

GEF-8 PPG REQUEST FOR GBFF PROJECTS

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General Project Information

Project Title:

Advancing ABS implementation in Cambodia

Region:

Cambodia

GEF Project ID:

11604

Country(ies):

Cambodia

Type of Project:

GBFF

GEF Agency(ies):

UNDP

GEF Agency Project ID:

9985

Anticipated Executing Entity(s):

Ministry of Environment

Anticipated Executing Type:

Government

GEF Focal Area (s):

Biodiversity

Submission Date:

3/29/2024

Project Sector (CCM Only)

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Biodiversity, Supplementary Protocol to the CBD, Access to Genetic Resources Benefit Sharing, Species, Animal Genetic Resources, Plant Genetic Resources, Influencing models, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Stakeholders, Indigenous Peoples, Private Sector, Large corporations, SMEs, Local Communities, Civil Society, Academia, Non-Governmental Organization, Type of Engagement, Partnership, Consultation, Information Dissemination, Communications, Awareness Raising, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Gender-sensitive indicators, Gender results areas, Access and control over natural resources, Access to benefits and services, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Capacity Development, Knowledge Exchange, Learning, Targeted Research

Type of Trust Fund:

GBFF

Project Duration (Months)

30

GEF Project Financing: (a)

1,182,877.00

GEF Project Non-Grant: (b)

0.00

Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c)

112,373.00

Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant: (d)

0.00

Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d)

1,295,250.00

Total Co-financing:

0.00

PPG Amount: (e)

50,000.00

PPG Agency Fee(s): (f)

4,750.00

PPG total Amount: (e+f)

Total GEF Resources: (a+b+c+d+e+f)

54,750.00

1,350,000.00

Project Tags:

Support IPLC, GBF Target 3, GBF Target 4, GBF Target 13, GBF Target 21, GBF Target 22

Indicative Project Overview

To advance ABS implementation in Cambodia for conservation of biological diversity and equitable sharing of benefits from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.

Project Components

1. Regulatory and institutional framework

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GBFF
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
340,000.00	

Project Outcomes:

1. Governance framework for ABS strengthened.

As measured by:

ABS guidelines and regulatory instruments adopted and operational.

Project Outputs:

1.1 ABS regulations and institutional mechanisms operationalized.

1.2 ABS data management strengthened.

2. Capacity building

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GBFF
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
320,000.00	

Project Outcomes:

2. National, sub-national, and community capacities for ABS implementation built and strengthened.

As measured by:

Number of beneficiaries (sub-national institutions and IPLCs) with strengthened capacities on ABS implementation.

Project Outputs:

- 2.1 Capacities of national and sub-national institutions, including the target communities to implement ABS regulations and procedures enhanced.
- 2.2 Capacities of IPLCs to engage in ABS implementation enhanced.

3. Outreach and demonstration

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GBFF
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
360,000.00	

Project Outcomes:

- 3.1 Multi-Stakeholder Awareness and engagement on ABS implementation strengthened.

As measured by number of knowledge products disseminated and number of beneficiaries from ABS demonstration project.

Project Outputs:

- 3.1 Understanding of the ABS regime and the values of traditional knowledge associated with genetic and biological resources enhanced.
- 3.2 ABS demonstration project established.

M&E

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GBFF
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
55,343.00	

Project Outcomes:

- 3.2 Project-level monitoring and evaluation, in compliance with UNDP and mandatory GEF-specific monitoring and evaluation requirements.

Project Outputs:

Inception Workshop and Report, Annual GEF Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs), Reports of Board Meetings, monitoring of GEF core Indicators, Gender Action Plan and Stakeholder Engagement Plan; Independent Terminal Evaluation.

Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
1. Regulatory and institutional framework	340,000.00	

2. Capacity building	320,000.00	
3. Outreach and demonstration	360,000.00	
M&E	55,343.00	
Subtotal	1,075,343.00	0.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)	107,534.00	
Total Project Cost (\$)	1,182,877.00	0.00

Please provide justification

PROJECT CONCEPT DESCRIPTION

Project Concept Description (No more than seven pages total, including 5 pages of text maximum. Concepts longer than 7 pages will be returned. Please note the portal entry will be limited to up to 19,400 characters of text and up to two figures.)

