

GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

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General Project Information

Project Title

Inclusive Conservation, Restoration, and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Priority Ecoregions

Region

Argentina

GEF Project ID

11394

Country(ies)

Argentina

Type of Project

FSP

GEF Agency(ies):

UNDP

GEF Agency ID

9523

Executing Partner

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development

Executing Partner Type

Government

GEF Focal Area (s)

Biodiversity

Submission Date

10/17/2023

Project Sector (CCM Only)

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Biodiversity, Species, Invasive Alien Species, Wildlife for Sustainable Development, Biomes, Grasslands, Temperate Forests, Wetlands, Financial and Accounting, Conservation Finance, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Community Based Natural Resource Mngt, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Productive Landscapes, Climate Change, Climate Change Mitigation, Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use, Forest, Forest and Landscape Restoration, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Income Generating Activities, Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands, Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Livelihoods, Sustainable Forest, Ecosystem Approach, Influencing models, Deploy innovative financial instruments, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Stakeholders, Communications, Awareness Raising, Public Campaigns, Type of Engagement, Consultation, Participation, Information Dissemination, Indigenous Peoples, Private Sector, Financial intermediaries and market facilitators, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Local Communities, Civil Society, Academia, Community Based Organization, Non-Governmental Organization, Beneficiaries, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Gender results areas, Access to benefits and services, Capacity Development, Participation and leadership, Access and control over natural resources, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Innovation, Learning, Knowledge Generation

Type of Trust Fund

GET

Project Duration (Months)

84

GEF Project Grant: (a)

5,279,452.00

GEF Project Non-Grant: (b)

0.00

Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c)

501,548.00

Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant (d)

0.00

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

Total Co-financing

5,781,000.00	39,200,000.00
PPG Amount: (e)	PPG Agency Fee(s): (f)
200,000.00	19,000.00
PPG total amount: (e+f)	Total GEF Resources: (a+b+c+d+e+f)
219,000.00	6,000,000.00
Project Tags	
CBIT: No NGI: No SGP: No Innovation: No	

Project Summary

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

Argentina is one of the world’s megadiverse countries, with 18 ecoregions: 15 continental, 2 oceanic and the Antarctic region. These are the High Andes; Puna; High Monte; Yungas Forest; Dry Chaco; Humid Chaco; Upper Parana Atlantic Forest; Ibera Wetlands; Plains and Shrubs; Parana Delta and Flooded Savanna; Espinal; Pampas; Low Monte; Patagonian Steppe; Patagonian Forests; South Atlantic Islands; Argentine Sea; and Antarctica [\[1,2\]](#). Of these, eight have been classified amongst the highest priorities for conservation both nationally (National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan-NBSAP) and regionally [\[3\]](#). In addition to their global importance, these 18 ecoregions provide key ecosystem services for a wide range of productive sectors in the country, especially for agriculture, livestock, fishing, and for other regional economies that together play a leading role in the national economy.¹

The project aims to improve biodiversity conservation, restoration, and sustainable management of ecosystems in the following priority ecoregions: Dry Chaco, Humid Chaco, Upper Parana Atlantic Forest, Parana Delta and Flooded Savanna, Espinal, Low Monte, and Patagonian Andean Forest. The project area harbors many endemic, rare, and threatened species of flora and fauna. This area is also vulnerable to climate change (CC), invasive alien species (IAS), and damaging human activities, such as deforestation, overgrazing and unsustainable land use, mining, and agricultural practices, which result in soil erosion, loss of soil nutrients, changes to the water cycle, and disruptions to the carbon and nitrogen cycles. The project will address these problems and barriers by strengthening the governance framework, policies and capacities for conservation, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity in priority ecoregions (Component 1); applying policies, regulations, plans, maps, and guides, and demonstrating inclusive conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity to enhance connectivity and ecosystem integrity (Component 2); fostering innovative financial mechanisms, incentives, and market access for biodiversity-based productive activities (Component 3); and managing knowledge effectively (Component 4). The project will generate global environmental benefits by restoring 19,832 ha of land and ecosystems, improving practices on 38,080 ha of landscape (excluding protected areas), and benefiting approximately 5,000 people (of which 53% are women). The project will also be innovative and transformative by establishing the first comprehensive National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity, which will provide

guidance and protocols for new models of conservation and restoration that reconcile the protection of biodiversity with its sustainable use in diverse ecosystems. The project will also leverage the support and resources from various sources and partners, such as national authorities, regional and local authorities, local communities, civil society organizations, private sector actors, research, and academic institutions, etc., who will be involved in the governance and management of priority ecoregions, as well as benefit from the project interventions and outcomes.

^[1] Spanish equivalents: Altos Andes; Puna; Monte de Sierras y Bolsones; Selva de las Yungas; Chaco Seco; Chaco Húmedo; Selva Paranaense; Esteros del Iberá; Campos y Malezales; Delta e Islas del Paraná; Espinal; Pampas; Monte de Llanuras y Mesetas; Estepa Patagónica; Bosques Patagónicos; Islas del Atlántico Sur, Mar Argentino y la Antártida.

^[2] Burkart et al., 1999

^[3] Dinerstein et al., 1995

Indicative Project Overview

Project Objective

To conserve biodiversity and restore degraded ecosystems through inclusive nature-based solutions that foster connectivity, ecosystem services, and the sustainable use of biodiversity products.

Project Components

Component 1: Strengthening the national and provincial governance framework

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
1,005,610.00	6,300,000.00

Outcome:

1.1 Strengthened governance for ecosystems conservation, restoration and sustainable use measured by:

a) # inclusive conservation and restoration modalities^[4] (one per ecoregion).

b) % implementation of national restoration plan for BD.

c) % change in capacity of key stakeholders to implement BD restoration practices (as measured with the UNDP capacity development scorecard and/or survey).

(Indicators and targets to be confirmed during the PPG phase).

[4] During the PPG, specific models or modalities will be designed per ecoregion to prescribe appropriate actions to be taken for conservation and restoration, recommended species, etc.

Output:

1.1.1 Intersectoral and multilevel/interprovincial coordination and governance mechanisms strengthened and operational.

1.1.2 Modelling and mapping of degraded areas, invasive alien species (IAS), and ecosystem services to identify priority ecosystems to be restored.

1.1.3 Technical guidelines, manuals, standards, and norms for inclusive ecological restoration developed, validated, and adopted by ecoregion.

1.1.4 Set of national and local workshops and training programs for key stakeholders for the inclusive restoration of ecosystems.

1.1.5 A comprehensive National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity developed and agreed with key local and national stakeholders for national upscaling.

Component 2: Promoting the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
2,011,220.00	18,062,300.00

Outcome:

2.1 Enhanced ecosystem integrity and connectivity through conservation, restoration, and sustainable use practices in priority ecosystems measured by:

- a) # land users (including women and indigenous peoples [IPs]) who have adopted inclusive conservation, restoration, and sustainable use practices, by type of practice.
- b) # ha of land restored.
- c) # ha of landscapes under improved practices (excl. PA).
- d) # OECMs created, minimum 1 or 2.

Output:

2.1.1 Inclusive conservation and restoration approaches and operational modalities applied in priority ecosystems.

2.1.2 Technical support for indigenous peoples and local communities, including women, on the sustainable use of biodiversity for BD-based productive activities, including compliance with certification schemes.

2.1.3 Replicable models of BD-friendly products/value-chains developed and strengthened in each priority ecoregion.

2.1.4 Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECM) that promote restoration and BD-based production approved as a result of the technical training and implementation of the models from Outputs 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

2.1.5 Remote sensing technologies and geographical information systems monitor an increase in connectivity from BD conservation, restoration, and sustainable use practices.

Component 3: Developing innovative financial mechanisms, incentives, and market access for biodiversity-based production

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
1,508,415.00	10,600,000.00

Outcome:

3.1 Innovative financing for BD-based production piloted and implemented with a gender-responsive approach measured by:

- a) # Financial mechanisms.
- b) # strategic alliances to commercialize products.
- c) # IPLCs trained in how to access financial mechanisms.

Output:

3.1.1 LGA Compensation Fund designed and implemented for ecosystem restoration.

3.1.2 Financial mechanisms for gender-sensitive and sustainable use value chains for BD-based products contribute to the sustainable use of biodiversity.

3.1.3 Certification seals for nature-positive BD-based products (generated through sustainable management and landscape restoration practices).

