rhino populations in priority landscapes including the Terai Arc Landscape; innovative and scalable models of community based conservation, sustainable livelihoods, and institutional partnerships are established in all landscapes; and landscape and forest conservation priorities are integrated into state development plans and policy advocacy undertaken for forest, species and habitat conservation. WWF India will integrate coordination with MoEFCC, State Forest Departments, UNDP, GTF and other partners during the conservation landscape strategy and implementation discussion meetings. This will help to strengthen the landscape conservation argument.

*WWF India's programme in the Terai Arc Landscape* (including Dudhwa) focuses on: monitoring of wildlife and key corridors; reducing the dependence of villages on forest resources such as fuel wood; managing human-wildlife conflict; policy and advocacy work promoting broad-based support for conservation by involving the Forest Department, local political leaders and communities; and raising awareness among local communities. In Western India, the landscape programme includes Ranthambhore, focusing on reducing habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation due to developmental projects and encroachment by villagers; addressing human-wildlife conflict; and reducing poaching of tigers, co-predators and prey species. During the PPG, the project team worked closely with the WWF landscape teams and headquarters staff and utilized their in-depth knowledge in the design of the intervention strategies. Continued coordination will be required throughout implementation as indicated in the above paragraph.

*The Global Tiger Forum (GTF)*<sup>[3]</sup> is an inter- governmental international body established in 1993 with members from willing countries to embark on a global campaign to protect the remaining 5 sub-species of Tigers distributed over 13 Tiger Range countries of the world. It utilizes co-operative policies, common approaches, technical expertise, scientific modules and other appropriate programmes and controls. GTF also aims to provide financial capabilities for tiger conservation and to develop a trust fund to support programme implementation. GTF has been assisting the government of India in preparation of management plans/Tiger conservation plans, capacity development, implementing with WWF-India the Conservation Assured Tiger Standards (CA|TS) assessment in 4 states, working collaboratively and raising awareness, sharing information, best practices and technical expertise to increase cooperation and partnership among Tiger Range Countries including organizing bilateral meetings between India and its neighbours Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. USAID's Tiger Matters project, in partnership with GTF, builds capacity in the tiger range countries in Asia and supports transboundary efforts to stop illegal wildlife trade and trafficking. GTF has published a Manual on Protocols for monitoring habitat quality and wildlife populations in tiger landscapes, targeting frontline staff and their trainers, and also a Manual on Technical guidelines for habitat, prey and tiger recovery across tiger range countries. Based on the above experience, GTF will play a key role in supporting project implementation, with specific inputs to all four project Components and the PMU as an Executing Agency.

*The Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON)* undertakes research on small cats nationally and in specific landscapes and sites, and provided significant input to the PPG process. Relevant research has included ecological species sorting in relation to habitat structure in the small cat guild of Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary, research on activity patterns of small and medium sized cats in the Pakke-Eaglenest landscape analysing some 783 records of Leopard Cat, Asiatic Golden Cat, Marbled Cat and Clouded Leopard from 10 locations; national survey of the fishing cat identifying conservation issues,

including Dudhwa and Katarniaghat as surveyed sites; and IUCN Red List assessments for species including Fishing Cat, Rusty-spotted Cat, Asiatic Golden Cat, Jungle Cat and Leopard Cat. See **Annex 24** for additional information.

*The Wildlife Trust of India (WTI)* [4] runs conservation programmes at national and landscapes levels of relevance. Relevant projects include: *The Wildlife Crime Control Division (WCCD)* - consisting of three projects that complement one another, assisting and supporting various government agencies and aimed collectively towards the reduction of crime against wildlife and its habitats across India: The Litigation Project aims to ensure litigation success in cases involving wildlife-related crime; *Guardians of Wild or the Van Rakshak Project* was started in 2001 with the goal of assisting the government in creating a strong, well-equipped and motivated force of frontline field staff, to curb poaching and habitat degradation across the Protected Area network; and *The Wildlife Trade Control Project* comprehensively addresses issues related to the illegal trade in wildlife and its derivatives, ensuring that the government machinery is being empowered and trained enough to sustainably manage wildlife crime in the long run. In the NE India project landscape, WTI supports *The Centre For Bear Rehabilitation And Conservation (CBRC)*, established under the Pakke Conservation Project, which is the first specialised rehabilitation centre for Asiatic black bears in India. Supported by the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), the centre was established jointly by the Arunachal Pradesh Forest Department, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) in 2002, with an aim to rehabilitate displaced cubs back into the wild. In Dudhwa landscape, WTI has provided a lot of support over the years, including distribution of first aid kits to frontline staff as part of its Rapid Action Project, and developing strategies to mitigate HWC involving big cats under WTI's Terai Tiger Project ? such as integrating local community volunteers into conflict mitigation activities through the formation of Primary Response Teams (PRTs). The project's landscape level activities to build frontline staff capacity, address HWC hotspots and engage communities in anti-poaching and wildlife crime will need to build on and be coordinated with WTI efforts.

*The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) -ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development* [5] aims to catalyse innovative ideas and solutions, in India, and globally, to enable business, and its stakeholders, in sustainable value creation. Instituted in 2006, the CII-ITC Sustainability Awards recognise and reward excellence in businesses that are seeking ways to be more sustainable and inclusive in their activities ? to date, 304 businesses have been recognised. The CII will be a key partner in establishing an wildlife business council platform and mobilizing corporate sector funding for wildlife conservation.

[1] [https://www.sgpindia.org/sgp\\_india.html](https://www.sgpindia.org/sgp_india.html)

[2] <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P133803>

[3] <http://globaltigerforum.org/about-gtf/>

[4] <https://www.wti.org.in/>

[5] <https://www.sustainabledevelopment.in/>

**Table 4. Intersection of related initiatives with project outputs**

Related Initiative	Intersections with Components and Outputs of the Present Project			
	C1	C2	C3	C4
UNDP/GEF GWP SECURE	All Outputs			4.4
UNEP/GEF Wetlands - IMWBES		2.1		4.4

FAO/GEF Transforming Agriculture for GEBs & BD		2.1	3.4	4.4
WWF/GEF ILM for TAL Nepal	1.5	2.2	3.5	4.3, 4.4
UNDP/GEF GWP Bhutan Tourism Child Project				4.3, 4.4
GEF SGP India		2.1	All Outputs	4.4
WB India Ecosystems Service Improvement Project				4.4
USAID/India Forest-Plus 2.0				4.4
USAID/WCT Tiger Matters project		2.2	3.5	4.4
WWF India	All Outputs	All Outputs	All Outputs	All Outputs
GTF	All Outputs	All Outputs	All Outputs	All Outputs
SACON	All Outputs	2.1	3.2, 3.3	4.2, 4.3, 4.4
WTI	All Outputs	All Outputs	All Outputs	All Outputs
CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development				4.1, 4.4

### *South ? South Cooperation*

This project is a child project under the GEF-7 Global Wildlife Program (GEF ID 10200), which provides a mechanism for cooperation and knowledge sharing, with both global and all national GWP projects being integrated into the GWP Global Knowledge Exchange Platform. India has a strong engagement in the GWP, being one of the first countries to join the GWP and an active participant in knowledge exchange, including hosting the 2017 in-person knowledge exchange event. During the PPG, the project was represented at the GWP in-person knowledge exchange event in South Africa in October-November 2019. This project will engage in GWP global/regional/thematic knowledge events to increase stakeholder engagement, present on project activities, and share experiences with other similar projects. The project will also actively share knowledge gained through participation in the GWP across national and sub-national networks.

The project is also well aligned with the Global Tiger Initiative / Global Tiger Forum, providing another avenue for international knowledge sharing further to WWF and UNDP's networks (see above section for GTF approach to coordination). In addition, to bring the voice of key stakeholders including the MoEFCC, State government agencies, partner NGOs and engaged communities to global and regional fora, the project will explore opportunities for meaningful participation in specific events where UNDP could support engagement with the global development discourse on landscape conservation for wild cats. The project will furthermore provide opportunities for regional cooperation with countries that are implementing initiatives on the conservation of wild cats, human-wildlife relations management and combatting poaching and illegal wildlife trade in geopolitical, social and environmental contexts relevant to the proposed project in South Asia.

Learning opportunities and technology transfer from peer countries will be further explored during project implementation. This will explicitly include collaboration with the WWF/GEF-6 Integrated Landscape Management for the Terai Arc Landscape in Nepal and the GWP GEF-7 tourism project in Bhutan. To present opportunities for replication in other countries, the project will codify good practices and facilitate dissemination through global ongoing South-South and global platforms, such as SAWEN, the UN South-South Galaxy knowledge sharing platform and PANORAMA.

## **7. Consistency with National Priorities**

Describe the consistency of the project with national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions from below:

NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc.

- National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan (NBSAP) under UNCBD

- National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) under UNCBD

- National Portfolio Formulation Exercise (NPFE) under GEFSEC

- Others

The rationale and policy of this project are fully consistent with broader government planning and policy at national level, directly contributing towards the implementation of relevant MEAs, especially the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Although prepared prior to the adoption of the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (SPB) 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets in 2010, India's National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) 2008 is nevertheless broadly aligned with the current global biodiversity agenda. In this regard, India decided that a revision of the NBAP 2008 was not necessary, and instead prepared an addendum in 2014<sup>[1]</sup> to the NBAP 2008 consisting of 12 National Biodiversity Targets mapped towards the achievement of the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets. These NBTs will guide investment and resource allocation for biodiversity conservation at the national level, and therefore bear high significance for wild cats and their main habitats – forest, grasslands and wetlands. An overview of implementation of the NBAP was prepared in 2019<sup>[2]</sup>.

The international MEA framework relevant to the NBAP includes the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and other biodiversity related environmental conventions. These include the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Actions under NBAP also contribute to implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Of the nine small cat species covered by the project, six are on CITES Appendix I and three are on Appendix II. Illegal wildlife trade (IWT) is a concern for certain species, especially near border areas. The project will seek to strengthen CITES implementation in relation to the identification of small wild cats and their parts in trade, and transboundary collaboration on combatting IWT.

The Ramsar Convention requires the wise use of wetlands, which is relevant in the project context especially for Dudhwa landscape, where there are significant wetland resources of importance for fishing cat and other wildlife, many of which are located in the agricultural landscapes of PA buffer zones and subject to invasive species, nutrient enrichment and lowering of groundwater tables.

A comprehensive web of policies and laws has evolved in the country to address various aspects of nature conservation that the NBAP seeks to achieve. The fundamental policy and legal support for its implementation is embedded in the Constitution of India which creates an abiding responsibility of the State and the people of India to take positive action for the protection and conservation of natural resources. Key national policies of relevance to the current project include the National Forestry Policy 1988, the National Environment Policy 2006, and National Agroforestry Policy 2014.

The Biological Diversity Act 2002 created a three tier architecture for its implementation at national, state and the local levels. This architecture coordinates the implementation of the NBAP in collaboration with

line agencies and other non-government stakeholders. At the national level, this includes the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), linked with central line ministries, institutes and national NGOs; at the State level, it includes State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) linked with State line departments, NGOs, CSOs and industry; and the local level there are Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) linked with local line agencies, Panchayati Raj institutions and other bodies.

The Wildlife Protection Act 1972 (amended 2006) empowers the State to declare areas of ecological, faunal, floral, geomorphological or zoological association or importance as protected areas, under four categories, namely, National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Community Reserves and Conservation Reserves. The Wildlife Division in the Directorate General of Forests in MoEFCC at Central Government level, and state wildlife departments and their subordinate offices at field level in states implement this Act. The 2006 Amendment brought in a separate chapter on tiger conservation ? this included the establishment of a National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) under MoEFCC; definitions of a Tiger Reserve, Core Zone, Buffer Zone and Corridor (National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries nominally being Core Zones); and management of Buffer Zones became a statutory requirement through the Tiger Conservation Plans (TCPs). Previously management plans only applied to the PAs - not Buffer Zones outside PAs. The TCPs now cover the tiger plus co-predators (e.g. small cats).

The Government of India has taken a pioneering initiative for conserving its national animal, the tiger, by launching the ?Project Tiger? in 1973[3]. From 9 tiger reserves since its formative years, the Project Tiger coverage has increased to 50 at present, spread out in 18 of our tiger range states. The tiger reserves are constituted on a core/buffer strategy. The core areas have the legal status of a national park or a sanctuary, whereas the buffer or peripheral areas are a mix of forest and non-forest land, managed as a multiple use area. The Project Tiger aims to foster an exclusive tiger agenda in the core areas of tiger reserves, with an inclusive people oriented agenda (beneficiary oriented tribal development) in the buffer. Project Tiger is an ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the MoEFCC? providing central assistance to the tiger States for tiger conservation in designated tiger reserves. The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) is a statutory body of the Ministry, with an overarching supervisory / coordination role, performing functions as provided in the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Details of other relevant legislation are listed in the NBAP.