Project Concept Description

Project rationale

Baseline

Cambodia's geographic location, long history and complex topographical, ecological, and social features have made it rich in biodiversity, genetic resources and traditional knowledge. While diverse climatic conditions diversified the country's flora with both tropical and temperate plants, thousands of years of agricultural practice by local communities enriched its crop genetic resources. In 2000, 8,260 plant species were found in Cambodia, 10% of which are endemic. These include 800 known medicinal plants that make the country attractive for bioprospecting, such as Mmoem Tthnam Cchin (a perennial herb in the Zingiberaceae family), Rromdeng Prey (*Alpinia conchigera*), Rromeit Prey (*Curcuma* sp.), Kkravanh (*Amomum kravanh*), Mreah Prov Phnom (*Dysoxylum lourieri*), Dey Khla (*Gardenia angkorensis*), Tepongrou (*Cinnamomum cambodianum*) and Vohr Romiet (*Coscinium usitatum*). In particular, the mountainous upland areas hold a wealth of traditional knowledge on nature conservation, health and wellbeing, sustainable farming practices, and plant and animal species utilization and management. They host approximately 1.7 million people (11.68% of the country's total population), of whom more than 200,000 are from indigenous minorities who have lived for many centuries in harmony with their natural environment.

Cambodia's rapid economic growth and transition to a market-oriented economy are increasingly straining its natural resources and habitats, and therefore pose a threat to biological diversity. Several native medicinal plants are facing extinction and are no longer available in sufficient quantity for use by IPLCs. 324 species of native medicinal plants are considered as potentially threatened – or may otherwise become vulnerable in the longer term. The key drivers of biodiversity loss include, among others, land use changes, overexploitation and unsustainable use of wild plants and animals, overharvesting of forest products, pollution and climate change. Also, the traditional knowledge of the local and indigenous communities that is associated with genetic resources is disappearing rapidly in hand with the changing lifestyles.

The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has been implementing environmental policies and governance reforms to transform the economic development model into one that is more sustainable and better equipped to simultaneously ensure the needs of people and ecosystems. This includes putting in place strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources for socio-economic development. In terms of Access to Benefit Sharing (ABS), Cambodia signed the Nagoya Protocol in February 2012 and became a party three years later with the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSA) designated as the Competent National Authority (CNA). The government started allocating annual budget for capacity building of staff working in the ABS Office and some initial provisions on ABS were included in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) in 2016 and the Code of Environment and Natural Resources in 2022. More importantly, it was during the period 2019-2022, through a partnership with UNDP and GEF (GEF Project ID #5769), that the RGC finally put in place a national legislation on ABS and established the associated mechanisms.

The main achievement so far is the adoption of a sub-decree in 2023, which stipulates the formal procedures and requirements for fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, their derivatives, or associated traditional knowledge in Cambodia. It includes detailed administrative instructions, such as how to apply for ABS permits and level of fines for non-compliance. It is therefore a first step towards establishing a clear national mechanism to implement the Nagoya Protocol and to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of its components. However, the operationalization of the sub-decree and other ABS-related interventions is facing significant challenges.

Problems the project will address

1) Regulatory and institutional challenges. A number of Prakas (ministerial or inter-ministerial decisions/proclamations signed by the relevant Ministers), forms and guidance documents to implement the provisions stipulated in the sub-decree, especially on the administrative and permitting system, have been drafted but not formally adopted yet. Examples include bioprospecting contract guidelines and models, bio-community protocol guidelines, and Prakas on the establishment of checkpoints to monitor the utilization of genetic resources. In terms of institutional arrangements, while the sub-decree clearly outlines the role of the National Focal Point (NFP) and the CNA, designations of organizations and officials responsible for implementing at sub-national level are not in place yet. Moreover, a financing mechanism to manage ABS related revenues and funds needs to be established. For the data, a secure and confidential database for

information related to Cambodia's genetic resources and traditional knowledge to ensure their protection is yet to be developed. This is also linked to the fact that current volume of studies assessing genetic resources in the country is limited.