3.1.4 Strategic alliances with distribution platforms and commercial groups to commercialize products (see certification output above).

3.1.5 Traceability system guides for biodiversity use.

3.1.6 Targeted financial training program for IPLCs and other stakeholders facilitate access to financial mechanisms.

Component 4: Developing a knowledge management system

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
302,805.00	1,185,516.00

Outcome:

4.1 Knowledge of project outcomes, lessons learned, and best practices documented and disseminated measured by:

% increase in stakeholder awareness (survey).

Output:

- | |
|---|
| <p>4.1.1 Gender sensitive communication and stakeholder engagement strategy and plan.</p> <p>4.1.2 Information/knowledge management system developed and made accessible to stakeholders.</p> <p>4.1.3 Roadmap and materials for scaling of successful project solutions.</p> |
|---|

M&E

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
200,000.00	1,185,517.00

Outcome:

Monitoring and Evaluation of project impact and adaptive management measured by:

- 100% of the M&E targets are met.
- Satisfactory or better quality ratings on PIR, MTR, and TE.

Output:

A gender-responsive project M&E system using data disaggregated by sex, age and ethnicity.

Project Implementation Review (PIR), Mid-term Review (MTR) and Terminal Evaluation (TE).

Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
Component 1: Strengthening the national and provincial governance framework	1,005,610.00	6,300,000.00
Component 2: Promoting the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity	2,011,220.00	18,062,300.00

Component 3: Developing innovative financial mechanisms, incentives, and market access for biodiversity-based production	1,508,415.00	10,600,000.00
Component 4: Developing a knowledge management system	302,805.00	1,185,516.00
M&E	200,000.00	1,185,517.00
Subtotal	5,028,050.00	37,333,333.00
Project Management Cost	251,402.00	1,866,667.00
Total Project Cost (\$)	5,279,452.00	39,200,000.00

Please provide justification

PROJECT OUTLINE

A. PROJECT RATIONALE

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

The Republic of Argentina is a federal country made up of 23 provinces and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires (CABA). With an extensive continental and marine territory^[13], Argentina has vast natural, cultural, and economic diversity, and is one of the world's megadiverse countries, with 18 ecoregions: 15 continental, 2 oceanic and the Antarctic region. These are the High Andes; Puna; High Monte; Yungas Forest; Dry Chaco; Humid Chaco; Upper Parana Atlantic Forest; Ibera Wetlands; Plains and Shrubs; Parana Delta and Flooded Savanna; Espinal; Pampas; Low Monte; Patagonian Steppe; Patagonian Forests; South Atlantic Islands; Argentine Sea; and Antarctica^[24]^[3]⁵. Of these, eight have been classified amongst the highest priorities for conservation both nationally (National Biodiversity Strategy and Plan of Action-NBSAP) and regionally^[4]⁶. Five are exclusive or semi-exclusive to Argentina and house a significant number of endemic species. The Argentine Sea Ecoregion includes coastal environments considered unique due to the influence of the cold Malvinas currents along the south coast of Buenos Aires province^[5]⁷. Arid, semi-arid, sub-humid and dry ecosystems cover 75% of the national territory. Collectively referred to as drylands, these ecosystems include dry forest, scrub, grasslands, high altitude deserts, and Andean wetlands. These 18 ecoregions provide key ecosystem services for a wide range of productive sectors in the country, especially for agriculture, livestock, fishing, and for other regional economies that together play a leading role in the national economy.

Threats

A series of threats and environmental problems have been observed in different provinces throughout Argentina. The Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS) has noted the advance of deforestation on the one hand, and the climatic incidence of long dry periods and landslides in the rainy season on the other. Villages and cities with sparse trees are vulnerable to dust storms advancing over them, due to lack of adequate coverage. This brings about an imbalance in nature, due to a loss of small soil particles, which is evidenced by degradation of the texture and structure of the soil, with loss of organic matter, nutrients, microbiota and macrobiota, which are important for the conservation of biodiversity and the ecosystem services they provide (also referred to as the Contributions of Nature to People, which encompass the concept of goods and ecosystem services, but are much broader and recognize the different types of relationships that different social groups establish with nature). These dust storms affect people and animals, causing health problems as the respiratory tract and vision are affected. Furthermore, CC and the consequential displacement or destruction of native species make Argentina more vulnerable to IAS.

Habitat loss due to changes in vegetation and land use (deforestation and fragmentation).

In Argentina, the conversion of natural ecosystems to agricultural and livestock purposes has consequences such as the loss of habitat and biodiversity, the alteration of biotic interactions and biogeochemical processes (water, carbon, and nutrient cycles), the reduction of ecosystems' capacity to supply vital services and landscape transformation^[6]⁸. This transformation has been particularly important in native forest environments, such as the Chaco, the Atlantic Forest, and the Yungas, where it is estimated that more than 1,145,000 hectares have been deforested in recent years^[7]⁹. Among the main drivers of deforestation are the incorporation of new technologies (transgenic crops and no-tillage) and the high relative prices of agricultural products that produced a growth in Pampean agriculture and its expansion to the Parque Chaqueño region^[8]¹⁰.

In the Patagonian Andean Forest, Monte and Espinal regions (Caldén district), the main cause of the transformation of native forests are forest fires, some of which are propitiated for cattle ranching.[9]¹¹

Livestock production has also been displaced to marginal areas. In the Pampas region, the incorporation of high productivity drought-resistant pastures has expanded and intensified in the Chaco region. Deforestation and implementation of poor livestock management practices have favored processes of desertification and land degradation in Argentina[10]¹², mainly in the dry regions of the country (i.e., Dry Chaco and Patagonian Steppe ecoregions). Land degradation and desertification result in the loss of biodiversity and a progressive decline in productivity, in turn reducing the quality of life of the rural population[11]¹³. Furthermore, wetlands have undergone alterations in their structure and functioning derived from changes in productive systems and urban activities, among other causes[12]¹⁴. This situation has sparked a national debate regarding the necessary measures for their conservation, rational use, and restoration.

Mining activities can also contribute to landscape fragmentation, altering the natural connectivity of ecosystems and habitats. Excavations, road construction, and other infrastructure development associated with mining can create barriers that disrupt the movement of wildlife and the flow of ecological processes. As a result, collaborating with experts in landscape ecology and implementing strategic mitigation and restoration measures is crucial to minimize the negative impacts of mining-induced fragmentation and promote the restoration of functional landscapes.

Animal and plant species associated with these environments today face serious threats to their long-term conservation, and generate the need to implement strategies at the national level for their study and preservation. The threat of habitat loss due to changes in vegetation and land use will be addressed by the project through the incorporation of sustainable management practices into ecosystem restoration plans.

Overexploitation and degradation of natural resources

Over-exploitation of natural resources persists and continues to increase. It occurs in various ways: unsustainable extraction of valuable timber species, hunting of endangered species, overgrazing of grasslands by domestic animals without stock control or rotation possibilities, and illegal trade[13]¹⁵ in biodiversity and its products. Furthermore, the lack of a systematized scientific-technological foundation to ensure the sustainable use of biodiversity favors the misuse and over-exploitation of flora and fauna. For example, the extraction of palm heart (*Euterpe edulis*) has been deemed unsustainable due to high market demand without science-based guidelines regarding the proper rates and periods of harvest and no incentives to promote the sustainable use of the species.

Vulnerability to invasive alien species (IAS)

In turn, the over-exploitation of native flora and fauna acts as a potential gateway for invasive alien species and diseases (Rosen and Smith 2010), which not only present a significant threat to biodiversity conservation[14]¹⁶ but also generate negative economic and social implications[15]¹⁷. Many of the species of wild flora and fauna considered vulnerable within the Argentine territory register one or more invasive alien species among their main threats. In the province of Buenos Aires, the wild pig (*Sus scrofa*) negatively impacts populations of the Pampas deer (*Ozotoceros bezoarticus*). In the province of Santa Cruz, the American mink (*Neovison vison*) is a central factor in the decline of the hooded grebe (*Podiceps gallardoi*). The rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) has been attributed to predation pressure on entire groups of native amphibians and fish throughout the country, such as the naked characin (*Gymnocharacinus bergii*), endemic to Arroyo Valcheta in the province of Río Negro. It is also responsible for altering the habitat of the hooded grebe in Patagonia. The herbivory of the red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) affects the cypress of the mountain range (*Austrocedrus chilensis*) and the coihue (*Nothofagus*

dombeyi) and can also favor the advance of invasive conifers. In northwestern Argentina, the tapir (*Tapirus terrestris*) competes with the cow (*Bos taurus*) and other exotic animals for domestic use.^{[16]¹⁸}

The proposed project will address this threat through ecosystem restoration plans that include lessons learned and best practices for IAS management and control, as well as provide technical bases for the sustainable use, extraction, and commercialization of biodiversity-friendly products.