India has also been a key player in the Global Tiger Initiative (GTI)[4] which was launched in 2008 as a global alliance of governments, international organizations, civil society, the conservation and scientific communities and the private sector, with the aim of working together to save wild tigers from extinction. The GTI?s founding partners included the World Bank, GEF, the Smithsonian Institution, Save the Tiger Fund, and International Tiger Coalition (representing more than 40 non-government organizations). The initiative is led by the 13 tiger range countries (TRCs). The inter-governmental Global Tiger Forum[5] formed in 1993 is based in India and supports range states in their tiger conservation work.

The project is strongly aligned towards implementation of specific aspects of the National Wildlife Action Plan 2017-31 (NWAP) [6]. This includes support for chapters on: *Landscape level approach for wildlife conservation, Conservation of threatened species, Peoples participation in wildlife conservation, Control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife, Mitigation of human-wildlife conflict, Development of human resources, and Strengthening research and monitoring.*

The development of Eco-Sensitive Zones around Protected Areas under the Environment (Protection) Act 1986 in line with official Guidelines published by the Wildlife Division of MoEFCC in 2011 will be supported in the project landscapes as part of the landscape conservation approach.

**SDGs and Aichi Targets:** This project will primarily contribute towards and SDG 15 (Life on land): Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss, supporting activities that address multiple targets. It will also make secondary contributions towards SDG 1: No poverty, 3: Good health, 5: Gender equality, and 13: Urgent action on climate change. The project will contribute towards Strategic Goal C of the Aichi Targets: To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity, particularly Target 11, in terms of PAs being

effectively and equitably managed and well-connected to the wider landscape[7]; and Target 12, to prevent the extinction of known threatened species.

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[1] <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/in/in-nbsap-v3-en.pdf>

[2] <https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/about/latest/#in>

[3] For details of NTCA mandate and activities, see: <https://projecttiger.nic.in/Index.aspx>

[4] <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/environment/brief/the-global-tiger-initiative>

[5] <http://globaltigerforum.org/>

[6] [http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/file/nwap\\_2017\\_31.pdf](http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/file/nwap_2017_31.pdf)

[7] For details, see: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/strategic-plan/targets/T11-quick-guide-en.pdf> and <https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/rationale/target-11/>

## 8. Knowledge Management

**Elaborate the "Knowledge Management Approach" for the project, including a budget, key deliverables and a timeline, and explain how it will contribute to the project's overall impact.**

Experience gained elsewhere in India on the *in-situ* management of big cat species has highlighted the need for a centrifugal approach, to work with related stakeholders while understanding the movement and disturbance ecology of big cat species in order to address human-big cat interface. Such an inclusive approach entails a portfolio with overarching contours of community stewardship, while actively engaging other stakeholders and ensuring mutual gains and reciprocal commitments for fostering in-situ conservation efforts beyond source areas. The situation analysis done for the High Altitude Tigers in an IUCN supported project led by the GTF across India, Bhutan and Nepal is a case in point. Likewise, the WWF and GTF ongoing engagement in the Pilibhit TR landscape of Uttar Pradesh has also flagged the importance of engagement at a larger scale "zone of influence". The ongoing engagement of GTF, under the GOI-GEF-UNDP SECURE Himalayas project has further underlined the imminent need to work at a scale beyond source areas, with master planning for the region having portfolios to address various stakeholders towards big cat landscape transformation, resulting in several altered states of landscape condition (see Output 1.1).

The project's knowledge management approach is supported explicitly by *Output 4.4: Knowledge management coordinated between landscapes, across India, neighbouring countries and with the Global Wildlife Program, including sharing of best practices and lessons learned*. This Output aims to ensure that project results, knowledge, experiences and lessons learned are made available to relevant audiences locally, nationally and internationally to inform conservation efforts elsewhere. In terms of approach, this project is a child project under the GEF-7 Global Wildlife Program, which provides a mechanism for

coordination and knowledge sharing. The project is also well aligned with the Global Tiger Initiative / Global Tiger Forum, providing another avenue for international knowledge sharing further to WWF and UNDP's networks. In addition, the project incorporates activities that will strengthen the country's knowledge management system and capacity. This includes the use of a project website/regional knowledge platform for sharing of news and materials online; the publication of project technical reports, awareness materials and technical briefs, which will form part of a project communication strategy; and annual project meetings for stakeholders at landscape level. Knowledge gained through GWP events will be shared across India including the project demonstration landscapes through the project established national/regional knowledge platform and NTCA and GTF channels.

The regional knowledge platform will ensure widespread dissemination of information on project results and best practices on wild cat conservation. The platform shall be anchored with the MoEFCC and will be moderated by the GTF. The platform will be universally accessible and would be especially useful for national and global audiences including local governments, international organizations, civil society organizations, academic and research institutions, the private sector, and community level institutions. The platform will serve as a reference point and bring together global, regional and national level reports, technical guidelines, protocols, and informational resources, as well as the main activities, news, publications, videos, infographics, websites and databases related to wild cats conservation. The platform would also promote citizen science to spearhead outreach and awareness generation and identify nature-based solutions for conservation of wild cats and its habitats.

#### **Indicative Activities:**

4.4.1 Develop a project knowledge management plan to ensure that project news and results are shared with project stakeholders and related initiatives (e.g. GTI), and updated annually. This will incorporate virtual communications tools and building capacity of the PMU/stakeholders/tools for virtual communications as a backstop to avoid delay in project activities in case face-to-face training/workshops are delayed (COVID-19 mitigation);

4.4.2 Collaborate with and support small cat interest groups for networking and knowledge-sharing;

4.4.3 Develop a project website / regional knowledge platform to share project news, results and information with stakeholders, the wider public in India and international audiences especially across South Asia ;

4.4.4 Share technical reports, news articles and awareness materials arising from project activities with stakeholders at all levels through project website/regional knowledge platform, media, etc, and provided to the GWP Secretariat through GWP qualitative reports and coordination meetings;

4.4.5 Develop case studies on key issues relating to landscape conservation for wild cats including stakeholder workshops, and publish them on the regional knowledge platform as technical briefs covering integrated management of ESZs to benefit wildlife, management of targeted wasteland habitats, small wild cat friendly agriculture practices, HWC management in targeted communities, monitoring of small wild cats, gender mainstreaming and traditional knowledge relevant to wild cats / habitats;

4.4.6 Hold annual project meetings for updating and consulting with stakeholders (government agencies, NGOs, scientists etc.) on project progress, results and lessons learned, including a wrap up/handover meeting in Year 6;

4.4.7 Project participates in GWP virtual and face-to-face knowledge management events, and shares results nationally through the regional knowledge platform, IUCN Cat Specialist Group and MoEFCC/NTCA and GTF channels;

4.4.8 Present project results at national/ international conferences (eg CITES COP side events);

#### 4.4.9 Publish and disseminate the project terminal report in both hard copy and electronic formats.

In addition, Output 1.2 on the development of species recovery action plans for wild cats will include a participatory approach facilitated by experts involving extensive stakeholder consultation at national and state levels in order to gather relevant information on wild cats to inform conservation assessment, distribution atlas and gap analysis.

The detailed timeline for the above activities is given in Project Document **Annex 2**. As a result of knowledge management, at least 6 project best practices and lessons will be documented and disseminated through national and international networks. The budget for knowledge management is approximately \$244,000. Overall, there is keen interest from GTF, the MoEFCC, WWF, UNDP and other project partners to ensure that learnings from the project's field activities in the demonstration landscapes are made available to support the replication and upscaling of the project approach, aided by technical workshops and sharing through existing networks. The GTF in particular as an inter-governmental body supporting tiger conservation has strong capacity and mandate for transferring learning through its meetings, workshops, website and partner network so that the project experiences can be shared and replicated in other tiger range countries in Asia.

## 9. Monitoring and Evaluation

### Describe the budgeted M and E plan

UNDP, in accordance with being the GEF Agency for Component 4, will lead on Project M&E including submission of annual PIRs, and an independent project mid-term review and terminal evaluation. Therefore the following text follows UNDP-GEF rules. The WWF Grant Agreement signed with the Government of India for Components 2 and 3 will follow WWF requirements, while also aligning to the lead role of UNDP on key project M&E steps.

The project results, corresponding indicators and mid-term and end-of-project targets in the project results framework will be monitored annually and evaluated periodically during project implementation. If baseline data for some of the results indicators is not yet available, it will be collected during the first year of project implementation. The Monitoring Plan included in prodoc **Annex 3** details the roles, responsibilities and frequency of monitoring project results.

The costed M&E plan included below, and the Monitoring plan in Annex, will guide the GEF-specific M&E activities to be undertaken by this project. In addition to these mandatory UNDP and GEF M&E requirements, other M&E activities deemed necessary to support project-level adaptive management will be agreed during the Project Inception Workshop and will be detailed in the Inception Report.

### **Additional GEF monitoring and reporting requirements:**

#### Inception Workshop and Report:

A project inception workshop will be held within 60 days of project CEO endorsement, with the aim to:

- a. Familiarize key stakeholders with the detailed project strategy and discuss any changes that may have taken place in the overall context since the project idea was initially conceptualized that may influence its strategy and implementation.
- b. Discuss the roles and responsibilities of the project team, including reporting lines, stakeholder engagement strategies and conflict resolution mechanisms.
- c. Review the results framework and monitoring plan.

- d. Discuss reporting, monitoring and evaluation roles and responsibilities and finalize the M&E budget; identify national/regional institutes to be involved in project-level M&E; discuss the role of the GEF OFP and other stakeholders in project-level M&E.
- e. Update and review responsibilities for monitoring project strategies, including the risk log; SESP report, Social and Environmental Management Framework and other safeguard requirements; project grievance mechanisms; gender strategy; knowledge management strategy, and other relevant management strategies.
- f. Review financial reporting procedures and budget monitoring and other mandatory requirements and agree on the arrangements for the annual audit.
- g. Plan and schedule Project Board meetings and finalize the first-year annual work plan.
- h. Formally launch the Project.

- GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR): The annual GEF PIR covering the reporting period July (previous year) to June (current year) will be completed for each year of project implementation. A PIR will be completed for the full project, led by UNDP as GEF Agency seeking WWF inputs as joint GEF Agency. Any environmental and social risks and related management plans will be monitored regularly, and progress will be reported in the PIR. The PIR submitted to the GEF will be shared with the Project Board. The quality rating of the previous year's PIR will be used to inform the preparation of the subsequent PIR.

- GEF Core Indicators: The GEF Core indicators in **Annex F** will be used to monitor global environmental benefits and will be updated for reporting to the GEF prior to MTR and TE. Note that the project team is responsible for updating the indicator status. The updated monitoring data should be shared with MTR/TE consultants prior to required evaluation missions, so these can be used for subsequent ground-truthing. The methodologies to be used in data collection have been defined by the GEF and are available on the GEF [website](#). The required Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METTs) have been prepared (**prodoc Annex 10**) and the scores included in the relevant GEF Core Indicators.

- Independent Mid-term Review (MTR): The terms of reference, the review process and the final MTR report will follow the standard templates and guidance for GEF-financed projects available on the [UNDP Evaluation Resource Center \(ERC\)](#). UNDP will lead on this for both GEF Agencies. A management response to MTR recommendations will be posted in the ERC within six weeks of the MTR report's completion.

- Terminal Evaluation (TE): An independent terminal evaluation (TE) will take place upon completion of all major project outputs and activities. The terms of reference, the evaluation process and the final TE report will follow the standard templates and guidance for GEF-financed projects available on the [UNDP Evaluation Resource Center](#). UNDP will lead on this for both GEF Agencies. A management response to the TE recommendations will be posted to the ERC within six weeks of the TE report's completion.

Final Report: The project's terminal GEF PIR along with the terminal evaluation (TE) report and corresponding management response will serve as the final project report package. The final project report package shall be discussed with the Project Board during an end-of-project review meeting to discuss lesson learned and opportunities for scaling up.

**Table 5. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and Budget**

GEF M&E requirements	Responsible Parties	Indicative costs (US\$) <i>All in Component 4 unless indicated</i>	Time frame

GEF M&E requirements	Responsible Parties	Indicative costs (US\$) <i>All in Component 4 unless indicated</i>	Time frame
<b>Inception Workshops - 3 (1 national and 2 at state level)</b>	Implementing Partner Project Manager	20,000 (10,000 National; 10,000 States)	Within 60 days of CEO endorsement of this project.
<b>Inception Report</b>	Project Manager	None	Within 90 days of CEO endorsement of this project.
<b>Reflections Meetings to review M&amp;E and other data for adaptive management</b>	Project Manager	None	Annually in preparation for the progress reports and development of the annual workplans
<b>Monitoring of indicators in project results framework</b>	Project Manager	18,000 (6,000 x 3 years)	Annually prior to GEF PIR excluding MTR and TE years (covered below). This will include GEF core indicators.
<b>GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR) [1]</b>	RTA UNDP Country Office WWF Project Manager	None	Annually typically between June-August
<b>Monitoring all risks (Atlas risk register)</b>	UNDP Country Office WWF Project Manager	10,000 (2,000 x 5 years)	On-going.
<b>Monitoring of safeguards according to UNDP SESP and WWF IPPF/PF</b>	M&E and Safeguards Analyst Landscape M&E and Safeguards/IP Specialist WWF	50,000 (10,000 National; <i>40,000 Landscapes in Component 3</i> )	On-going.
<b>Supervision missions[2]</b>	UNDP Country Office WWF	None	Annually
<b>Oversight missions[3]</b>	RTA and BPPS-GEF WWF	None	Troubleshooting as needed
<b>Mid-term GEF Core indicators and METT</b>	Project Manager	10,000	Before mid-term review mission takes place.
<b>Independent Mid-term Review (MTR)</b>	Independent evaluators	56,500	8 June 2024
<b>Terminal GEF Core indicators and METT</b>	Project Manager	10,000	Before terminal evaluation mission takes place
<b>Independent Terminal Evaluation (TE)</b>	Independent evaluators	46,500	8 April 2027

GEF M&E requirements	Responsible Parties	Indicative costs (US\$) <i>All in Component 4 unless indicated</i>	Time frame
<b>TOTAL indicative COST</b>		<b>221,000</b> <b>= 4.91% of GEF Grant</b>	

[1] The costs of GEF Agency oversight participation and time are charged to the GEF Agency Fee.