2) Capacity challenges. ABS is a complex subject, requiring significant capacity building efforts at different levels and across different stakeholder groups. While the Ministry of Environment and, to some extent, members of the inter-ministerial ABS sub-technical working group, have in the past few years acquired sufficient knowledge of ABS related issues, capacity building activities are yet to meaningfully reach provincial level officials, research institutions, NGOs and IPLCs. For example, community-level knowledge on developing bio-community protocols and engaging with potential buyers is limited if not non-existent.

3) Awareness and stakeholder engagement challenges. The RGC has developed a communication strategy on ABS, but this has not been fully operationalized. The Cambodia Clearing House Mechanism website was developed (<https://chm-ncsd.moe.gov.kh/>) and is active, however it still lacks relevant ABS information. This is also limiting the possibility to reach the international and national private sector and hence the opportunities to stimulate interests in ABS deals in Cambodia. Linked to the second challenge above, more efforts are required to engage other ministries to ensure their cooperation and policy coherence, and create awareness with various segments of the population, also noting that ABS is still a relatively new topic for the public.

Goal and objectives of the project

Against this background, the goal of the project is to support the RGC to fully operationalize the ABS regulations and institutional mechanisms, as well as advance the implementation of ABS related interventions through a whole-of-society approach, especially focusing on empowering IPLCs, women, children and youth.

Justification for the project intervention

The RGC is committed to biodiversity conservation and, as part to these efforts, to advance ABS implementation in line with the Nagoya Protocol. Under the current baseline scenario, there are governance, capacity and stakeholder engagement challenges that this project will help address to support this agenda, building on the achievements from the previous GEF-funded ABS project and its recommendations.

Expected results including the Global Environmental Benefits

-

The project will result in a stronger enabling environment for an equitable sharing of benefits from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge between the RGC, private sector and research establishments and owners of these resources and traditional knowledge (including IPLCs). It will also result in enhanced capacities and collaborations across stakeholders to reduce biodiversity loss and conserve natural resources. Moreover, the project will increase Cambodia's compliance with the Nagoya Protocol and contribution to the Global Biodiversity Framework (in particular, Goal C and target 13).

The project will deliver results against core indicator 4.1 (Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity), especially deriving from the implementation of the ABS demonstration project. An exact quantification of the target will be carried out during the PPG phase, once the specific area for the demonstration activities will be determined. The project will also contribute to core Indicator 11, with at least 5,000 (50% men, 50% women, approximately) people directly benefiting from GEF-financed investments. This is mainly IPLCs but also government personnel.

Due to resource constraints, some of the activities (e.g. capacity building, research, demonstration) will need to be limited to one or two provinces of Cambodia. However, UNDP will seek additional partnerships to expand interventions to other provinces.

Project description

Theory of change

The theory of change underpinning this project can be briefly articulated as follows.

- IF the governance framework for ABS is strengthened through the formalization, adoption and roll-out of relevant regulations and measures.
- IF knowledge of Cambodia's genetic resources is strengthened and there is a secure system in place to manage and share such information.
- IF capacities and knowledge of government (at both national and sub-national levels) and relevant stakeholders (including IPLCs) regarding ABS procedures and respective roles are enhanced.
- IF the partnership and coordination between the Ministry of Environment and other line ministries is strengthened and the collaboration between these authorities and non-government stakeholders is enhanced through effective outreach and dialogues, and demonstration of benefit sharing agreements.
- IF the above conditions are achieved through an inclusive multi-stakeholder approach (also recognizing the role of IPLCs and women as agents of change), in line with international environment conventions, and benefitting from regional and global ABS networking.

- THEN Cambodia will have a stronger system in place to protect its biological diversity ensuring equitable sharing of benefits from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.
- BECAUSE the regulatory, institutional, capacity and collaboration constraints for effective ABS implementation have been addressed.

The exact scope of project components and activities will be defined during the PPG phase, also to maximise the use of available financial resources, but a brief description is included below.