Vulnerability to climate change (CC).

The synergistic effects between climate change and other threats represent a major problem for biodiversity and associated ecosystems^{[17]¹⁹}. Current projections show: 1. Increase in average temperature by 0.5 - 1^o C in the short term and more than 3^o C in the long term, with a maximum increase in the Argentine Northwest (NOA) and central Patagonia. 2. Decrease in precipitation by 10-20% in the west of northern and central Patagonia and the mountain area of Mendoza, with an increase of 10-20% in the center and east of the country. 3. Increase in extremes of high temperatures and precipitation for most regions (increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events). The Andean and Patagonian regions present the greatest environmental risk with the main impacts associated with the retreat of glaciers, increases in water stress and changes in the dynamics of ecosystems, among others. Argentina's vascular flora species are vulnerable^{[18]²⁰} and wildlife has already begun to experience the impacts of climate change, especially with regards to loss of habitat and displacement as a result of forest and grass fires as well as flooding of rivers and adjacent lands. What was historically known as "seasonal" flooding is now happening throughout the year and is forcing the displacement of wildlife to higher ground, oftentimes resulting in conflicts with human development and infrastructure. Furthermore, CC and the consequential displacement or destruction of native species make Argentina more vulnerable to invasive alien species (IAS), as described above.

Baseline policies and programs:

Argentina has a strong baseline of sectoral policies and programs that provide an important foundation for the proposed project. In accordance with the National Constitution, Article 2 of the General Law of the Environment 25.675 (LGA) establishes environmental policy objectives. The national government stipulates the minimum budgets that provinces must allocate to preserve environmental quality and the provinces dictate the necessary norms to complement them. Provinces retain jurisdiction over environmental and natural resources management in their territory. The Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS) is responsible for implementing the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2016-2020 (Res 151/2017) - extended for 2021-24 (Resolution 356-2022) - which brings together State policies on BD and provides an effective tool to incorporate BD into other national policies. The following programs further demonstrate MAyDS' involvement in a variety of issues that are relevant to the project. The overall investment is estimated at US\$22M of which US\$13.5M would count as project cofinancing.

General Law of the Environment (LGA) Environmental Compensation Fund: The LGA states that any work or activity that is likely to degrade the environment, any of its components or significantly affect the quality of life of the population, must be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure, prior to its execution, and the environmental impact studies (EIA) must contain, among other things, the measures aimed at mitigating the negative effects. Furthermore, Axis 1 of the NBSAP is 'To implement the design and application of innovative fundraising mechanisms, such as (...) compensation for loss of biodiversity', and establishes compensation, preservation and restoration as actions that can be accompanied by plans for the sustainable use of biodiversity to ensure its long-term sustainability. To facilitate this, the LGA Environmental Compensation Fund was created to compensate ecological systems and the environment that has been degraded. MAyDS approved a Guide for the Preparation of Environmental Impact Studies and the Guide for the Preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment through Resolution 337/2019, which contain general guidelines to incorporate the steps of the mitigation hierarchy into policies, plans, programs and projects. The 'Working Group^{[19]²¹} on Compensation for Loss of Biodiversity' was established to create the LGA Environmental Compensation Fund with support from the IDB, and has progressed in the development of a compensation guide (a draft of which is currently undergoing final revisions), but the implementation of pilots, metric validation, and coordination with other ministries is still missing. Furthermore, while there is background material on hazardous waste and environmental insurance, as well as a partial draft inventory of contaminated sites, this is lacking with regards to environmental impacts that affect biodiversity and therefore not available to the public.

To address these gaps, the proposed project would support the analysis of the environmental impacts of different productive activities (energy, mining, hydrocarbons, agriculture, fishing, etc.), as well as the elaboration of technical guidelines for different private sectors, including general compensation proposals to achieve conservation in balance with these productive activities, benefits for residents, communities and indigenous peoples in the health and sustainable use of the biodiversity of restored ecosystems.

Argentina's Wildlife Conservation Law No. 22.421 declares wildlife within the national territory to be of public interest, including its protection, conservation, propagation, reintroduction, and rational use. Within the framework of this law, the Directorate of Wildlife and Biodiversity Conservation has been developing several lines of action with priority species and habitats. The sustainable management of wildlife program is essential for the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and the post-2020 goals and targets. It implements axis 1 of the NBSAP and incorporates the new transversal axis, inclusive conservation.

The Inclusive Conservation Program was created under Resolution 2/2022 to implement a technical and financial support system for indigenous and other communities that wish to conserve the natural ecosystems of their properties and use wild resources in a sustainable manner. The objectives are:

- Promote models of sustainable land use in properties of indigenous communities and other neighboring communities to conserve natural ecosystems and ensure income and decent jobs.
- Promote the sustainable use of biodiversity with emphasis on traditional uses and the development of community tourism, while strengthening its roots and development.
- Build reciprocal capacities between local inhabitants and external technicians for the survey and monitoring of wild resources.

The National Native Forests Law No. 26.331 (2007) establishes minimum environmental protection budgets for the enrichment, restoration, conservation, use, and sustainable management of native forests and the environmental services they provide. It establishes a promotion regime and criteria for the allocation of funds in exchange for the environmental services provided by the forest (a type of Payment for Environmental Services – PES)^{[20][22]}. This 'forestry law' represents a very important advance for the reduction of threats to BD by favoring its conservation and sustainable use. The law is an indispensable tool to implement State policy through conservation plans, land use change and management, and conservation-friendly production. Between 2010 and 2021, the funds allocated financed some 10,103 plans, granted to 4,253 beneficiaries through the National Fund for the Enrichment and Conservation of Native Forests (FNECBN). In 2021, approximately US\$6.9 Million^{[21][23]} were distributed and executed^{[22][24]}. Furthermore, the non-timber forest products (NTFP) program (Resolution 127/2022) promotes the use of biodiversity in relation to the sustainable use of species, products, and by-products with added value. The program represents one of the policy impacts of the GEF/UNDP Biodiversity Sustainable Use Project (USUBI) –to give continuity to the policies of sustainable use of biodiversity, particularly NTFP^{[23][25]}. Among these, food, medicines, dyes, essential oils, gums, resins, textile fibers and construction materials can be mentioned, which add value to the forest and the services they provide, and which contribute to food security, social inclusion, and economic development through the generation of green employment and income for the communities that inhabit them.

The National Strategy on Invasive Alien Species (ENEI), developed within the framework of the NBSAP, establishes a set of specific objectives aimed at developing and strengthening the prevention and management of IAS as part of the actions aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Given the impact that IAS have on the loss of integrity and degradation of different ecosystems and biodiversity, the management strategies in the ENEI will provide important elements for the development of the National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity. As such, this project will allow these actions to be integrated into the post-2020 goals. For example, Component 1 will integrate within Comprehensive Restoration Plans the knowledge of native species that are resistant and long-lived, and that under disturbance can recover and continue competing with IAS. Then, in Component 2, local communities in the pilot sites will be involved in the control and eradication of IAS, with an emphasis on promoting local and traditional knowledge, when available.

Finally, Argentina has begun developing a National Strategy to Combat Desertification and Land Degradation to address issues of land degradation and desertification that result in the loss of biodiversity and a progressive decline in productivity,

in turn reducing the quality of life of the rural population. This Strategy incorporates the concept of 'land degradation neutrality' as a guiding principle and promotes forest management practices with integrated livestock farming and sustainable silvopastoral systems.

In this context, the long-term solution is to ensure the integrity of biodiversity and ecosystem services through a comprehensive conservation, sustainable use, and ecological restoration framework. Through UNDP, the Government of Argentina is requesting GEF assistance to create new capacities and instruments to integrate BD conservation, sustainable use, and management practices into a comprehensive National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity in order to address the following 4 major barriers to the long-term solution:

Barrier 1. Weak governance for ecosystem conservation, restoration and sustainable use.