[2] The costs of GEF Agency oversight participation and time are charged to the GEF Agency Fee.

[3] The costs of GEF Agency oversight participation and time are charged to the GEF Agency Fee.

## 10. Benefits

**Describe the socioeconomic benefits to be delivered by the project at the national and local levels, as appropriate. How do these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of global environment benefits (GEF Trust Fund) or adaptation benefits (LDCE/SCCF)?**

Overall, this project will secure the conservation of the globally-significant wild cat landscapes of Dudhwa in the northern Indian State of Uttar Pradesh and Pakke-Eaglenest in Arunachal Pradesh in the north-east through a landscape conservation approach in line with the National Wildlife Action Plan 2017-31, that broadens and brings together the conservation programs of individual species, connects stakeholders and empowers communities, and operates across PAs, identified tiger corridors and in buffer zones surrounding and connecting these areas. In addition, it will support the existing WWF-led landscape conservation programme at Ranthambhore in Rajasthan through limited interventions and knowledge exchange. The landscape conservation approach represents a shift away from the traditional approach of focusing resources solely on increasingly isolated protected areas, given that these PAs are ecologically and socio-economically inter-dependent on the mosaic of land uses in their surrounding landscapes. The landscape approach recognizes protected areas as core areas for biodiversity conservation and aims to ensure their integration with sustainable land use in buffer zones[1], and biological corridors that connect PAs in order to deliver sustainable and climate-resilient natural resource management, and addresses the conservation of globally significant large ranging mammals (e.g. tiger, rhino, elephant) as well as the suite of wild cat species and their prey. This approach is based on integrated ecosystem management[2], operating at the scales required to capture representative biodiversity and conserve major ecological processes and services.

The landscape conservation approach necessitates working across multiple scales and stakeholders in the natural resource management sector, including local communities, local forest user groups, and small-scale agriculture users. This recognizes that a sustainably managed landscape and provision of ecosystem services is critical for local livelihood provision, and likewise, sustainable and biodiversity-friendly community land use options are key to landscape conservation. The landscape conservation approach recognizes emerging threats to each of the project landscapes, particularly in the form of habitat fragmentation driven by economic development and increasing human populations, and includes coordination with production sectors, towards reducing threats to biodiversity, increasing sector engagement in landscape conservation, and facilitating local ? state - national dialogue. The project will also seek to embed Global Wildlife Program threat-reduction priorities regarding combating human-wildlife conflict, poaching and illegal wildlife trade.

Wild cats themselves, being at the pinnacle of their respective food chains, have a vital role to play in maintaining the health of ecosystems by regulating prey populations. From the available literature it appears that small cats are largely specialised on rodent prey[3] and, especially in human landscapes, could play a vital role in regulating rodent populations and hence in disease control, apart from other economic benefits in preventing crop losses from rodent attack. Surprisingly, this has received little attention from research, funding and conservation circles. A study in Sariska TR, Rajasthan estimated that one Jungle Cat and one Caracal together eat around 5,000 rodents, equalling around 183 kg of rodents per year[4].

The global environmental benefits that will result from the GEF Project Alternative include ?mainstreaming biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes through the Global Wildlife Program to prevent extinction of known threatened species? and ?addressing direct drivers to protect habitats and species and improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate?. These will be achieved through the integrated and coordinated management of globally-significant wild cat landscapes in western, northern and north-eastern India; the improved management of 389,572 ha[5] of PAs in Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest landscapes, including improved conservation of associated KBAs; and improved management of an estimated 100,000 ha of agricultural and forest mosaic that buffers and connects PAs and provides important habitats for small cats. These benefits are reflected in the GEF 7 Core Indicators in **Annex F**. In addition, the project will contribute directly towards the conservation and sustainable management of globally significant ecoregions ? Dudhwa landscape is located in the Global 200 Terai-Duar Savannas and Grasslands ecoregion; Ranthambhore falls in the Kathiawar-Gir dry deciduous forests Ecoregion; and the NE India landscape lies in the East Himalayan Biodiversity Hotspot[6], and is part of the ?East Himalayan Endemic Bird Area?[7]; its upper reaches are also recognised among the Global 200 Ecoregions as the ?Eastern Himalayan Broadleaf and Conifer Forests? ranked as Vulnerable[8]. Each of these landscapes supports small wild cat populations such as fishing cat (VU) and clouded leopard (VU) (see prodoc **Annex 18**), as well as a diversity of other globally significant species including important populations of tiger (EN), leopard (VU), Asian elephant (EN), greater one-horned rhinoceros (VU), hog deer (EN), Barasingha (VU), gharial (CR), Gangetic dolphin (EN), swamp francolin (VU), Bengal florican (CR) Bugun liocichla (CR), and white-rumped, red-headed and Oriental white-backed vultures (all CR) (see the landscape profiles in prodoc **Annex 16**). The effective protection and management of such species, together with other species such as Indian (EN) and Chinese (CR) pangolins, Himalayan black bear (VU) and turtles that have been significantly targeted by poaching and the illegal wildlife trade, will contribute towards the goals of the GEF-7 Global Wildlife Program in addition to the supporting GEF-7 Biodiversity programs.

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[1] Now being elaborated through Eco-Sensitive Zone planning for all PA buffer zones across India

[2] For example, see: <https://www.thegef.org/news/integrated-ecosystem-management>

[3] Nowell K. and Jackson P. (eds.) (1996). Wild Cats: Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan, Vol. 382. IUCN SSC Cat specialist Group, Gland, 383pp.; Pocock R.I. (1939). Family Felidae, pp191?330. In: *The Fauna of British India, including Ceylon and Burma: Mammalia, Vol. 1, Primates and Carnivora*. Taylor & Francis, Ltd., London, 572pp.; Sunquist M. and Sunquist F. (2002). *Wild Cats of the World*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, 462pp.

[4] Mukherjee S., Goyal S.P., Johnsingh A.J.T. and Pitman M.L. (2004). The importance of rodents in the diet of Jungle Cat (*Felis chaus*), Caracal (*Caracal caracal*) and Golden Jackal (*Canis aureus*) in Sariska Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan, India. *Journal of Zoology, London* 262(4): 405-411; <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0952836903004783>

[5] Core and Buffer Areas of Pakke TR, Eaglenest WS, Sessa Orchid Sanctuary, Dudhwa TR. Excludes ESZ of Eaglenest WS (5588 ha) and Ranthambhore TR (141,128 ha). PIF target was 520,949 ha.

[6] Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF). 2005. Ecosystem Profile: Indo-Burman Hotspot, Eastern Himalayan Region. WWF US-Asian Program.

[7] Stattersfield, A. J., Crosby, M. J., Long, A. J. and Wege, D. C. (1998) Endemic Bird Areas of the World: Priorities for Biodiversity Conservation. BirdLife International Series No. 7. BirdLife International, U.K. PP Sultana, A. and Khan, J. A. (2000) Birds of Oak forests in the Kumaon Himalaya, Uttar Pradesh, India. Forktail16: 131-146.

[8] Olson, David M., and Eric Dinerstein. "The Global 200: Priority Ecoregions for Global Conservation." *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden* 89, no. 2 (2002): 199-224. doi:10.2307/3298564.

## 11. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

Provide information on the identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project/program based on your organization's ESS systems and procedures

### Overall Project/Program Risk Classification \*

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Medium/Moderate			

#### Measures to address identified risks and impacts

Elaborate on the types and risk classifications/ratings of any identified environmental and social risks and impacts (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and any measures undertaken as well as planned management measures to address these risks during implementation.

## Project Information

<b>Project Information</b>	
1. Project Title	Strengthening conservation and resilience of globally significant wild cat landscapes through a focus on small cat and leopard conservation
2. Project Number	PIMS 6355
3. Location (Global/Region/Country)	India

## Part A. Integrating Overarching Principles to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability

### **QUESTION 1: How Does the Project Integrate the Overarching Principles in order to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability?**

***Briefly describe in the space below how the Project mainstreams the human-rights based approach***

Human rights, as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments, have been considered while designing the project. Equal opportunities for vulnerable segment of society like minorities, disabled persons, poorest of the poor or destitute, and elderly persons among the local community is ensured to mainstream human rights-based approach in the project. Following the human rights-based approach, the key engagement principle in pursuing project objectives and outcomes is being mainstreamed by meaningful, effective and informed participation of the project stakeholders and communities in the formulation/design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Project's outputs and impacts. Further, appropriate regular information sharing initiatives (community consultation and disclosure meetings, stakeholder workshops, media briefings, etc.) will be supported by the project to ensure required level transparency. Besides, the project aims to strengthen community/ village-based organizations and will implement project interventions through this localized approach. Project activities in demonstration landscapes will aim to reduce adverse impacts from wild cats on local communities (e.g. through human-wildlife conflict damage) and provide economic benefits and livelihood opportunities through adoption of eco-friendly land management techniques, and partnerships with the private sector for enhancing sustainable forest management practices through cultivation and harvesting of NTFP such as medicinal plants where appropriate. The community benefits and incentives for their engagement in wild cats' conservation will be based on agreements with affected stakeholders / communities to ensure that they don't lose out. Obtaining due consent from indigenous communities, the project will also seek to identify and use traditional cultural knowledge to support project activities helping preserve these cultural practices and traditions of different indigenous communities at the demonstration landscapes.

***Briefly describe in the space below how the Project is likely to improve gender equality and women's empowerment***

A gender analysis has been conducted to identify the differences, needs, roles and priorities of women and men as it relates to the engagement in wild cat conservation, eco-friendly land use management, and human-wildlife conflict impacts in a way that reflects locally-specific needs and contexts. A gender action plan, based on the gender analysis has been prepared and will be integrated into project design to ensure that gender-based differences are built into project activities as appropriate, and gender-disaggregated targets will be developed as indicators of project's success. Further, specific project activities will be developed to support the engagement of women in project activities.

**Briefly describe in the space below how the Project mainstreams environmental sustainability**

The project is seeking to strengthen the conservation of globally significant wild cats in India. The project will work across the landscape, both strengthening the management of protected areas that house wild cats, and in areas buffering and connecting these protected areas that are also important habitats for wild cats. The project focuses on conserving the small cat population by engaging with the key stakeholders like local communities, civil society/ NGO, government departments and private sector and creating an enabling local, national and global atmosphere for small wild cat conservation by facilitating and supporting policy frameworks and infrastructure facilities. Project activities will strive to strengthen the conservation of wild cats through increasing understanding of conservation status, progressing coordinated policy and planning for wild cat conservation, through on-ground activities with local communities and institutions to deploy better land and habitat management practices, and through business sector engagement. Conservation of small cats in their habitat will consequently protect other flora and fauna species found in that area.