Project components and activities

Component 1: Regulatory and institutional framework on ABS

The project will support the RGC to:

- Review and formalize the draft ABS roadmap, guidelines and regulatory instruments, and prepare for their roll-out at both the national and sub-national levels (e.g., prakas on the check points establishment for genetic resources use monitoring);
- Assess the need for additional complementary legislation and measures (e.g., model contracts, code of conduct, verification procedures) that can ensure ABS benefits to communities and put in place verification mechanisms for the movement of valuable genetic resources to avoid unauthorized access (biopiracy);
- Review and formalize the ABS institutional framework, with focus on sub-national administration;
- Complete the design of an ABS financing mechanism that is tailored to the Cambodian context while meeting international benchmarks in line with the Nagoya Protocol;
- Carry out research on genetic resources and traditional knowledge in one or two selected provinces with presence of IPLCs;
- Advance the development of a secure and confidential database for information related to Cambodia's genetic resources and traditional knowledge – this could be a stand-alone database or it could be linked to existing digital platforms such as the Cambodia Environment Management and Information System managed by the Ministry of Environment;
- Review and upgrade the Clearing House Mechanism in liaison with global ABS Clearing House processes or the alike to ensure alignment and technical/resource support.

Component 2: Capacity building for ABS implementation

The project will support the RGC to:

- Review and update ABS related training and knowledge material;
- Provide refresher capacity building sessions to the Ministry of Environment and members of the ABS sub-technical working groups, especially considering global developments (e.g., the GBF; response to pandemics etc.);
- Organize capacity building sessions for relevant sub-national administration and officials, focusing on ABS contract monitoring and checkpoint work. Depending on budget availability, this support will be provided in at least 2 provinces. Create a network among subnational authorities to exchange best practices and lessons discovered; and
- Provide capacity building support to targeted IPLCs in at least 2 provinces on development of bio-community protocols, engagement and negotiations with private sector, and assistance with the technical aspects of recording genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.

Component 3: Outreach and demonstration on ABS implementation

The project will support the RGC to:

- Conduct outreach to international and national private sector to stimulate interest in ABS deals in Cambodia;
- Develop and roll-out one high-profile ABS demonstration project with strong emphasis on IPLCs benefits;
- Plan and conduct awareness-raising campaign(s) on ABS using different media;
- Establish collaboration with academic institutions and non-governmental organizations to incorporate ABS topics into outreach initiatives; and
- Facilitate knowledge exchange and networking at the regional and global levels.

Stakeholders

The design and implementation of the project will be led by the Ministry of Environment (MoE), which hosts the General Secretariat of the National Council for Sustainable Development (i.e., the CNA) and has the overall mandate on ABS matters. MoE will engage different stakeholders based on their roles and interests related to ABS. At the government level, MoE will cooperate with other line ministries (including through the ABS sub-technical working group) and relevant sub-national authorities and officials to ensure buy-in and collaboration, and the requisite capacities, for implementation of ABS regulations and administrative procedures. MoE will also liaise with academic institutions, especially for ABS related research and data collection, as well as international and local NGOs involved in biodiversity conservation and IPLCs engagement,

to receive inputs and support on ABS implementation. MoE will also engage the private sector (e.g., pharmaceutical and cosmetic companies), following appropriate due diligence process, not only to create awareness on ABS but also to facilitate the establishment of deals and projects, especially with IPLCs. IPLCs will play a key role in the project, especially as beneficiaries of capacity building activities and the establishment of ABS demonstration projects. The specific academic institutions, NGOs and IPLCs that will be engaged during the project will be defined during the PPG phase.

Specific Action Areas the project is aligned to

The project will contribute primarily to GBFF Action Area 8 (Capacity building and implementation support for biosafety, handling of biotechnology and access and benefit sharing, including under the Nagoya and Cartagena protocols) and Action Area 2 (Support to IPLCs stewardship and governance of lands, territories, and waters). The project will indirectly contribute to other GBFF Action Areas as well, with the exclusion of Action Area 7 (Invasive Alien Species).

GBFF eligibility (criteria)

Potential to generate GEBs. The scope of the project (ABS) and the nature of interventions (mostly at the upstream level) have the potential to generate GEBs at scale directly (e.g., through implementation of ABS demonstration project) and indirectly (e.g. as a result of the operationalization of the ABS regulations and procedures). The project will generate GEBs under indicators 4.1 (area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity) and 11 (people benefitting from GEF-financed investments). Considering the complexity of ABS, the exact quantification will be carried out during the PPG phase.