While Argentina has a restoration plan for forested ecosystems, there is no comprehensive restoration plan for biodiversity. There is no integrated plan of validated conservation tools and inputs such as sustainable use, conservation, IAS management and control, or sustainable property management in conjunction with the communities. These are crucial elements for a National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity to be implemented at the national level. A product of the recent update of the BD national strategy comprises the characterization of ecosystems and a categorization of the state of conservation of ecosystems. However, it is not complete and lacks several criteria to enable consistent and reliable prioritization of degraded areas for restoration. Meanwhile, the Red List of Ecosystems of Argentina is a product of the GEF/UNDP intersectoral project^{[24]²⁶} yet it has not been applied to restoration initiatives. As such, while these inputs provide an important baseline, they have not been used in comprehensive ecosystem restoration models, neither with validated restoration techniques by ecosystem, nor with a prioritization of areas to be restored to ensure ecosystem connectivity.

With regards to the management and sustainable use of biodiversity, there are gaps in the legal framework for biodiversity-based products, including native forest NTFP. At the federal level, there is a Forest Law, but there is no Flora Law that allows adequate management of BD-based products and NTFP. The lack of a Flora Law generates problems in the collection/storage and access to technical and administrative information regarding these nature-based products. Current information/data need to be adjusted per selected sites and communities. However, there are problems related to the collection/storage and access to technical and administrative information by small producers and/or indigenous communities for management plans within the framework of the Forest Law.

Despite the testing of successful ecosystem restoration models in some parts of the country and the existence of a Restoration Plan for degraded areas of forested areas, ecosystem restoration has not yet been addressed through a comprehensive biodiversity conservation policy under the umbrella of the NBSAP and taking into consideration the post-2020 goals. For this reason, the project will integrate conservation practices, sustainable use, and management of IAS in a comprehensive National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity.

Barrier 2. Inadequate management practices for sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem restoration.

Currently, Argentina does not have a coherent work program for applying adequate practices needed for ecosystem restoration. Without a National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity, technical assistance and knowledge exchanges are scarce and there is insufficient adoption and use of ecosystem restoration techniques that include the conservation and use of biodiversity as well as the management of invasive alien species (IAS). Furthermore, technicians, local communities and producers lack comprehensive guides for restoration by ecosystem type that also integrate guidelines for IAS management and the sustainable use of BD. For example, the province of Tierra del Fuego has indicated that while they are aware of IAS management for beaver (*Castor canadensis*), which has colonized 95% of the province's basins, there is a lack of ground-truthed models and know-how regarding effective restoration models that incorporate IAS management. The beaver has colonized waterways on both the Argentine and Chilean sides of the island, threatening the southern forests of lenga, guindo and ñire, a unique ecosystem of very high global conservation value, while also affecting forestry and livestock production^{[25]²⁷}. Argentina has signed cooperation agreements with Chile for the control of the species, taking into account both the conservation of southern forests and the prevention of the expansion of the species towards continental Patagonia. Due to the extent of the impact on BD, the difficulties in controlling the beaver, and the need for restoration protocols for that area of Patagonia, it is necessary to integrate the knowledge generated in a comprehensive management and restoration plan that engages the private sector through the LGA Compensation Fund. Without pilot experiences to test and confirm the efficacy of different practices, there is no opportunity for replication and nation-wide implementation. The

experiences in the pilot sites can be replicated at the national level through the preparation of a comprehensive restoration plan and the ecosystem restoration prioritization map.

Barrier 3. Weak or inadequate financial mechanisms and market access for restoration and BD-based products

While there are baseline programs to support the implementation of mechanisms such as Forest Management Plans, there is a lack of access to financing for BD-based products due to several factors. There is a lack of valuation of BD-based products and insufficient comprehensive models of value chains for them. Consequently, there is an absence of markets for these products. In general, there is a lack of technical knowledge on managing forests and other resources by producers (peasants and indigenous communities) who use biodiversity products. This is due, in part, to a lack of technical training of small producers on the sustainable management of their land. Furthermore, oftentimes, native communities or small producers in rural areas incorporate sustainable use of biodiversity in their practices but struggle to establish direct access to marketing centers due to their remote location. While there are state credit lines that could be applicable to small producers, currently, they do not specifically address the issue of ecosystem restoration and sustainable use. While the previous GEF USUBI project addressed many of the barriers to achieving a value chain for products harvested through the sustainable use of forests, one of the barriers that remains for small producers to increase their income and join small producer markets is producing sufficient volume. Products generated through the sustainable use of BD must comply with extraction rates and methods at a rate that fosters BD conservation. Extraction methods balanced with conservation and sustainable harvest rates often require large areas to allow harvest volumes required for commercialization. Therefore, the low volume of products is a limitation to entering the market, even in the alternative markets of small producers. One solution to this barrier is to increase the resilience of degraded ecosystems through restoration. Restoration in the areas will also increase the number of species available for sustainable use, which will, in turn, produce the necessary volumes to be inserted in the markets of small producers at a small but constant rate.

Barrier 4. Scattered knowledge and limited awareness about the benefits of restored ecosystems and potential for sustainable use and BD-based products.

There is insufficient knowledge of the importance of BD and of the ecosystem goods and services derived from it. In urban and peripheral areas, for example, there is not a culture of promoting and managing trees, and therefore the residents do not understand the important mitigating effects that trees provide as generators of water through transpiration, noise reduction, cleaning of small particles in the atmosphere, carbon dioxide fixers, attenuation of temperatures in summer, etc. Successful examples from other projects, such as USUBI, are unknown in other regions and have not been adjusted to the characteristics and needs of other ecosystems.

To overcome the above barriers and address the drivers of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation, this particular project was selected because of its holistic approach to ensuring a comprehensive restoration plan for biodiversity that considers all ecosystems, impact and management of IAS, and opportunities for BD-based products resulting from inclusive sustainable use. The proposed project would assist in the development of a National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity within the framework of the new post-2020 biodiversity goals, with an information component on priority restoration areas and the development of a guide / regulation to encourage restoration areas in conservation corridors, establishing restoration methods by ecosystems, incorporating restoration and training in communities and indigenous peoples, and ultimately strengthening the availability of financial and market mechanisms to foster value-chains for BD-based products.

This strategy will be implemented in collaboration with a variety of public, private sector, and local stakeholders, including women and IPs, who will be instrumental in delivering the GEBs as follows:

Stakeholders	Relevant Roles / Participation in the project
National Level	
Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS)	MAyDS will be the National Executing Agency in collaboration with the provinces. It is responsible for developing and implementing national environmental policies and is the enforcement authority for the General Environment Law and Minimum Standards Law. It coordinates national environment policies related to national strategies. MAyDS will chair the Project Board.
National Parks Administration (APN)	Will provide knowledge of the terrain and the needs of the most isolated populations.
Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries	This Secretariat is responsible for all aspects related to agriculture, livestock, and fisheries, and in particular: to understand the preparation, application, and control of the regimes of activities related to the agricultural, livestock and fishing sectors. The project will work with this Secretariat to articulate the development of livestock policies and propose solutions to reduce overgrazing in Component 2.
Federal Council on the Environment - COFEMA	COFEMA is a federal forum made up of provincial environmental authorities. Its objectives are to coordinate regional and national environment management programs and strategies, to promote agreement on policies with all government sectors involved in solving environmental issues; to formulate