## Part B. Identifying and Managing Social and Environmental Risks

<p><b>QUESTION 2: What are the Potential Social and Environmental Risks?</b></p> <p><i>Note: Describe briefly potential social and environmental risks identified in Attachment 1 ? Risk Screening Checklist (based on any ?Yes? responses).</i></p>	<p><b>QUESTION 3: What is the level of significance of the potential social and environmental risks?</b></p> <p><i>Note: Respond to Questions 4 and 5 below before proceeding to Question 6</i></p>			<p><b>QUESTION 6: What social and environmental assessment and management measures have been conducted and/or are required to address potential risks (for Risks with Moderate and High Significance)?</b></p>
<p><b>Risk Description</b></p>	<p><b>Impact and Probability (1-5)</b></p>	<p><b>Significance (Low, Moderate, High)</b></p>	<p><b>Comments</b></p>	<p><b>Description of assessment and management measures as reflected in the Project design. If ESIA or SESA is required note that the assessment should consider all potential impacts and risks.</b></p>

<p><i>Risk 1: Upstream risk of restriction of access/use of natural resources and displacement of IPs/ tribal communities through preparation of landscape-level master plans including management of ESZ for wild cat conservation.</i></p> <p>(Principle 1: 1.3; 1.4, 1.6 ,1.7</p> <p>Standard 5: 5.2 Standard 6: 6.1, 6.2, 6.4)</p>	<p>I = 3 P = 3</p>	<p><b>MODERATE</b></p>	<p>These master plans under Output 1.1 for Dudhwa (UP) and Pakke-Eaglenest (AP) project landscapes will provide the vision and strategic basis for multi-stakeholder engagement in landscape conservation actions and a framework for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of progress, including demonstration of inter-agency collaboration mechanisms for management of the Environmentally Sensitive Zones (ESZ) that are being established around PAs, and guidelines for specific aspects of wild cat conservation. The process will include delineation of the landscape, defining the extent, zonation, review of existing policies, plans, state and national schemes, other donor/partner initiatives, identification, appraisal and engagement of stakeholders.</p> <p>The project landscapes are inhabited by indigenous/tribal communities including potentially vulnerable groups that might not have stable land rights arrangements. Indigenous communities in project landscapes include the</p>	<p>A Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) approach will be integrated and apply in the landscape planning approach and processes to avoid and prevent potential social and environmental impacts linked to development and implementation of landscape master plans. However, it will be ensured that no resettlement will take place with the use of GEF financing under this project.</p> <p>The landscape master plans will be implemented in landscapes with indigenous peoples and communities. If the SESA considerations as part of master plan development determine that Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) would be required to be compliant with UNDP SES then the measures outlined in the WWF IPPF will be followed. This will ensure a consistent and efficient approach of obtaining FPIC from project-affected communities. The IPPF would be assessed to confirm that it adheres to UNDP SES requirements prior to adoption of measures detailed in the WWF IPPF.</p> <p>A comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) (<b>Annex 7</b>) along with Project-specific grievance redress mechanism will be followed during all phases of the project. The master planning process under output 1.1 will follow a participatory approach engaging District/State level stakeholder in each landscape including Eco-Sensitive Zones with consultation on existing policies, plans, state &amp; national level schemes, defining clusters at Dudhwa TR, Pakke TR and Eagle Nest WLS. The planning process will also include primary data collection using community focus group discussions, participatory mapping and assessment through deployment of field teams.</p>
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<p><b>Risk 2:</b> <i>Risk of curtailing of customary natural resource management rights of tribal communities in project landscape through operational policy and plans for wild cat conservation.</i></p> <p>(Principle 1: 1.5; Standard 6: 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4)</p>	<p>I = 2 P = 3</p>	<p><b>MODERATE</b></p>	<p>The operational policy update and planning process under outputs 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 include National level Species Recovery Action Plans, Protocol and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) including for human rights-based approach to law enforcement, and site-specific guidelines for small cat conservation. These policies and plans will be prepared and implemented in national park buffer and periphery areas of Dudhwa (UP) and Pakke-Eaglenest (AP) project landscapes where many tribal communities are living without having stable land rights arrangements.</p> <p>Although the project doesn't have any direct impact on community rights, the activities under Outputs 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 are intended to strengthen wild cat conservation, which could potentially include regulations/ restrictions on management rights / access to and use of resources through the updating of operational policies, plans and guidelines. Thus, the rights of tribal/indigenous peoples could be curtailed while developing or updating these operational policies</p>	<p>A targeted SESA approach will be integrated into the policy development/revision and planning process for small cat conservation to identify and consider potential social and environmental risks linked to implementation of the different operational plans and policies.</p> <p>In parallel, the project will include capacity development activities to support the effective implementation of operational policies and SOPs. This is included under Output 1.5 for areas relevant to landscape management. Supported by WWF as GEF Agency, Output 2.2 includes training for frontline staff including community engagement and gender, delivery of a human rights-based approach to site-based wildlife law enforcement, field techniques for monitoring small cats, taking account of project-supported SOPs (Output 1.3) and guidelines (Output 1.4) and relevant SES requirements. Further, evaluation workshops (e.g. Activity 1.3.7) will be conducted to confirm best practices in implementation and identify lessons needed for implementation of guidelines and SOPs.</p>
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<p><b>Risk 3:</b> <i>Risk of low capacity to implement project activities which could impede compliance with UNDP social and environmental safeguards</i></p> <p>(Principle 1: 1.5; Standard 1: 1.2)</p> <p>-</p>	<p>I = 3</p> <p>P = 3</p>	<p><b>MODERATE</b></p>	<p>This risk applies for multiple outputs under components 1 and 4. Officials of State and District Forest Departments including technical agencies/consultants under these department could have limited capacity to apply SOPs, particularly for HWC management, and strengthening human-rights approaches to wildlife-related law enforcement under Output 1.3, activities 1.3.4 and 1.3.5. Risks of limited capacity of State and District agencies also applies to implement Site-specific guidelines (Output 1.4) and Capacity development for mainstreaming wild small cat conservation in landscape management (Output 1.5).</p>	<p>Capacity assessment of implementing agencies and stakeholders for components 1 &amp; 4 has been integrated into project design/preparation and will be considered during implementation. Capacity development programs are included in Output 1.5 on landscape management considerations. Landscape conservation priorities for wild cats will be mainstreamed through carefully designed capacity building measures for State departments (e.g. Forest, Revenue, Animal Husbandry, Land Use Planning, Agriculture &amp; Fisheries, Water Management), District Administrations and research institutions for landscape-level conservation Supported by WWF as GEF Agency, Output 2.2 includes training for frontline staff. Output 4.1 for the private sector includes activities to raise awareness of corporate sector, sensitization workshops and provision of technical assistance to raise skills and capacity for on-ground conservation support in project landscapes. Screening processes will be built into private sector partnerships and proposed activities to be supported by the private sector (see Risk 7 below).</p>
			<p>Similarly, issues of low or limited capacity such as lack of knowledge regarding small cats and their conservation, human rights and economic rights of local community, sustainable natural resource management may limit the success of implementation of output 4.1 (development of National-level Green Business platform for enhancing corporate sector engagement for community based</p>	<p>The PMU has a National Safeguards and M&amp;E Officer that will support these processes and provide sensitization training on SES requirements and ensure adequate consideration of SES within these activities.</p>

<p><b><i>Risk 4: Project may exclude marginalized/vulnerable groups from participatory processes and/or project benefits due to lack of effective community engagement and support</i></b></p> <p>(Principle 2: 2.3; Standard 6: 6.4)</p>	<p>I= 3</p> <p>P= 3</p>	<p><b>MODERATE</b></p>	<p>The project will be developed in an area where there is a high percentage of indigenous/Tribal populations of subsistence farming communities. The findings of community consultations conducted during PPG suggest that marginalized groups including tribal, scheduled caste and youth have limited access to information and awareness of their rights and entitlements, and therefore there is a risk that they might not be aware of or included in project consultations and activities.</p>	<p>A participatory process and stakeholder engagement plan will be in place as an integral part of project planning and implementation. The stakeholder engagement plan will be implemented, and regularly reviewed and updated as needed to ensure meaningful and inclusive engagement of project-affected stakeholders.</p> <p>The master planning process under output 1.1 will follow a participatory approach including community focus group discussions, participatory mapping and assessment through deployment of field teams.</p> <p>Capacity of the implementing agencies will be developed for effective and inclusive community engagement including engagement of local and indigenous communities and vulnerable groups (e.g. Outputs 1.5, 2.2).</p>
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<p><i>Risk 5: Project activities and approaches to landscape-level planning, operational policy updates, capacity building and corporate sector engagements might not fully incorporate or reflect views of women and girls and ensure equitable opportunities for their involvement and benefit.</i></p> <p>(Principle 2: 2.2, 2.3)</p>	<p>I = 3 P = 3</p>	<p><b>MODERATE</b></p>	<p>The project will ensure participation of women in planning process, capacity building activities and access to opportunities and benefits from the project. However, the risk of exclusion of women and girls while developing the national-level green business platform for enhancing corporate sector engagement for community-based wildlife conservation (Output 4.1) still exists due to the existing gender divisions of labor, gender-specific challenges, gender differential needs, and the different roles that men and women play in relation to the conservation of wild cats. The gender disparity and differences in the way that men and women interact with and use wild cat landscapes and habitats need to be identified and considered while designing the corporate sector conservation business.</p>	<p>A gender analysis based on specific consultations with women and girls in the demonstration landscapes and review of literatures has been conducted during the PPG (see <b>Annex 8</b> of project document).</p> <p>The Gender Action Plan (<b>Annex 8</b>) will be implemented. This has identified differential needs, interests, concerns and practices of both men and women in the local community for ensuring their better participation and development in the conservation process. In addition, the Gender Action Plan has also proposed activities to ensure project opportunities and benefits flow to women and girls. The corporate sector also can utilize the key findings of the gender action plan while designing and implementing the corporate sector conservation business.</p> <p>A comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) (<b>Annex 7</b> of the project document) along with Project-specific grievance redress mechanism will be followed during all phases of the project.</p>
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<p><i>Risk 6: The project landscapes could be impacted by the Supreme Court's ruling that over a million claims of Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers are not valid and shall be evicted from forests by July 2019. Though the court later stayed its order to give states more time to examine the rejected land claims, this could potentially result in conflict in demonstration landscapes and disrupt project implementation.</i></p> <p>-</p> <p>(Principle 1: 1.8; Standard 6: 6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 6.6)</p> <p>-</p>	<p>I = 4 P = 2</p>	<p><b>MODERATE</b></p>	<p>This risk is not related to the project or any of the co-financing. There is no direct link between project outputs with the Supreme Court's ruling that all households whose rights claims under FRA[1] have been rejected shall be evicted from forests by July 2019 (since stayed). The Tribal communities in Pakke- Eaglenest (Arunachal Pradesh) landscape haven't applied for Forest Rights under FRA 2006, though they are fully eligible. They have been in the region (forest lands) since 2001. This was the main reason of not listing Arunachal Pradesh in the Supreme Court Order[2] of February 13, 2019. It was reported that Tharu Communities in Dudhwa have applied for Forest Rights under FRA 2006. However, till now, no incidences of resistance or protest by Adivasi and other forest-dwellers in other project landscapes have been reported. Similarly, no cases of forced eviction of Adivasi and other forest-dwelling households have been reported from forestlands of the project landscape.</p> <p>The indigenous (tribal) communities in the project areas, particularly of</p>	<p>A comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) (<b>Annex 7</b>) will be followed to minimize the possible disruption or risk of stakeholder concern or conflict between stakeholders arising due to Supreme Court's decisions. A Project-specific grievance redress mechanism will be implemented.</p> <p>It is ensured that no resettlement will take place with the use of GEF financing under this project.</p>
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<p><i>Risk 7: Entry of the private sector in conservation (enhancing corporate sector engagement for community-based wildlife conservation) business may alter traditional patterns of natural resource use and social power due to its market orientated and profitmaking motives.</i></p> <p>(Principle 1: 1.8; Standard 5: 5.2</p> <p>Standard 6: 6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 6.6,6.8)</p> <p>-</p>	<p>I=3 P=2</p>	<p><b>MODERATE</b></p>	<p>This risk is related with output 4.1 (promotion of corporate sector engagement for community-based wildlife conservation. The mobilization of corporate partnerships and CSR funds for project related initiatives in each landscape for potential targeted sectors (to be determined, but may include sugar production in Dudhwa, and tourism in Pakke-Eaglenest and Ranthambhore), and supporting community stewardship, skill development and livelihood based initiatives, through adoption, procurement and marketing of derived products, including local craft, horticulture and medicinal and aromatic plant cultivation, among others (in all landscapes).</p> <p>This may expose risk on potential partnerships with private sector entities that do not have a good SES/CSR track record or risk to indigenous and tribal communities? traditional resource use and access to lands if conservation activities are not delivered in a way that identifies and mitigates potential SES impacts.</p>	<p>Any corporate partnerships will be screened and due diligence and an exclusionary process applied for high-risk sectors in accordance with UNDP Private Sector Partnerships policy and UNDP Private Sector Risk Assessment Tool. Through application of the Risk Assessment Tool, all potential private sector partners are screened against UNDP's exclusionary criteria and assessed on their exposure to significant controversies on a series of areas (e.g. Human Rights, Labor, Environment, Governance, etc.). Conditions and risk logs/management plans will be applied as needed based on this assessment. Compliance with private sector due diligence will be monitored during implementation by the National Safeguards and M&amp;E Officer in the PMU.</p> <p>In addition, the activities under Output 4.1 to develop partnerships and implement pilot initiatives with private sector (e.g. Green Business Platform/investment fund/CSR fund/grants etc. made available through private sector investment) will include a screening process to ensure consideration of social and environmental impacts, adherence to SES and exclusion of potential high-risk activities. The screening procedure will be integrated into the planning process to avoid any impacts on traditional patterns of natural resource use and social power due to market orientated and profitmaking motives of corporate sectors.</p> <p>A comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) (<b>Annex 7</b>) along with Project-specific grievance redress mechanism will be followed during all phases of the project.</p>
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<p><i>Risk 8: Risk of the project supporting private sector entities that could be noncompliant with national and international labor standards (i.e. principles and standards of ILO)</i></p> <p>(Standard 3: 3.8)</p>	<p>I=3</p> <p>P=2</p>	<p><b>MODERATE</b></p>	<p>Implementation of pilot initiatives of conservation business (output 4.1) will comprise a number of interventions[3] targeted on specific sectors (to be determined, but possibilities include sugar production in Dudhwa, tourism in Pakke-Eaglenest and Ranthambhore and horticulture and medicinal and aromatic plant cultivation in all landscapes). Development of business partnerships and implementation of pilot initiatives on the identified areas of interest and other interventions may require additional workforce. These initiatives will also help in escalating the development activities around the project site which will demand a constant supply of labor for many sectors.</p>	<p>Screening/exclusionary process for partnering with private companies will be a part of project planning and designing of private sector investment in accordance with UNDP due diligence for private sector partnerships (see above risk), including risk of potential noncompliance with ILO standards.</p> <p>Any activities proposed by private sector investment linked to the project will be subject to screening processes and an exclusionary process will apply to ensure that grants/grantees to not cover activities that would be in noncompliance with UNDP SES.</p> <p>Compliance with private sector due diligence will be monitored during implementation by the National Safeguards and M&amp;E Officer in the PMU</p>
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<p><i>Risk 9: The intended outcomes of Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 and 4.1 of the Project could be sensitive or vulnerable to potential impacts of climate change and variability, and natural disasters.</i></p> <p>-</p> <p>(Standard 2: 2.2)</p>	<p>I=2</p> <p>P=3</p>	<p><b>MODERATE</b></p>	<p>The project landscapes are geographically and climatically distinct, yet all are subject to stresses associated with climate change, including droughts, floods and erratic monsoon rains. These short-term events can have serious local impacts on wildlife including direct mortality and dispersion into human-dominated areas. Longer term trends affect ecological zones, species distribution, phenology, occurrence of IAS etc.</p>	<p>A climate risk screening has been completed and is included as Annex 28. The potential climate change impacts/vulnerabilities will be considered while selecting corporate investments and designing master planning process for landscape conservation through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Screening of climate change vulnerabilities for all corporate sponsored projects in Output 4.1 and master planning process (1.1), preparation and implementation of recovery action plans (1.2), protocol and standard operating procedures (SOPs) (1.3) and Site-specific guidelines for small cat conservation (1.4).</li> <li>2. Integration of inputs from Eco-Sensitive Zone management and climate-smart land use considerations.</li> </ol> <p>The project's landscape conservation approach will incorporate climate vulnerability assessment and adaptation measures as far as possible, to identify potential climate change impacts and incorporate both ecosystem-based adaptation and disaster risk reduction considerations into master planning process, preparation and implementation of recovery action plans, protocol and standard operating procedures (SOPs) and Site-specific guidelines for small cat conservation and corporate sponsored projects. This will consider, for example, increased climatic variability, increase in frequency and intensity of natural disasters such as droughts and floods, and ecological shifts.</p>
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<p><i>Risk 10: Risk that coordination and knowledge exchange actions on transboundary conservation could perpetuate potential safeguards risks linked to law enforcement.</i></p> <p>(Principle 1: 1.1, Standard 3: 3.1)</p>	<p><b>I=2</b></p> <p><b>P=3</b></p>	<p><b>MODERATE</b></p>	<p>Under Output 4.3, activities will support the development of a 'roadmap' for transboundary coordination on law enforcement. This may include coordination with staff from neighboring countries Nepal and Bhutan, and with PAs in Nepal (Shuklaphanta, Bardia and Banke NPs) and Bhutan (Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary) that are sites of other GEF projects. Nepal, Bhutan and India may have different legislative measures and approaches of law enforcement for conservation and transboundary coordination and differing levels of capacity and there is the risk that the roadmap could include activities or actions that could result in perpetuation of potential safeguards risks linked to law enforcement if sufficient measures, norms and capacity are not in place.</p>	<p>A screening process will be put in place to identify and avoid potential safeguards impacts of the 'roadmap' developed for transboundary coordination on law enforcement for conservation (4.3.1). As needed mitigating measures such as need for capacity development and agreement on law enforcement approaches and standards will be captured in the roadmap development.</p>
	<b>QUESTION 4: What is the overall Project risk categorization?</b>			
	<b>Select one (see <a href="#">SESP</a> for guidance)</b>			<b>Comments</b>
	<i>Low Risk</i>			?