Alignment of the project with the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) and/or National Biodiversity Finance Plans or similar instruments to identify national and/or regional priorities. The project is aligned to the NBSAP adopted in 2016 (currently under review), especially theme 15 which has the following strategic objectives: strengthen communication, education and public awareness on ABS; develop and implement a national ABS policy and legislation; enhance the enabling environment for the development of ABS legislation and the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS and related legislation. The project also is aligned to other relevant national legislation and policies, including the Environment and Natural Resources Code (Article 31. Implementation of international instruments concerning biodiversity) and Circular Strategy for the Environment (in particular, Strategy 2: Green; Priority 2: Enhancing biodiversity conservation; Priority 3: Strengthening the conservation and management of natural and cultural resources by expanding forest cover and promoting the value of natural heritage, culture and traditions).

Level of policy coherence and coordination across multiple ministries, agencies, the private sector and civil society. The project will promote policy coherence and coordination for ABS implementation across line ministries leveraging and strengthening existing institutional mechanisms such as the ABS sub-technical working group. The project will also engage academic institutions and NGOs during implementation, e.g. in conducting research on genetic resources, implementing capacity building activities, and supporting engagement of IPLCs. The project will also conduct outreach to the private sector on ABS investment opportunities.

Mobilization of private sector and philanthropies' resources. This is at the core of ABS implementation, to ensure that exploration and use of biodiversity for commercially valuable genetic and biochemical resources is paid for and resources are shared in an equitable and fair manner. Beyond the general outreach to the private sector, the project will facilitate the establishment of at least one ABS demonstration project which is expected to mobilize funding from the private sector.

Engagement with and support to IPLCs. IPLCs are expected to play a key role in the project, especially as beneficiaries of capacity building activities and the establishment of ABS demonstration projects.

Core Indicators

Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	2,500			
Male	2,500			
Total	5,000	0	0	0

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

The project focuses on governance, capacities and stakeholder engagement, i.e. mostly upstream type of interventions. The impact will therefore be at the national level. However, we can assume that specific areas of the landscape targeted by the ABS demonstration project will be under improved practices, hence the selection of core indicator 4. The estimation of the hectares will be conducted during the PPG phase. The project will also have direct beneficiaries as a result of the capacity development activities and the ABS demonstration project, hence the selection of core indicator 11. Based on the desk assessment of the ABS related technical staff and the community members leading the ABS work in the selected sites, the core indicator 11 target was estimated.

ANNEX A: PROJECT FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

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

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	GEF Project Grant(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total GEF Financing (\$)
UNDP	GBFF	Cambodia	Biodiversity	GBFF Action Area 8	749,377.00	71,191.00	820,568.00
UNDP	GBFF	Cambodia	Biodiversity	GBFF Action Area 2	433,500.00	41,182.00	474,682.00
Total GEF Resources (\$)					1,182,877.00	112,373.00	1,295,250.00

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Is Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount (\$)

50000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

4750

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non- Grant	PPG (\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total PPG Funding(\$)
UNDP	GBFF	Cambodia	Biodiversity	GBFF Action Area 8	Grant	33,500.00	3,182.00	36,682.00
UNDP	GBFF	Cambodia	Biodiversity	GBFF Action Area 2	Grant	16,500.00	1,568.00	18,068.00
Total PPG Amount (\$)						50,000.00	4,750.00	54,750.00

Please provide justification

Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

(Only for Multi-Trust Fund projects where GEF TF is included)

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Sources of Funds	Total(\$)
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		Regional/ Global			
Total GEF Resources					0.00

Indicative Action Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Co-financing(\$)
GBFF Action Area 8	GBFF	749,377.00	
GBFF Action Area 2	GBFF	433,500.00	
Total Project Cost		1,182,877.00	0.00

Amount of resource allocated to support actions by IPLCs for the conservation, restoration, sustainable use and management of biodiversity:

Amount
360,000.00

Indicative Co-financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
Total Co-financing				0.00

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

GEF Agency(ies) Certification

GEF Agency Type	Name	Date	Project Contact Person	Phone	Email
GEF Agency Coordinator	Nancy Bennet	3/29/2024		+12129065044	nancy.bennet@undp.org
Project Coordinator	Bipin Pokharel	3/29/2024			bipin.pokharel@undp.org

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

Name	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
San Vanty	GEF OFP Cambodia	Permanent Secretary of State, Ministry of Environment	3/27/2024