Stakeholders	Relevant Roles / Participation in the project
	policies that favor a conservation-based use of environmental resources; and to promote growth and economic development planning that takes into account social equality in harmony with the environment. COFEMA will benefit from capacity building activities and will be involved in Components 1 and 3.
National Consultative Committee for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity -CONADIBIO	CONADIBIO is composed of representatives of national and provincial governments, civil society, indigenous peoples' organizations, and the scientific sector. It has become the main area of coordination among the agencies involved in biodiversity issues and in the preparation of the NBSAP 2016-2020 and updating it with the post-2020 goals. Currently, CONADIBIO is composed of 20 representatives of government agencies and 6 non-governmental organizations. It will benefit from capacity building activities and will be involved in Components 1 and 3.
Secretariat of Energy	It is the function of this Secretariat to intervene in the preparation and execution of the national energy policy. It will be a key partner in identifying potential contributors and participants in the Compensation Fund as part of Component 3.
Secretariat of Mining	The Secretariat of Mining will be a key partner in identifying potential contributors and participants in the Compensation Fund for restoration / reclamation of mining sites in Component 3.
Misiones Institute of Biodiversity (IMIBIO)	IMIBIO works to promote an ecologically conscious and sustainably active society incorporating biodiversity. It seeks to strengthen the provincial food production sector by valuing local resources, providing technical assistance, productive alternatives, training and applied research.
Andean Patagonian Forestry Research and Extension Center (CIEFAP)	CIEFAP is an autonomous interjurisdictional research, innovation and technological development organization, whose objective is to contribute to the sustainable development of the Patagonian region by highlighting the potential of its human capital and its renewable natural resources in general and, in particular, those linked to forest systems and lands suitable for forestry.
National Institute for Indigenous Affairs (INAI)	INAI is tasked with overseeing the government's policy on affairs pertaining to Argentina's various indigenous communities. INAI has environmental and housing programmes, sustainable food production programmes, and various initiatives to safekeep and rescue endangered cultural elements such as language. In particular, the INAI is concerned with maintaining bilingual and inter-cultural education among indigenous communities. As such, it is a potential partner for Components 2 and 4. During project development, a consultation process will be undertaken to confirm project intervention sites. If the PPG identifies sites with IPs, the project will coordinate with INAI to employ full, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) and participation mechanisms in accordance with UNDP's SES requirements, particularly with Standard 6: Indigenous Peoples.
Local and Provincial Levels	
Provincial Governments of Misiones, Chaco, Santa Fe, Rio Negro and Tierra del Fuego, Antarctica and South Atlantic Islands	Provincial governments have a mandate for environmental management and sustainable development, BD conservation and protection of wildlife. They will play an active role in the project and will be responsible for supervising the project in each jurisdiction to ensure the coordination and execution of their cofinancing/contributions. Among others, the Provincial Wildlife and Biodiversity Agencies, Provincial Livestock and Agricultural Development Agencies, and agencies in charge of tax collection at the provincial level will be involved. These institutions are responsible, among other things, for planning, environmental management, and productive sectors.
Indigenous People	<p>Indigenous People will be key in the selection and implementation of pilot activities in Components 2 and 3, promoting effective BD conservation, restoration, and sustainable use in each of their jurisdictions, cooperating with the resolution of disputes regarding the use of BD and facilitating dialogue between the parties. During the PPG phase, they will participate in the definition of activities to be implemented in Components 2 and 3.</p> <p>During project development, a consultation process will be undertaken. If the PPG identifies sites with IPs, the project will coordinate with INAI to employ full, prior and informed consent (FPIC) and participation mechanisms in accordance with UNDP's SES requirements, particularly with Standard 6: Indigenous Peoples.</p>
Local Communities	<p>Local Communities will be key in the selection and implementation of pilot activities in Components 2 and 3, promoting effective BD conservation, restoration, and sustainable use in each of their jurisdictions, cooperating with the resolution of disputes regarding the use of BD and facilitating dialogue between the parties. During the PPG phase, they will participate in the definition of activities to be implemented in Components 2 and 3.</p> <p>During project development, a gender assessment and a consultation process will be undertaken.</p>
Private sector	The private sector will be engaged at the provincial level through public-private partnerships for collaborative planning and financing for restoration, conservation and sustainable use of BD, especially in the development/strengthening of value chains for BD-friendly products from Component 2 and financial mechanisms in Component 3. The potential for private sector co-financing will be fully assessed during the PPG phase in accordance with UNDP's private sector due diligence policy.

Stakeholders	Relevant Roles / Participation in the project
Academic Institutions	These institutions will provide technical and scientific knowledge to generate the necessary protocols to establish a comprehensive National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity; allow the dissemination of the knowledge generated through fora, talks and different presentations; and coordinate with the academic extension areas of each university.
Other CSOs/ NGOs	These include stakeholders such as NGOs, cooperatives and associations of livestock producers, professional associations, municipalities, researchers, etc. They will participate in activities such as dialogue platforms, and the development and implementation of BD conservation, restoration and sustainable use practices. Their role will be important in the replication of good BD conservation, restoration and productive practices (Components 2 and 3). For example, <i>Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina</i> has expressed interest in the project and would share its expertise in sustainable use, conservation, restoration and analysis of economic opportunities linked to biodiversity. Additional CSOs/NGOs will be identified as part of the stakeholder analysis to be conducted during the PPG.

Argentina has a robust portfolio of closed and ongoing GEF initiatives that provide important lessons learned and opportunities for coordination. Based on the experience and support of MAYDS, special consideration will be given to the lessons learned from the following completed projects:

- a. **UNDP/GEF Project: “Mainstreaming sustainable use of biodiversity in production practices of small producers to protect the biodiversity of high value conservation forests in the Atlantic Forest, Yungas and Chaco” (2015-2022):** The project will benefit from the lessons learned from engaging the NTFP sector in mainstreaming of BD conservation criteria in its practices.
- b. **WB/GEF project: “Rural Corridors and Biodiversity” (2011-2017):** The project will benefit from the experiences and lessons learned from working with provincial environmental agencies in the province of Misiones.

Furthermore, the project team will work in close coordination with the following ongoing projects to ensure complementarity and to avoid overlap:

- a. **UNDP/GEF project: “Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation criteria in sectoral and intersectoral public policies and programs to safeguard threatened wildlife in Argentina”:** This project aims to mainstream conservation criteria in sectoral and intersectoral public policies and contribute to their effective implementation to safeguard threatened wildlife. The project is specifically focused on infrastructure (road and wind energy), sport hunting and poaching, and livestock, including compensation and awareness raising of livestock producers to reduce conflict with large predators (i.e., jaguar).
- b. **UNDP/GEF project: “Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management (SLM) into development planning: Making Environmental Land Use Planning (ELUP) Operational in Argentina”:** One of the elements of this project relates to the application of economic and financial instruments to evaluate ecosystem services and their consideration in ELUP so as to provide a complementary set of instruments for the integral management of BD conservation with regards to urban expansion/ tourism, mining, and agriculture.
- c. **The project will also exchange information with the UNDP/GEF Small Grants Program (SGP) in Argentina, which provides funding for several projects to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity, reduce ecosystem degradation, and promote BD-friendly products in IP and local communities.**

The proposed project will strategically complement the ongoing GEF funded projects and will maintain close coordination with them through a set of specific mechanisms: (i) annual coordination and planning meetings; (ii) technical meetings for sector-specific matters; (iii) meetings and activities to exchange lessons learned and good practices, with the authorities, technical and other sectors. The project will build upon relevant results from the abovementioned projects, incorporating experiences learnt and scaling up relevant site-specific management and planning tools developed by project partners. Ultimately, this project will support the consolidation of models produced by these other projects, especially those related to strengthening conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of BD. The project will fit well within the current landscape of investments and country priorities. It will strengthen coordination with the provinces and with the actions that are being developed at the local level. This project will integrate lessons learned from past and current projects. A framework for action and institutional coordination will be developed to implement the validated conservation tools. As such, this project is a logical complement to previous/current GEF investments, providing an innovative approach to ensuring a comprehensive national restoration plan for biodiversity that considers all ecosystems, impact and management of IAS, and opportunities for BD-based products resulting from inclusive sustainable use.

[1] Argentina spans the latitudes 21° 46' SL up to 55° 03' SL; is the 8th country in land area (2,791,810 km²) and 4th in the Americas. Its marine territory covers 4.8 m km², an additional 1.7m km² of continental shelf was recently recognized under UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

[2] Spanish equivalents: Altos Andes; Puna; Monte de Sierras y Bolsones, Selva de las Yungas; Chaco Seco; Chaco Húmedo; Selva Paranaense Esteros del Iberá; Campos y Malezales; Valle y Delta del Paraná; Espinal; Pampas; Monte de Llanuras y Mesetas; Estepa Patagónica; Bosques Patagónicos; Islas del Atlántico Sur, Mar Argentino y la Antártida.

[3] Burkart et al., 1999

[4] Dinerstein et al., 1995

[5] Clausen et al., 2008 and National Biodiversity Strategy and Plan of Action 2016-2020 (NBSAP 2015-2020).