***Moderate Risk***

The environmental and social risks for the project components 1 and 4 supported by UNDP as GEF Agency have been assessed and identified following UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards (SES) and Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP). A total of 10 risks have been identified for components 1 and 4 that could have potential negative impacts in the absence of safeguards. All are rated as Moderate. Therefore, the overall SESP risk categorization is Moderate.

Project assessment and management responses to ensure adherence to UNDP SES include:

- ? Implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan;
- ? Implementation of the gender action plan;
- ? Establishment of grievance redress mechanism and its communication to project stakeholders;
- ? Incorporation of a SESA approach into policy/planning/procedural activities with potential upstream impacts;
- ? As indicated as needed by SESA, securing of FPIC using measures outlined in WWF IPPF (following confirmation this adheres to required UNDP standards);
- ? Implementation of capacity development program for project partners and stakeholders including sensitization on SES requirements and roles;
- ? Completion of private sector due diligence for potential private sector

	<i>High Risk</i>	?	
	<b>QUESTION 5: Based on the identified risks and risk categorization, what requirements of the SES are relevant?</b>		
	Check all that apply		<b>Comments</b>
	<i>Principle 1: Human Rights</i>		See above summary in Q4
	<i>Principle 2: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment</i>		
	<i>1. Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management</i>		
	<i>2. Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation</i>		
	<i>3. Community Health, Safety and Working Conditions</i>		
	<i>4. Cultural Heritage</i>	?	
	<i>5. Displacement and Resettlement</i>		NB: Displacement from access to resource is likely but physical displacement or eviction or resettlement of communities is not expected. A screening procedure will be followed during the implementation planning process to avoid physical displacement or resettlement of communities. However, it is ensured that no resettlement will take place with the use of GEF financing under this project.
	<i>6. Indigenous Peoples</i>		
	<i>7. Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency</i>	?	

[1] The FRA (2006) provides for restitution of traditional forest rights to forest dwellers across India, including individual rights to cultivated land in forested landscapes and collective rights to control, manage and use forests and its resources as common property. It also stipulates the conditions for relocation of forest dwellers from critical wildlife habitations with their free informed consent and their rehabilitation in alternative land.

[2] The 21 states included in the Supreme Court Order are Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

[3] These are examples of relevant industries in the landscapes that offer potential for engagement in business partnerships. At present we do not have sufficient information or commitments from business partners to say what industries would be engaged in reality.

#### **Supporting Documents**

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title	Module	Submitted
<b>Annex 4 - Final SESP-INDIA-wildcats_revision_17 Mar 2021 for 1st resubmission</b>	<b>CEO Endorsement ESS</b>	

**ANNEX A: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK** (either copy and paste here the framework from the Agency document, or provide reference to the page in the project document where the framework could be found).

This project will contribute to the following Sustainable Development Goal(s)[1]: 1, 5, 11, 13, 14, 15				
This project will contribute to the following country outcome (UNDAF/CPD, RPD, GPD): UNDP CPD Outcome: Energy, environment and resilience; Output 3.2: Effective solutions developed at national and subnational levels for sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems, ozone depleting substances, chemicals and wastes.				
	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target
<b>Project Objective:</b> <i>Secure populations and habitats of wild cats subject to habitat encroachment, human-wildlife conflict, poaching and illegal trade in priority landscapes of northern, north-eastern and western India</i>	<b>Mandatory Indicator 1:</b> (GEF Core Indicator #11): # direct project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (individual people)	0	3,200 (1,860 women, 1,340 men)	6,300 (3,690 women, 2,610 men)
	<b>Mandatory Indicator 2:</b> (GEF Core Indicator #1): Terrestrial PAs under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (Hectares) as measured by METT (Annex 10): A. Dudhwa Tiger Reserve* (220,177 ha) B. Pakke Tiger Reserve* (137,695 ha) C. Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary* (21,700 ha) D. Sessa Orchid Sanctuary (10,000 ha) *Includes Core and Buffer Areas, but not ESZ	Area: 0 Baseline METT Scores: A - 41 B - 52 C - 54 D - 55	Area: 389,572 ha Mid-term METT Scores for: A - 57 B - 63 C - 64 D - 67	Area: 389,572 ha Completion METT Scores for: A - 81 B - 81 C - 81 D - 82

	<b>Mandatory Indicator 3:</b> (GEF Core Indicator #4): Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding PAs) (Hectares)	0	40,000 ha under improved practices, including: sustainable grazing management; improved arable cropping practices (e.g. reduced chemical use); community-based natural resource management; etc.	100,000 ha under improved practices, including: sustainable grazing management; improved arable cropping practices (e.g. reduced chemical use); community-based natural resource management; etc.
<b>Project Component 1:</b>	<b>Enabling policy, planning and institutional framework for wild cat conservation</b>			
<b>Project Outcome 1:</b> <i>Strengthened policy, planning and institutional framework for wild cat conservation in accordance with the National Wildlife Action Plan 2017-2031</i>	<b>Indicator 4:</b> Landscape conservation master plans developed for globally-significant wild cat landscapes and institutionalized into government plans and programs with implementation supported by multi-sector partnerships	Conservation efforts focus on PAs and dispersed efforts led by diverse parties outside the PAs, with no overall vision or coordination at landscape level	Landscape conservation master plans developed for Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest Landscapes and multi-sector partnerships defined for their implementation	Landscape conservation master plans for Dudhwa and Pakke-Eaglenest Landscapes adopted by the respective State Governments and implementation supported by State Government plans and budgets and multi-sector partnerships
	<b>Indicator 5:</b> Tiger Conservation Plans within project landscapes incorporate specific requirements for small wild cat conservation based on project landscape master plans, Species Recovery Action Plans, SoPs and site specific guidelines	Tiger Conservation Plans do not include measures for small wild cats	One set of recommendations for each project landscape delivered to NTCA for uptake in Tiger Conservation Plans, based on project landscape Master Plans, Species Recovery Action Plans, SoPs and site specific guidelines	Tiger Conservation Plans within project landscapes revised to incorporate specific requirements for small wild cat conservation, and recommendations for upscaling endorsed by NTCA

	<b>Indicator 6:</b> Improved institutional capacity of relevant government agencies for landscape conservation incorporating wild cat needs, as measured by Capacity Development Scorecard ( <b>Annex 19</b> ), for MoEFCC, Uttar Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh State, District and Municipal Agencies including Forestry, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Medicinal Plants, Tourism, etc).	Baseline Score: 34.2	Mid-term Score: 39	Completion Score: 48
<b>Outputs to achieve Outcome 1</b>	1.1 Landscape-level master plans for wild cat conservation developed and institutionalized into government plans and programs 1.2 National level Species Recovery Action Plans developed and implemented for Caracal, Fishing Cat and Clouded Leopard informed by a national database and atlas on wild cats 1.3 Protocol and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for small cat and leopard conservation developed and institutionalized in State and District Forest Departments 1.4 Site-specific guidelines on small cat (plus leopard) conservation integrated into revised big cat conservation strategies and management plans of tiger reserves and other PAs 1.5 Capacity of State and District agencies increased for mainstreaming wild cat conservation in landscape management.			
<b>Project Component 2</b>	<b>Strengthened management and protection of wild cat landscapes</b>			

<b>Outcome 2:</b> <i>Improved protection and management of wild cats and habitats in target PAs, corridors and buffer zones in wild cat landscapes</i>	<b>Indicator 7:</b> Targeted reduction in threats to wild cat populations and their habitats, as measured by patrol reporting/MSTRIPES: A. Dudhwa Landscape - i)# HWC incidences reported/year - ii)# poaching/IWT cases reported/year -iii) # wildlife killed on monitored road stretches/year  B. Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape - i)# HWC incidences reported/year -ii) # poaching/IWT cases reported/year - iii)# wildlife killed on monitored road stretches/year [Annual targets for WWF]	Baseline levels of threats reported: A. Dudhwa Landscape To be determined using systematic reporting procedures in Year 1  B.Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape To be determined using systematic reporting procedures in Year 1	Mid-term target levels of threats reported: A. Dudhwa Landscape All: Improved rate of reporting over baseline; i)Increased No. reports of HWC incidents due to improved reporting ii)Increased No. reports of poaching/IWT cases due to improved reporting iii) No increase over baseline  B.Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape All: Improved rate of reporting over baseline; i)Increased No. reports of HWC incidents due to improved reporting ii)Increased No. reports of poaching/IWT cases due to improved reporting iii)No increase over baseline	Completion target levels of threats reported: A. Dudhwa Landscape i)increased No. reports of HWC incidents due to improved reporting; ii)50% reduction over baseline iii)20% reduction over baseline  B.Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape i)increased No. reports of HWC incidents due to improved reporting; ii)50% reduction over baseline iii)20% reduction over baseline
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	<p><b>Indicator 8:</b> Increased wild cat occupancy status in landscape areas targeted for improved habitat management, as measured by camera trap grid and scat collection data</p> <p>A. Dudhwa Landscape: Fishing cat occupancy in targeted area of grassland and wetland habitats</p> <p>B. Pakke-Eaglenest: Wild cat species occupancy of targeted corridor and degraded forest habitats</p>	<p>Baselines to be determined through monitoring surveys when targeted areas for habitat management are defined, and detailed monitoring methods established through expert review</p>	<p>A. Dudhwa Landscape: Fishing cat occupancy determined for the targeted area ? at least stable over baseline</p> <p>B. Pakke-Eaglenest: Wild cat species occupancy determined for targeted corridor and degraded forest habitats ? at least stable over baseline</p>	<p>A. Dudhwa Landscape: Fishing cat occupancy for the targeted area shows a stable population trend.</p> <p>B. Pakke-Eaglenest: Wild cat species occupancy for targeted corridor and degraded forest habitats shows a stable and/or increasing trend over baseline</p>
	<p><b>Indicator 9:</b> Improved frontline capacity for conservation and management of small wild cats and their habitats, as measured by Small Cats Capacity Development Scorecard (see <b>Annex 18</b> for Scorecard baselines) for:</p> <p>A. Dudhwa Landscape</p> <p>B. Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape</p>	<p>Baseline frontline capacity scores for:</p> <p>A. 25%</p> <p>B. 44%</p>	<p>Mid-term frontline capacity scores for:</p> <p>A. 50%</p> <p>B. 60%</p>	<p>Completion frontline capacity scores for:</p> <p>A. 77%</p> <p>B. 85%</p>
<p><b>Outputs to achieve Outcome 2</b></p>	<p>2.1 Targeted interventions to improve wild cat habitat management demonstrated at project landscapes</p> <p>2.2 Frontline staff capacitated and equipped to conduct monitoring, surveillance and enforcement</p>			
<p><b>Project Component 3</b></p>	<p><b>Community stewardship and human-wildlife coexistence in wild cat landscapes</b></p>			

<b>Outcome 3:</b> <i>Enhanced community-based management of wild cats and habitats, with threat reduction including HWC and improved local livelihoods</i>	<b>Indicator 10:</b> No. of villages actively monitoring small wild cat species and their habitats in support of community-based conservation efforts A. Dudhwa Landscape B. Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape	Baseline to be established at targeted localities in Year 1 A. No current monitoring of small cats by communities B. No current monitoring of small cats by communities, although Singchung Bugun conducting community conservation efforts	A. At least 5 villages B. At least 5 villages All with at least 30% participation of women	A. At least 10 villages B. At least 10 villages All with at least 30% participation of women
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	<p><b>Indicator 11:</b> Targeted percentage reduction of locally-specific threats related to community-based management of natural resources:</p> <p>A. Dudhwa Landscape</p> <p>i) Percentage reduction in quantity of firewood collected by targeted communities</p> <p>ii) Percentage of free-ranging dogs neutered at targeted sites</p> <p>iii) Percentage reduction in density of free-ranging livestock at targeted sites</p> <p>B. Pakke-Eaglenest Landscape</p> <p>i) Percentage reduction in annual deforestation rate in targeted areas</p> <p>ii) Percentage reduction in number of illegal hunting incidents reported at targeted sites</p>	<p>A</p> <p>Baseline to be established at targeted localities in Year 1</p> <p>i) quantity of firewood collected by targeted communities</p> <p>ii) Percentage of free-ranging dogs that are neutered</p> <p>iii) density of free-ranging livestock</p> <p>B</p> <p>i) 1.2%/annum in Papum RF (Pakke Buffer Area, 2013-17); and &gt;4% in lower elevation accessible areas (2011-19) (see METT threats table, Annex 10)</p> <p>ii) Baseline to be established at targeted localities in Year 1</p>	<p>A.</p> <p>i) 10% reduction over baseline</p> <p>ii) 50% of free-ranging dogs</p> <p>iii) 25% reduction in livestock density over baseline</p> <p>B.</p> <p>i) 20% reduction in annual deforestation rate</p> <p>ii) As baseline (allowing for increased reporting rate)</p>	<p>A.</p> <p>i) 20% reduction over baseline</p> <p>ii) 80% of free-ranging dogs</p> <p>iii) 50% reduction in livestock density over baseline</p> <p>B.</p> <p>i) 50% reduction of annual deforestation rate</p> <p>ii) 50% reduction over baseline</p>
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	<p><b>Indicator 12:</b> Percentage reduction in annual incidence of HWC impacting crops, livestock and people in four targeted communities</p>	<p>Baseline HWC statistics to be collected for targeted communities starting in Year 1. Significant efforts by government and NGOs to combat HWC in project landscapes; yet HWC problems remain locally severe; absence of systematic strategy that considers wildlife corridors, habitat connectivity, land use and livelihood options.</p>	<p>At least 20% reduction in annual HWC incidence over baseline in four targeted communities</p>	<p>At least 60% reduction in annual HWC incidence over baseline in four targeted communities</p>
<p><b>Outputs to achieve Outcome 3</b></p>	<p>3.1 Capacity developed for community-based management of wild cats and habitats</p> <p>3.2 Awareness-raising and education programmes conducted for local communities on wild cat conservation and habitat management including documentation of related traditional knowledge</p> <p>3.3 Participatory community monitoring of wild cat populations and HWC operationalized through village-level institutions</p> <p>3.4 Local livelihood options diversified to encourage reduced pressures on wild cat habitats</p> <p>3.5 Targeted interventions in HWC hotspots to implement mechanisms for the prevention and management of HWC adjacent to PAs and corridors.</p>			
<p><b>Project Component 4</b></p>	<p><b>Partnerships, knowledge management and M&amp;E</b></p>			

<b>Outcome 4:</b> <i>Effective partnerships, communications, knowledge management and M&amp;E for wild cat conservation</i>	<b>Indicator 13:</b> National-level green business platform operationalized with Terms of Reference, broad membership and investment through partnership in project-related activities	Indian Wildlife Business Council no longer operational despite GTI, WB and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) establishing it in 2012	National-level green business platform established with Terms of Reference and membership including at least 10 corporate bodies	National-level green business platform operational with TOR, membership of at least 20 corporate bodies, and actively investing through at least one partnership activity in each project landscape
	<b>Indicator 14:</b> Improved understanding of values of wild cats and more positive attitudes towards small wild cat conservation among target audiences including national and state government line agencies (Forest and Wildlife, Environment, Agriculture, Revenue, Rural Development, etc) and concerned NGOs, as measured by KAP (Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices) score. See <b>Annex 21</b> for KAP assessment methodology	KAP baseline scores (to be conducted in Year 1)	KAP midterm targets (to be determined in Y1)	KAP completion targets (to be determined in Y1)
	<b>Indicator 15:</b> Annual number of PAs and institutions sharing knowledge on small wild cat conservation through regional knowledge platform	No regional platform for sharing of knowledge on small wild cat conservation	Platform established and operational - 10/year	20/year

	<b>Indicator 16:</b> Number of project best practices developed, disseminated and used, targeting: integrated management of ESZs to benefit wildlife, management of targeted Wasteland habitats, small wild cat ? friendly agriculture practices, HWC management in targeted communities, community-based monitoring of small wild cats, gender mainstreaming and traditional knowledge relevant to wild cats / habitats.	0	3	6
	<b>Indicator 17:</b> Number of annual reflection meetings to review M&E and other data for adaptive management, linked to preparation of progress reports and development of annual workplans	0	3	6
<b>Outputs to achieve Outcome 4</b>	4.1 National-level Green Business platform developed for enhancing corporate sector engagement for community-based wildlife conservation 4.2 Awareness raised for wild cat conservation at national and sub-national levels through communications strategy and action plan implementation 4.3. Transboundary joint action and collaboration on wild cat conservation 4.4 Knowledge management coordinated between landscapes, across India, neighbouring countries and with the Global Wildlife Program, including sharing of best practices and lessons learned 4.5 M&E system incorporating gender mainstreaming and safeguards developed and implemented for adaptive project management			

[1] The project will primarily target terrestrial biodiversity conservation (Goal 15 ? Life on Land), but also contribute towards other Goals, including: 1 (No Poverty), 5 (Gender Equality), 13 (Climate Action), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 14 (Life Below Water) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

**ANNEX B: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS (from GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF).**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response(s)</b>	<b>Project Document Reference</b>
<b>GEF Secretariat Comments on draft child project concept note</b>		
All feedback from GEF Secretariat at PIF/Project Concept stage was addressed at that time and is not elaborated further here		
<b>Comments Submitted by GEF Council Members ? US, received 4 July 2019</b>		
<b>10200 Global Wildlife Program; Global, Angola, Belize, Bhutan, Cambodia, Chad, Congo DR, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Namibia, Panama, South Africa, Vietnam</b>		

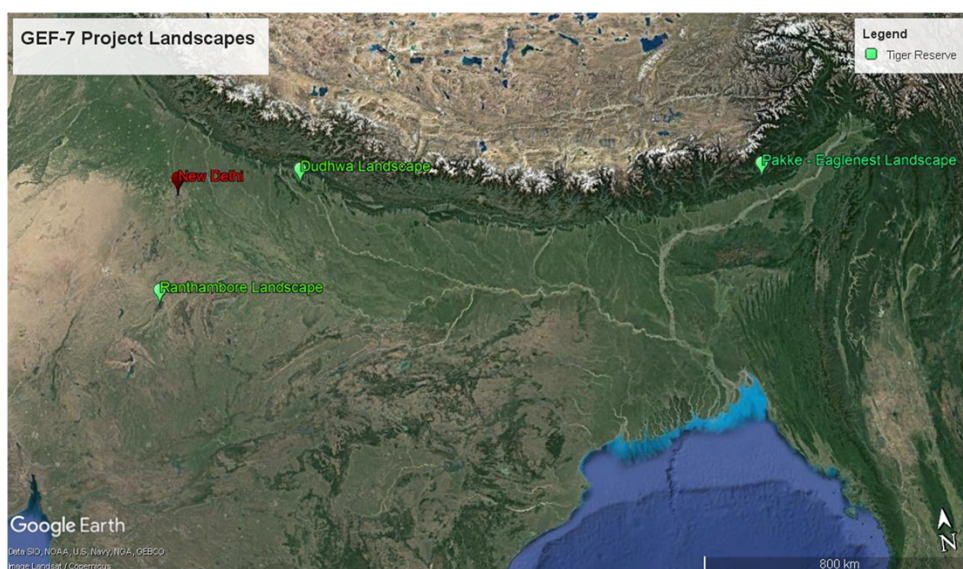
Comment	Response(s)	Project Document Reference
<p>a. Coordination. There are multiple efforts in combatting wildlife trafficking across the countries involved in this program, particularly within South Africa. It will be critical that the child projects coordinate and de-conflict with ongoing work.</p> <p>b. Private sector engagement. The project components related to business development across the child projects are particularly vague at this stage, and we look forward to greater clarity on private sector engagement as the projects develop.</p> <p>c. Gender. The project components related to gender mainstreaming are similarly vague, and we look forward to greater clarity as the projects develop.</p>	<p>a. The current project will support transboundary conservation measures targeting local coordination between Dudhwa and adjacent Nepalese districts and PAs, and Eaglenest WS and Sakteng WS in Bhutan. In both cases, there are other GEF projects supporting wildlife conservation on the other side of the border, namely the WWF-GEF-6 Integrated Landscape Management in the Terai Arc Landscape (Nepal), and the Global Wildlife Program UNDP-GEF-7 Bhutan Tourism project. In addition, as a child project of GWP II, the project will participate in GWP knowledge sharing events (webinars, conference side-events, website articles, etc) and share these further through the proposed regional knowledge platform and NTCA and GTF channels. The Prodoc Partnerships section described collaboration and coordination with other projects in more detail.</p> <p>b. Private sector engagement will be primarily led by GTF in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in Output 4.1, which aims to establish a national green business platform through a participatory process of regional dialogues, partnership development, and development of a private sector fund to support community-based conservation efforts including initial investments in the project landscapes. Both GTF and WWF India have substantial experience in working with the private sector, and WWF India receives significant ongoing investment support. Letters expressing intention to participate in the project and contribute cofinancing have been received from Sanofi and North Star Asia to date.</p> <p>c. Gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women is described in the CEO ER section on this subject, and a gender analysis and action plan given in prodoc <b>Annex 8</b>.</p>	<p>Partnerships Table 7 Results: Output 4.3 Output 4.4</p> <p>Results: Output 4.1</p> <p>Gender equality &amp; womens empowerment Annex 8</p>
<b>Comments from GWP Program Steering Committee Members</b>		
<p>The draft TOC and results framework, and subsequently full Project Document, were shared with the GWP PSC members. Helpful guidance and comments on the draft Theory of Change were provided by STAP further to the December 2019 STAP primer on TOCs <a href="http://www.stagef.org/theory-change-primer">http://www.stagef.org/theory-change-primer</a></p>	<p>The comments from STAP on the draft Theory of Change and inclusion of Theory of Change (TOC) analysis in the project document are appreciated. These comments have been taken into consideration in the preparation of the project. This has been included in the Baseline Analysis section of the CEO ER above.</p>	<p>Project Strategy Fig 3 Table 4</p>