[6] Paruelo et al., 2006; Volante et al., 2012

[7] NBSAP 2016-2020

[8] Díaz et al. al., 2017

[9] UMSEF 2021

[10] Pérez Pardo 2006

[11] SAyDS, 2001

[12] Kandus et al., 2011, Sica et al., 2016

[13] In Argentina, the illegal trade in flora and fauna represents a major threat to biodiversity. For many endangered species, illegal trade represents their main threat (Bertonatti 1995, Loydi A. 2008). From an economic point of view, the trafficking of live animals is not comparable to that of hides or skins, but it is undoubtedly one of the most sensitive points in the wildlife trade (Bertonatti and Corcuera 2000).

[14] Zalba 2005, Novillo and Ojeda 2008, Fasola and Roesler 2016, Torres and Gonzalez-Pisani 2016

[15] National Information System on Invasive Alien Species, INBIAR.

[16] National Strategy on Invasive Alien Species, 2022

[17] NBSAP 2016-2020

[18] Salariato, Diego Leonel; Zanotti, Christian Alejandro; Zuloaga, Fernando Omar; Assessing the impact of climate change on threatened endemic vascular plants of Argentina; Springer; Folia Geobotanica; 57; 1; 3-2022; 49-69

[19] The working group is comprised of representatives of the National Directorate of Biodiversity, the National Directorate of Environmental Management of Water and Aquatic Ecosystems, the National Directorate of Environmental Planning and Ordering of the Territory and the National Directorate of Forests, all of which depend on the Secretariat of Environmental Policy in Natural Resources of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.

[20] UMSEF, 2012

[21] This corresponds to 662 million Argentine pesos converted per OANDA rate for 2021: <https://www.oanda.com/currency-converter/en/?from=ARS&to=USD&amount=662000000>

[22] Informe de implementación de la Ley de Bosques 26.331, 2023. <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/ambiente/bosques/manejo-sostenible-de-bosques/informes-y-publicaciones>.

[23] NTFP are renewable natural resources obtained from forests, other forest areas and of trees outside forests that do not include timber, firewood and charcoal.

[24] UNDP/GEF Project: “Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation criteria in sectoral and intersectoral public policies and programs to safeguard threatened wildlife in Argentina”

[25] The beaver (*Castor canadensis*) was introduced in the 1940s to Tierra del Fuego with the intention of establishing a wild population that could be used for fur production. Beavers are responsible for the destruction of trees by cutting, girdling and flooding of *Nothofagus* forests, as well as the modification of the nutrient dynamics of the forest and waterways. The beaver has generated a decrease in the biomass and volume of forests, especially forests classified as protected because they are associated with water courses, an impact that is difficult to reverse. The beaver also has a serious impact on the ecosystem services of peatlands, which have a substantial role in regulating watersheds and water provision, supporting biodiversity and for their global contribution to carbon sequestration. It is estimated that currently 4% of the native forest area (approximately 30,000 hectares) is affected. 95% of Tierra del Fuego's basins are colonized by beavers. By virtue of all these impacts, through Provincial Law No. 696/2006, the *Castor canadensis* was declared a “harmful species” throughout the area of the Province of Tierra del Fuego, Antarctica and the South Atlantic Islands and the Provincial Executive Power authorizes framework agreements with neighboring provinces and regions in order to carry out joint work for its eradication.

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project description

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

Project Description

The Government of Argentina requests financing from the GEF in the biodiversity focal area due to the need to establish or strengthen ecosystem restoration mechanisms based on validated tools for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity that involves, among other aspects, the development of capacity building for biodiversity products and associated value chains.

The project proposes to implement an inclusive ecological restoration strategy that promotes connectivity at the landscape scale in prioritized areas for conservation based on the enhancement of ecological corridors, validated practices of sustainable use, and management of invasive alien species, in order to improve ecosystem health and people's quality of life. The project will take into consideration restoring and protecting areas and biological corridors for the genetic connectivity of threatened species, as well as the different climate change scenarios and their consequences such as natural disasters

(droughts and fires) for the selection of sites to restore and thus mitigate the synergistic effects of climate change and biodiversity loss. Despite the testing of successful ecosystem restoration models in some parts of the country and the existence of a Restoration Plan for forested areas, ecosystem restoration has not yet been addressed through a comprehensive biodiversity conservation policy under the umbrella of the National Strategy and the post-2020 goals. For this reason, the project will integrate biodiversity conservation practices, sustainable use and management of IAS in a comprehensive National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity.

The project will promote regulations associated with the sustainable use of biodiversity, as well as regulations for the restoration of ecosystems, which include guides and tools for decision-makers. This will support Argentina's implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the National Strategy on Biodiversity and the Kunming-Montreal Global Framework on Biological Diversity.

The project will provide support for the implementation of current regulations regarding invasive alien species and the General Environmental Law, through the promotion of a subcomponent of ecosystem restoration within the framework of the Compensation Fund provided for in the LGA.

The project's theory of change describes the project's logic for addressing the problems described in the project rationale and achieving the intended global environmental benefits. The theory of change is based on the following assumptions and causal pathways:

- **Assumption 1:** The degradation of biodiversity and ecosystems in priority ecoregions is mainly caused by unsustainable land use, overexploitation of vulnerable native flora and fauna, predation, and habitat loss due to IAS, and is exacerbated by climate change and other environmental stressors.
- **Assumption 2:** The improvement of biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of ecosystems and restoration of degraded ecosystems requires a combination of institutional, technical, financial, and social interventions that address the root causes and drivers of degradation, as well as the barriers and enablers for change.
- **Assumption 3:** The project's interventions will generate multiple environmental and socio-economic benefits for the ecosystems and communities in priority ecoregions, such

as increased ecosystem connectivity, increased ecosystem services, enhanced resilience, and improved livelihoods.

- **Assumption 4: The project's interventions will be supported by relevant stakeholders, especially IP and local communities and authorities, who will participate in the project activities, adopt sustainable practices, and benefit from the project outcomes.**
- **Assumption 5: The project's interventions will be informed by scientific data and knowledge, as well as by best practices and lessons learned from previous or similar projects in the country, region, or globally.**
- **Assumption 6: The project's interventions will be aligned with national policies and priorities, as well as with international commitments and frameworks, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**
- **Assumption 7: The project's interventions will be innovative and transformative, creating new opportunities and models for conservation, restoration and sustainable use that can be scaled up or replicated in other ecoregions in Argentina or elsewhere.**

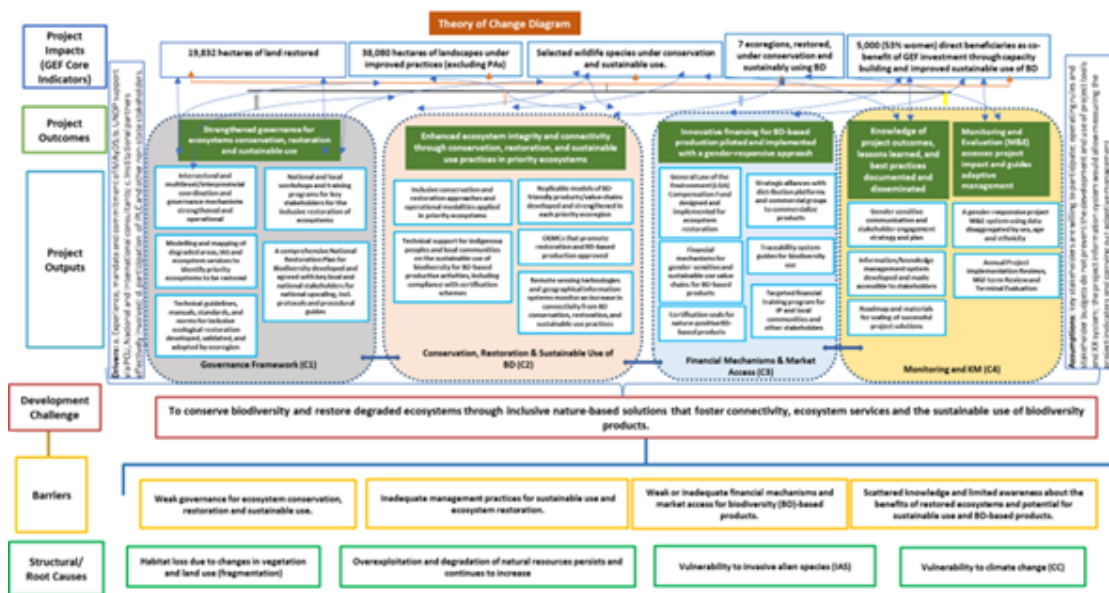
Based on these assumptions, the theory of change can be summarized as follows:

- **If the project enhances the governance framework at the national and provincial levels with regards to policies and capacities for conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity in priority ecoregions (Component 1), then it will create an enabling environment that contributes to ecosystem integrity, connectivity and biodiversity conservation.**
- **If the project applies and demonstrates replicable models of conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity in priority ecoregions (Component 2), then it will improve ecosystem connectivity, restore degraded areas, and provide alternative livelihood options for IP and local communities.**
- **If the project develops and strengthens innovative financial mechanisms and market access (Component 3), then it will improve access to resources for the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity and ultimately enhance the sustainability of project interventions.**
- **If the project manages knowledge effectively (Component 4), then it will increase awareness and understanding of the benefits of conservation and restoration efforts, build**

capacity of stakeholders, disseminate best practices and lessons learned, and support innovation and learning.