**ANNEX C: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG).**  
**(Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status**  
**in the table below:**

PPG Grant Approved at PIF:			
<i>Project Preparation Activities Implemented</i>	<i>GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount (\$)</i>		
	<i>Budgeted Amount</i>	<i>Amount Spent To date</i>	<i>Amount Committed</i>
Component A: Preparatory Technical Studies & Reviews	55,000.00	47,796.12	7,203.88
Component B: Formulation of the UNDP-GEF Project Document, CEO Endorsement Request, and Mandatory and Project Specific Annexes	50,000.00	43,451.01	6,548.99
Component C: Validation Workshop and Report	45,000.00	39,105.91	5,894.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>150,000.00</b>	<b>130,353.04</b>	<b>19,646.96</b>

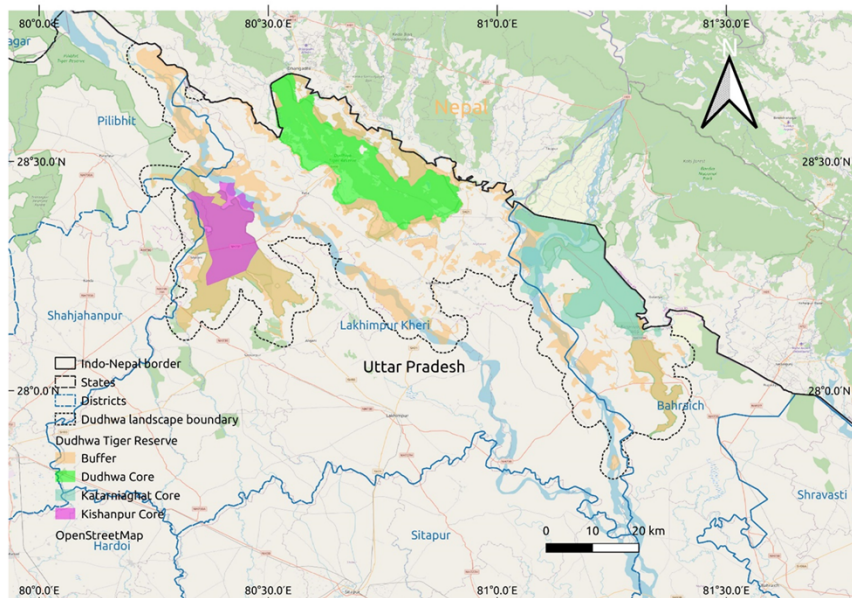
**ANNEX D: Project Map(s) and Coordinates**

**Please attach the geographical location of the project area, if possible.**



**Figure A1-1: Map showing the locations of the three project landscapes**

**Map Disclaimer:** The designations of the geographical entities and the presentation of the material do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.



**Figure A1-2: Map of Dudhwa Landscape, Uttar Pradesh**

**Map Disclaimer:** The designations of the geographical entities and the presentation of the material do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

**Landscape Coordinates:** Lower left - 80°11'29.647"E, 27°48'25.066"N; Upper Right - 81°25'50.183"E, 28°45'33.678"N

**Area:** 4639 km<sup>2</sup>

### *Protected Areas*

#### ***Dudhwa Tiger Reserve, incorporating:***

Name: Dudhwa National Park

WDPA site code[1]: 691

Status: National Park

Location: 28° 29' 27" N, 80° 42' 08" E

Province: Uttar Pradesh

District / City / County: Lakhimpur-Kheri District

Area: 490 km<sup>2</sup>

Elevation Range: 150-184 m

Name: Kishanpur WLS

WDPA site code: 1824

Status: Wildlife Sanctuary

Location: 28° 29' 27" N, 80° 42' 08" E

Province: Uttar Pradesh

District / City / County: Lakhimpur-Kheri District

Area: 227 km<sup>2</sup>

Elevation Range: 150-184 m

Name: Katarniaghat WLS

WDPA site code: 1807

Status: Wildlife Sanctuary

Location: 28° 14' 40" N, 81° 11' 29" E

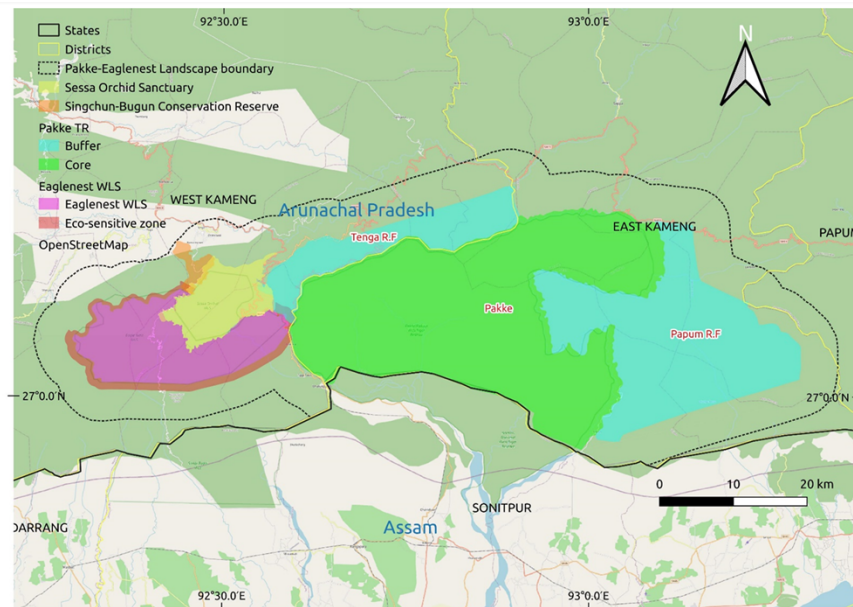
Province: Uttar Pradesh

District / City / County: Bahraich

Area: 400.69 km<sup>2</sup>

Elevation Range: 170-190 m

[1] WDPA site codes can be found on the World Database of Protected Areas website:  
[www.protectedplanet.net](http://www.protectedplanet.net)



**Figure A1-3: Map of Pakke – Eaglenest Landscape, Arunachal Pradesh**

**Map Disclaimer:** The designations of the geographical entities and the presentation of the material do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

**Landscape Coordinates:** Lower left- 92°14'30.277"E, 26°54'52.675"N; Upper Right -93°20'26.861"E, 27°18'12.275"N

**Area:** 2928 km<sup>2</sup>

### ***Protected Areas***

Name: Pakke Tiger Reserve

WDPA site code: 4530

Status: Tiger Reserve

Location: 27° 19' 07" N, 92° 51' 37" E

Province: Arunachal Pradesh

District / City / County: East Kameng District

Area: 862 km<sup>2</sup>

Elevation Range: 100-2000 m

Name: Sessa Orchid Sanctuary

WDPA site code: 62666

Status: Wildlife Sanctuary

Location: 27.2°N 92.5°E

Province: Arunachal Pradesh

District / City / County: West Kameng District

Area: 100 km<sup>2</sup>

Elevation Range: 1100 - 1800 m

Name: Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary

WDPA site code: 62670

Status: Wildlife Sanctuary

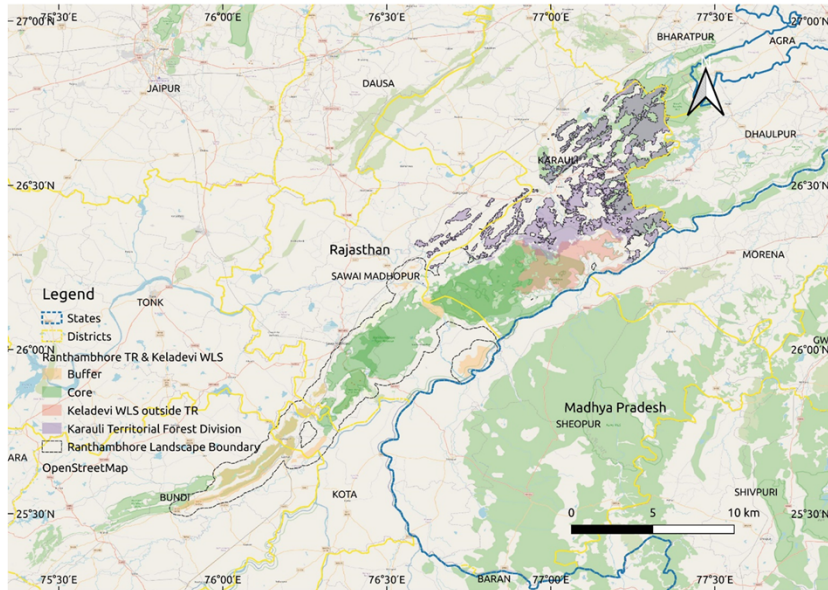
Location: 27° 08' 00" N, 92° 21' 47" E

Province: Arunachal Pradesh

District / City / County: West Kameng District

Area: 217 km<sup>2</sup>

Elevation Range: 334-3213 m



**Figure A1-4: Map of Ranthambhore Landscape, Rajasthan**

**Map Disclaimer:** The designations of the geographical entities and the presentation of the material do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

**Landscape Coordinates:** Lower left- 75°50'14.429"E, 25°29'29.81"N; Upper Right -77°22'43.774"E, 26°49'21.398"N

**Area:** 3974 km<sup>2</sup>

### ***Protected Areas***

#### ***Ranthambore Tiger Reserve, incorporating:***

Name: Ranthambore National Park (1980)

WDPA site code: 1808

Status: National Park

Location: 26° 02' 14" N, 76° 28' 50" E

Province: Rajasthan

District / City / County: Sawai-Madhopur District

Area: 392 km<sup>2</sup>

Elevation Range: 200-500 m

Name: Keladevi WLS (1983)

WDPA site code: 17380

Status: Wildlife Sanctuary

Location: 26° 02' 14" N, 76° 28' 50" E

Province: Rajasthan

District / City / County: Karauli District

Area: 630 km<sup>2</sup>

Elevation Range: 200-500 m

Name: Sawai-Mansingh WLS (1984)  
 WDPa site code: 17379  
 Status: Wildlife Sanctuary  
 Location: 26° 02' 14" N, 76° 28' 50" E  
 Province: Rajasthan  
 District / City / County: Sawai-Madhopur District  
 Area: 290 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elevation Range: 200-500 m

## ANNEX E: Project Budget Table

**Please attach a project budget table.**

Annex 27: GEF Budget template

**GEF Budget template: India Wild Cat Landscapes Project -UNDP Budget ? Components 1, 4 and PMC**

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Goods	IT Equipment: 2 computers (\$3000), 2 multifunction scanner-printers (\$1000), IT accessories and software (\$2000) to support landscape master plan development (one set for each landscape, to support GTF inputs and handed over to the State Govts) = \$6,000 (Output 1.1) 2 LCD projectors (\$900 each) to support training activities (one for each landscape, to support the State Govts) = \$2,000 (Output 1.5) Total: \$8,000	7,800		7,800			7,800	MoEFCC
Goods	IT Equipment: For communications, knowledge management and M&E activities - computers 2 @ \$1500 = \$3000, printer/scanner/fax multifunction 1 @ \$500; digital camera 1@\$800; IT accessories & repairs \$2,000, software \$1,800 Total: \$8,100		8,100	8,100			8,100	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Goods	IT Equipment: National project management - computers 2 @ \$1500 = \$3000, printer/scanner/fax multifunction 1 @ \$500; IT accessories & repairs \$2,000, software \$1,800 Total = \$7.300			-		7,300	7,300	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Contractual Services ? Individual	Contractual Services ? Implementing Partner: Landscape Conservation Planner to facilitate District (\$2000/month over 30 months) and State level consultations on landscape planning, and facilitate the coordination and integration of conservation and rural development initiatives to reduce inter-sectoral conflicts, and integration of master plans with existing planning processes (Output 1.1), provide technical advice and workshop facilitation on landscape planning for species recovery plans (Output 1.2), protocol and SOPs (Output 1.3) and guidelines (Output 1.4); provide training inputs on landscape planning (Output 1.5); (All Outputs) Total: \$60,000	60,000		60,000			60,000	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Contractual Services ? Individual	Contractual Services ? Implementing Partner: M&E and Safeguards Analyst (at \$2,000/month) for coordinating updating of annual indicators for PIR, MTR and TE (10 months), overseeing implementation of the M&E plan and ensuring alignment of project M&E with GWP M&E requirements(20 months), reviewing and revising annual work plan activities based on lessons learned (5 months), stakeholder/social inclusion consultations (5 months), coordinate the development, implementation and monitoring of any required ESIA's and safeguards plans in line with SESP requirements (20 months) (Output 4.5)		52,000	52,000			52,000	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Contractual Services ? Individual	Contractual Services ? Implementing Partner: M&E and Safeguards Analyst (at \$2,000/month) for coordinating updating of annual indicators for PIR, MTR and TE (10 months), overseeing implementation of the M&E plan and ensuring alignment of project M&E with GWP M&E requirements(20 months), reviewing and revising annual work plan activities based on lessons learned (5 months), stakeholder/social inclusion consultations (5 months), coordinate the development, implementation and monitoring of any required ESIA's and safeguards plans in line with SESP requirements (20 months) (Output 4.5)			-	68,000		68,000	