- If these four components are implemented successfully, then they will lead to the project objective: To conserve biodiversity and restore degraded ecosystems through inclusive nature-based solutions that foster connectivity, ecosystem services and the sustainable use of biodiversity products.

- If the project objective is achieved, then it will generate global environmental benefits that would not have accrued without the GEF project (additionality), such as restoring 19,832 ha of land and ecosystems, improving practices on 38,080 ha of landscape (excluding protected areas), and benefiting about 5,000 people (of which 53% women).



Gender Equality

Resolution No. 721/2014 established the 'Gender, Environment and Development - GAD' Program within the MAYDS. The national government then created the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity as well as the National Cabinet for the mainstreaming of the gender perspective, of which the MAYDS is a part. The Environment + Diversity Program builds on MAYDS efforts to mainstream the gender perspective, through dissemination, training, discussion cycles, and promotion of the implementation of the Micaela Law and the Transgender Quota Law. This Program, updated by Resolution 94/2022, has the following objectives:

- Incorporate and strengthen the gender and diversity perspective in the MAYDS as a transversal component in the design, execution, and evaluation of environmental public policies.
- Promote the participation and actions of civil society organizations (CSO) in matters of environment, gender, and sustainable development.

Within this context, the project will support activities that improve the gender balance and women's participation in workshops and decision-making fora regarding the implementation of conservation,

restoration, and sustainable use/ productive practices. Even though the project is not specifically focused on women, but rather on the communities they belong to, it will address key gender issues in order to mainstream gender as well as promote gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Project preparation will ensure that gender considerations become an integral part of the proposed project strategy through a full gender analysis, development of a project gender mainstreaming plan and assigning of a UNDP gender marker. This will include an analysis of how the project plans to achieve its environmental objective by addressing the differences in the roles, needs and priorities of women and men. The project will not exacerbate existing gender-based inequalities, rather it will promote participatory methodologies for both men and women. The project will include gender disaggregated indicators as part of the Project Results Framework. Furthermore, additional data will be collected such as: (i) Total number of male and female full-time project staff; (ii) Total number of male and female beneficiaries of the project, especially awareness-raising, capacity building and pilot site participants; and (iii) Total number of jobs created by the project that are held by women and men. The project design will ensure that financial and human resources are set aside for gender mainstreaming during project implementation and for monitoring the effectiveness of this mainstreaming.

Component 1 - Strengthening the national and provincial governance framework.

This component will strengthen the national and provincial governance framework for the comprehensive restoration of ecosystems to address connectivity at the landscape scale and the health of ecosystems. The governance framework will also benefit from conservation tools for the sustainable use of BD, management and control of IAS, and sustainable management at-scale in indigenous and peasant communities.

The project will integrate BD conservation, sustainable use and IAS management practices into a comprehensive National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity that promotes connectivity at the landscape scale in prioritized areas for conservation based on the enhancement of ecological corridors, validated practices of sustainable use, and management of invasive exotics, with the aim of improving the health of ecosystems and the quality of life of people.

The component consists of the following Outcome and Outputs:

Outcome 1.1 Strengthened governance for ecosystem conservation, restoration, and sustainable use:

This outcome will strengthen the governance framework for inclusive restoration with tools for conservation, sustainable use, and IAS management. The tools developed in this component will culminate in the elaboration and adoption of a comprehensive National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity. It comprises the following Outputs:

- Output 1.1.1 Intersectoral and multilevel/interprovincial coordination and governance mechanisms strengthened and operational. This will strengthen the intersectoral and interprovincial coordination spheres to institutionalize the proposed plans and guides and coordinate their implementation. Key partners for this output are the National Consultative Committee for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity (CONADIBIO) and Federal Council of the Environment (COFEMA).
- Output 1.1.2 Modelling and mapping of degraded areas, IAS, and ecosystem services to identify priority ecosystems to be restored. Currently, for forest monitoring there is no consensus on the definition of a degraded area, and it is not possible to evaluate the level of degradation and the areas to be restored from satellite images alone. For other ecosystems,

field definitions and evaluations are also necessary, which are more comprehensive than satellite monitoring. The Argentine Restoration Network does not have this fundamental input. As such, the project will support a comprehensive prioritization of areas for the restoration of the ecoregions of Argentina, which will guide the implementation of the National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity beyond the project life.

- Output 1.1.3 Technical guidelines, manuals, standards, and norms for inclusive ecological restoration developed, validated, and adopted by ecoregion. This will include guides for the implementation of property management models and inclusive conservation of sustainable use of the BD for ecological restoration programs. In addition, the project will develop and implement a strategy and framework for community involvement and inclusive local participation.
- Output 1.1.4 Set of national and local workshops and training programs for key stakeholders for the inclusive restoration of ecosystems.
- Output 1.1.5 A comprehensive National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity developed and agreed with key local and national stakeholders for national upscaling. This will provide a consensual/inclusive framework for implementing subsequent restoration and other related land use management actions for national upscaling. The Plan would be implemented under the auspices of CONADIBIO, as part of the committee's efforts to update the NBSAP with post-2020 goals.

Key partners for this component include: MAyDS (Dir. de BD – DNBio), CONADIBIO and COFEMA.

Component 2 – Promoting the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity.

This component will support the practical application and validation of inclusive conservation and restoration tools and techniques, and sustainable use practices. It considers IAS management and sustainable production systems such as agroecosystems to be integral parts of comprehensive and inclusive restoration plans. The project will consider the potential to work with the private sector on restoration investment plans, as well as the need to connect and build bridges with Biofin. The full identification and confirmation of specific private sector partners will begin during the PPG.

The component consists of the following Outcome and Outputs:

Outcome 2.1 Enhanced ecosystem integrity and connectivity through conservation, restoration, and sustainable use practices in priority ecosystems.

The outcome will provide pilot experiences for the practical application of the National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity. The project will take into consideration restoring and protecting areas and biological corridors for the genetic connectivity of threatened species, as well as the different climate change scenarios and their consequences such as natural disasters (droughts and fires) for the selection of sites to restore and thus mitigate the effects synergistic effects of climate change and biodiversity loss.

- Output 2.1.1 Inclusive conservation and restoration approaches and operational modalities applied in priority ecosystems. This will include technical support for IP and local communities on the conservation and restoration of ecosystems, including aspects of IAS management and CC resilience. It will also develop a guide for IP and local communities to choose restoration techniques and priority areas for productive activities, as well as guides for IP and local communities to manage species for sustainable use linked to restoration.

- Output 2.1.2 Technical support for IP and local communities, including women, on the sustainable use of biodiversity for BD-based productive activities, including compliance with certification schemes. This output will facilitate gender-sensitive training and support on management techniques to enable certification and increased value of BD-based products.
- Output 2.1.3 Replicable models of BD-friendly products/value-chains developed and strengthened in each priority ecoregion. The development of technical know-how for BD-friendly products will work in parallel with Output 3.1.3 to ensure financing mechanisms and market access to foster sustainability along the value chains.
- Output 2.1.4 OECMs that promote restoration and BD-based production approved as a result of the technical training and implementation of the models from Outputs 2.1.2 and 2.1.3. (Indicator: # OECMs created, min. 1 or 2).
- Output 2.1.5 Remote sensing technologies and geographical information systems monitor an increase in connectivity from BD conservation, restoration, and sustainable use practices.