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Contractual Services ? Individual	Contractual Services ? Implementing Partner: Project Manager ? 60 months over 6 years at \$1000/month (50% time; co-financed by GTF) = \$60,000 Project Admin and Finance Officer ? 60 months over 6 years at \$916.67/month = \$55,000 Total = \$115,000			-		115,000	115,000	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Contractual Services ? Company	Contractual Services ? Companies/Institutions: Subcontract to GTF for development of landscape master plans = \$120,000 (Output 1.1) Total \$120,000 Contractual Services ? Companies/Institutions: Subcontract to GTF for development of database, atlas and mobile phone application on wild cat monitoring - \$80,000 (Output 1.2) Total \$80,000 Contractual Services ? Companies/Institutions: Subcontract to GTF for developing protocol and SOPs for wild cat conservation = \$40,000 (Output 1.3) Total \$40,000 Contractual Services ? Companies/Institutions: Subcontract to environmental NGOs / academic institutions for developing guidelines for wild cat conservation = \$40,000 (Output 1.4) Total: \$40,000 Contractual Services ? Companies/Institutions: Subcontract to environmental	400,000		400,000			400,000	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Contractual Services ? Company	Contractual Services ? Companies/Institutions: -Subcontract to GTF to develop and operationalize Green Business Platform, business partnership development in landscapes, fund development, grant scheme for community-based conservation projects - \$120,000 (Output 4.1) Total: \$120,000 Contractual Services ? Companies/Institutions: -for coordination of communications task force, development of communications action plan and strategy; incorporate virtual communications tools and building capacity of the PMU/stakeholders/tools for virtual communications as a backstop to avoid delay in project activities in case face-to-face training/workshops are delayed (COVID19 mitigation); conduct national- and landscape-level awareness campaigns; develop awareness materials and monitoring results; - \$80,000		360,000	360,000			360,000	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
International Consultants	International Consultants: International Consultant for MTR/TE - 30 days at \$650/day for both MTR (Y3) and TE (Y5) = \$39,000 (Output 4.5) Total: \$39,000			-	39,000		39,000	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Local Consultants	Local Consultants: KAP consultant for baseline and completion assessments - 10 weeks at \$1000 / week Y2, 10 weeks Y6 = \$20,000 (Output 4.2) Website design consultant - 8 weeks at \$1000/week Y1-2 = \$8,000 (Output 4.4) Case study consultants (writers) - 24 weeks at \$1000/week Y3-6 = \$24,000 (Output 4.4) Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist 8 weeks/Y1 and Y2, and 4 weeks/Year for Y3-Y5 for PMU/executing partner training, local stakeholder consultations and support for Gender Action Plan implementation and monitoring, provide technical support to the PMU to integrate gender into project implementation plans, including annual work plans = 28 weeks @\$1000 (Y1-6) = \$28,000 (Output 4.5); Total: \$92,000		80,000	80,000			80,000	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Local Consultants	Local Consultants: National Consultant for MTR / TE - 30 days at \$200 for MTR (Y3) and 30 days at \$200 for TE (Y5) = \$12,000 (Output 4.5);			-	12,000		12,000	

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	Training, meetings and field training: Consultation meetings for development & implementation of landscape master plans = 8 x 2 landscapes x \$5137 = \$82,200 (Output 1.1) National and regional meetings (5 x \$5400) for development of database, atlas and mobile phone app - \$27,000 (Output 1.2) Consultation meetings to develop Species Recovery Plans for 3 cat species - 3x\$5,667 = \$17,000 (Output 1.2) Consultation meetings for developing protocol and SOPs for wild cat conservation - 4 x \$5,500 = \$22,000 (Output 1.3) Consultation meetings for developing guidelines for wild cat conservation 2 landscapes x \$11,000 = \$22,000 (Output 1.4) Support for training events for State and District Agencies - 8 events x 2 landscapes x \$4000 = \$66,000 (Output 1.5) Total: \$236,200	236,200		236,200			236,200	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	Training, Workshops and Conferences: - National and regional workshops x 5 at \$10,000 for development of Green Business Platform, business partnership development - \$50,000 (Output 4.1) - for communications strategy planning meetings (Y1, Y2) - \$2,000 (Output 4.2) - for transboundary collaboration and action planning meetings / visits (Y3-Y5) - \$30,000 (Output 4.3) - for annual stakeholder meetings \$5,000 x 5 years = \$25,000 (Output 4.4)		107,000	107,000			107,000	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	Training, Workshops and Conferences: - for project Inception stakeholder workshops ? national and state-level \$20,000 (Y1) (Output 4.5) - for post-MTR stakeholder consultation workshop to validate findings and help support finalization and implementation of MTR management response \$10,000 (Y3) (Output 4.5)			-	30,000		30,000	
Travel	Travel: In support of consultations, travel to and within landscapes for Output 1.1 ? Years 1-5 (\$30,000); Output 1.2 Years 1-5 (\$20,000); Output 1.3 Years 2-4 (\$7,500); Output 1.4 ? Years 2-4 (\$7,5000); Output 1.5 Years 1-5 (\$35,000); Total: \$100,000	100,000		100,000			100,000	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Travel	Travel: - for consultations, partnership development in project landscapes - \$10,000 (Output 4.1) - for awareness campaigns, KAP baseline and completion assessments in project landscapes - \$15,000 (Output 4.2) - for transboundary meetings and visits to project landscapes - \$17,000 (Output 4.3) - for annual stakeholders meetings, case study field visits and consultations, presenting results at international conferences - \$21,000 (Output 4.4) - for Communications, Awareness and KM officer - \$12,000 (Output 4.4) - for Gender consultant training and annual field visits - \$10,000 (Output 4.5)		85,000	85,000			85,000	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Travel	Travel: - for MTR (\$5,000) Y3 and TE (\$5,000) Y5 = \$10,000 (Output 4.5); -for annual monitoring of project RF indicators and safeguards-related consultations by M&E and Safeguards Analyst - \$16,000 (Output 4.5):			-	26,000		26,000	
Office Supplies	Supplies for production of project communications and knowledge materials and M&E reports, etc. (all Outputs) Total: \$17,700		17,700	17,700			17,700	MoEFCC
Office Supplies	Supplies: paper, stationery, printer cartridges, personal protective equipment (PPE), etc: National project management at \$1,000 / year over 6 years Total = \$5,900			-		5,900	5,900	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Other Operating Costs	AV & print production costs: audio visual and printed materials in support of: Landscape master plans for two landscapes - \$12,000 (Output 1.1) Atlas on wild cat distribution - \$10,000 (Output 1.2) Species Recovery Plans for 3 cat species - \$15,000 (Output 1.2) Protocol and SOPs on wild cats - \$10,000 (Output 1.3) Guidelines on small cat conservation - \$10,000 (Output 1.4) Training materials - \$20,000 (Output 1.5) Total: \$77,000	77,000		77,000			77,000	MoEFCC

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)					Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Sub-component 1	Sub-component 4					
Other Operating Costs	AV and Printing Production Costs: - for brochures and reports for Green Business Platform and grant scheme - \$10,000 (Output 4.1) - for awareness material printing production - \$15,000 (Output 4.2) - for supporting materials for transboundary site work - \$3000 (Output 4.3) - for KM reports, case studies, stakeholder meeting materials, terminal report - \$29,000 (Output 4.4)		57,000	57,000			57,000	MoEFCC
Other Operating Costs	AV and Printing Production Costs: - for Mid-term and terminal evaluation reports, M&E reports, gender, safeguards reports - \$6,000 (Output 4.5)			-	6,000		6,000	
Other Operating Costs	Professional services: Annual audit for Components 1 and 4 (\$3,000/ year for 6 years). Total \$18,000			-		18,000	18,000	MoEFCC
Grand Total		881,000	766,800	1,647,800	181,000	146,200	1,975,000	



**GEF Budget template: India Wild Cat Landscapes Project - WWF Budget - Components 2,3 and PMC**

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description						Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 2	Component 3	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Outcome 2.1	Outcome 3.1					
Goods	Field Equipient for ecological monitoring of pilots	10,000		10,000			10,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Field gear and equipment for frontline field staff	36,000		36,000			36,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	2 LCD projectors	1,800		1,800			1,800	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Camera traps, Binoculars, GPS, Digiital Bridge Camera, digital cameras, Sherman traps		45,820	45,820			45,820	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	IT equipment for Capacity and Development raising training		6,000	6,000		7,800	13,800	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
Grants/ Sub-grants	HWC Response in targeted Communities		70,000	70,000			70,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Livelihood Development		100,000	100,000			100,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate

<b>Sub-contract to executing partner/ entity</b>	GTF for capacity development and technical assistance for alternative livelihoods and sustainable development, habitat management plans, facilitation of rehabilitation and monitoring	135,000	180,000	315,000		36,000	351,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Local NGOs for LRPs and IPPs	21,000	44,000	65,000			65,000	
<b>Contractual Services - Local consultants</b>				-			-	
	Landscape M&E and Safeguards/IP Specialist	48,000	56,000	104,000	40,000		144,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	National Landscape Safeguards Expert	15,000	27,000	42,000			42,000	
	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist	-	24,000	24,000			24,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Capacity Development Specialist		60,000	60,000			60,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Community-based Wildlife Monitoring Specialist		64,000	64,000			64,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	HWC Response Specialists		104,000	104,000			104,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Paralegal HWC specialists		12,000	12,000			12,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Landscape Conservation and Stakeholder Engagement Officers	107,270	160,000	267,270			267,270	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate

	Ground Surveys, Forest Corridor Rehabilitation Proposals, Facilitation of Rehabilitation and Monitoring	65,000		65,000			65,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Implementation of Habitat Management and Rehabilitation	160,000		160,000			160,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	AV&Print Production	27,000	79,000	106,000			106,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Training Materials			-			-	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Landscape and Communications and Awareness Officer		77,000	77,000			77,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Community Mobilizers		54,540	54,540			54,540	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Monitoring of Safeguards	15,000	25,000	40,000			40,000	
<b>Trainings, Workshops, Meetings</b>				-				
	Meetings, reviews and consultation in support of intervention	27,000		27,000			27,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Legal Awareness workshops	10,500		10,500			10,500	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Training events for frontline staff	40,000		40,000			40,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate

	Sensitization/coordination program on threats	16,000		16,000			16,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Community Training and Awareness		120,000	120,000			120,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Community Monitoring facilitation		10,000	10,000			10,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	Livelihood Capacity Development		40,000	40,000			40,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	SAFE Workshops		35,000	35,000			35,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
<b>Travel</b>	Consultations - to and within Landscapes	67,630	171,640	239,270			239,270	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
						6,000	6,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
<b>Other Operating Costs</b>	<b>Vehicle Rental for each landscape for livelihood development activities</b>	-	50,000	50,000			50,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
	<b>Audit</b>			-		18,000	18,000	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>802,200</b>	<b>1,615,000</b>	<b>2,417,200</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>67,800</b>	<b>2,525,000</b>	

**ANNEX F: (For NGI only) Termsheet**

Instructions. Please submit an finalized termsheet in this section. The NGI Program Call for Proposals provided a template in Annex A of the Call for Proposals that can be used by the Agency. Agencies can use their own termsheets but must add sections on Currency Risk, Co-financing Ratio and Financial Additionality as defined in the template provided in Annex A of the Call for proposals. Termsheets submitted at CEO endorsement stage should include final terms and conditions of the financing.

**ANNEX G: (For NGI only) Reflows**

Instructions. Please submit a reflows table as provided in Annex B of the NGI Program Call for Proposals and the Trustee excel sheet for reflows (as provided by the Secretariat or the Trustee) in the Document Section of the CEO endorsement. The Agency is required to quantify any expected financial return/gains/interests earned on non-grant instruments that will be transferred to the GEF Trust Fund as noted in the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy. Partner Agencies will be required to comply with the reflows procedures established in their respective Financial Procedures Agreement with the GEF Trustee. Agencies are welcomed to provide assumptions that explain expected financial reflow schedules.

**ANNEX H: (For NGI only) Agency Capacity to generate reflows**

Instructions. The GEF Agency submitting the CEO endorsement request is required to respond to any questions raised as part of the PIF review process that required clarifications on the Agency Capacity to manage reflows. This Annex seeks to demonstrate Agencies' capacity and eligibility to administer NGI resources as established in the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy, GEF/C.52/Inf.06/Rev.01, June 9, 2017 (Annex 5).