The project will work in 3 regions comprised of 5 provinces across 7 ecoregions (see site selection criteria in Annex C; to be validated during the PPG):

Region	Province	Ecoregion	Hectares to be restored	Hectares of landscapes targeted to be under improved practices
North	Misiones	- Upper Parana Atlantic Forest	2,932 ha	3,580 ha
	Chaco	- Dry Chaco	10,000 ha	30,000 ha
Center	Santa Fe	- Humid Chaco	3,400 ha	6,000 ha
		- Parana Delta & Flooded Savannah		
South	Rio Negro	- Low Monte	1,000 ha	1,000 ha
		- Espinal		
	Tierra del Fuego	- Patagonian Andean Forest	2,500 ha	2,500 ha
Total hectares			19,832	38,080

The focal species for conservation and restoration for these areas include: species of melipona bee (RESTORATION: regeneration of the forest via pollination; USE: honey production) and fruit trees such as ñangapirí (also known as pitanga *Eugenia uniflora*; RESTORATION: forest cover; USE: fruit for humans as well as birds, monkeys, also used in candy, vinegar, and cosmetic creams). These species were prioritized because progress has already been made on administrative matters, such as their inclusion in the food code. The project will build on existing commercialization experiences, and work with local producers to increase the commercialization networks with the private sector and expand the areas of sustainable harvest and use. The project will also foster growth in the networking and exchange opportunities amongst these producers. While there are entities that are known to partner with local producers, the full identification and confirmation of specific private sector partners will begin during the PPG. It is expected

that with the restoration of the species, the number of producers involved in sustainable use and in the inclusive value chains will increase. A detailed list per province is provided in Annex C, as well as a summary of the methodology to implement the pilot activities.

This component will also improve the socio-ecological conditions of local populations, increase the sustainability of existing cultural systems, increase the empowerment of the populations of indigenous communities and small producers over their resources, and improve their social capital, through the implementation of productive and participatory projects. These projects are based on the challenge of turning ecological restoration practices into reality, by increasing the link between the experiences of communities that directly use natural resources and research institutions and forestry agricultural planning. The restoration of degraded sites must also guarantee the intrinsic ecological processes of the ecosystems, reconciling with the human needs that lead to the extraction of natural resources.

Key partners for this component include: MAyDS, APN, Agriculture, INAI, Provinces, IP, local communities, IMIBIO, Fundacion Vida Silvestre

Component 3 – Developing innovative financial mechanisms, incentives, and market access for biodiversity-based production.

As mentioned above, there is a difficulty in accessing resources, financing means, technical and legal information, and technical assistance. Through this component, the project will focus on the development of markets and financial mechanisms, and among the results, it is expected to strengthen trade and logistics mechanisms and associated value chains. The project will accomplish this through the promotion of different financial mechanisms and incentives for validated tools such as NTFPs (Resol.2022-127-APN-MAD), strategies for the management and control of invasive alien species, sustainable management of wildlife, the Inclusive Conservation Program (Resol.2022-2-APN-MAD), and the Program for the Promotion of the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (Resol.2021-1-APN-MAD), in addition to experiences from other areas of the Secretary of Environmental Policy in Natural Resources (SPARN). This component will be implemented in parallel with the work done in Component 2, and as such, will focus on the same intervention areas.

The component consists of the following Outcomes and Outputs:

Outcome 3.1 Innovative financing for BD-based production piloted and implemented with a gender-responsive approach.

This outcome focuses on identifying and promoting innovative financing and market options to support community restoration with the incorporation of species that are known to have sustainable uses. It will increase the resilience of the ecosystems and the financial sustainability of the communities from that use. It will strengthen value chains of BD-based products and support the implementation of financing models for restoration based on BD offsets. The project will consider the potential to work with private banks, insurance, derisking, voluntary carbon markets, etc. to increase the scale of impact. While there are entities that are known to partner with local producers, the full identification and confirmation of specific private sector partners will begin during the PPG.

- Output 3.1.1 LGA Compensation Fund designed and implemented for ecosystem restoration. The proposed National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity will be situated within the framework of the LGA Compensation Fund. The project will support the analysis of the environmental impacts of different productive activities (energy, mining, hydrocarbons, agriculture, fishing, etc.), as well as the elaboration of technical guidelines for different private sectors, including general compensation proposals to achieve conservation in balance with these productive activities, as well as benefits for residents, communities and indigenous peoples involved in conserving the health and sustainable use of the biodiversity of restored ecosystems. The LGA

Compensation Fund will be piloted in Project areas and will use lessons learned to adjust and improve it for nation-wide application.

- Output 3.1.2 Financial mechanisms for gender-sensitive and sustainable use value chains for BD-based products contribute to the sustainable use of biodiversity. The project will support training of IP and local communities in the sustainable use of biodiversity products, as well as in the creation of marketing networks. This will include, for example, conditional green financing lines for sustainable agriculture, NTFP, and others for small producers and Micro-, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs), with a target of women beneficiaries.
- Output 3.1.3 Certification seals for nature-positive BD-based products (generated through sustainable management and landscape restoration practices). These seals would recognize sustainable management, community engagement, and restoration efforts, among others. A benchmarking/gap analysis will be conducted between certification schemes, in compliance with UNDP Social and Environmental Safeguards (SES).
- Output 3.1.4 Strategic alliances with distribution platforms and commercial groups to commercialize products (see certification output above).
- Output 3.1.5 Traceability system guides for biodiversity use.
- Output 3.1.6 Targeted financial training program for IP and local communities and other stakeholders facilitate access to financial mechanisms.

An indicative list of BD-friendly products was defined for this PIF and will be confirmed during the PPG. The list is based on which products can potentially be used in each region in an inclusive manner together with the local, Creole, and indigenous communities, benefiting from and valuing their ancestral knowledge. The indicative list includes species that provide food, fodder and dyes, such as Patagonian Andean forest calafate (*Berberis microphylla*)^[30], and sarsaparilla (*Ribes magellanicum*), which is under consideration to be incorporated into the Argentine Food Code for the marketing of products based on its leaves (Farina et al. 2022)^[31]. A detailed list of species per province is provided in Annex C. The development of innovative financing mechanisms and market access will require the engagement of financial institutions and commercial partners. While there are entities that are known to partner with local producers, the full identification and confirmation of specific private sector partners will begin during the PPG.²⁸

Key partners for this component include: MAyDS, Energy, Mining, CEIFAP, Provinces, IP, local communities, Fundacion Vida Silvestre.

Component 4 - Knowledge management and M&E.

The component consists of the following Outcomes and Outputs:

Outcome 4.1 Knowledge of project outcomes, lessons learned, and best practices documented and disseminated

- Output 4.1.1 Gender sensitive communication and stakeholder engagement strategy and plan. This will include awareness raising and technical materials, based on best practices identified through Components 1-3, developed in local languages, disseminated, and used for training of landowners, communities, and private sector, taking into account gender balance. The project will promote knowledge exchanges to implement good practices for the restoration of ecosystems at the farm scale that improve the connectivity of ecosystems and

improve the health and quality of life of people. The training activities and workshops will seek to articulate this knowledge with the ancestral knowledge of the target population.

- Output 4.1.2 Information/knowledge management system developed and made accessible to stakeholders. Project outcomes, experiences, lessons learned, and best practices identified from Components 1, 2, and 3 will be compiled in a platform that is accessible to stakeholders. This will include a training and knowledge exchange platform for IP and local communities regarding conservation and restoration techniques for different ecosystems, as well as sustainable use practices for BD-based production.
- Output 4.1.3 Roadmap and materials for scaling of successful project solutions.

Outcome 4.2 Monitoring and Evaluation of project impact and adaptive management

- Output 4.2.1 A gender-responsive project M&E system using data disaggregated by sex, age, and ethnicity.
- Output 4.2.2 Annual Project Implementation Reviews, Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation.

Key partners for this component include: MAyDS, INAI, Ministry of Women

[30] Bustamante et al 2023. Productos Forestales No Madereros provenientes de especies nativas en las Reservas Forestales de Producción de Tierra del Fuego. congreso forestal latinoamericano

[31] Farina et al. 2022

Coordination and Cooperation with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

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

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

The project will cooperate with the following ongoing initiatives and projects:

- GEF 7/UNDP Project *Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation criteria in sectoral and intersectoral public policies and programs to safeguard threatened wildlife in Argentina* (GEF Project ID 9994). Cooperation regarding development and evaluation of instruments and mechanisms of economic and financial incentives for the promotion sustainable production models in habitats of endangered species; coordination with provinces and consultation with local stakeholders, including the private sector.
- GEF 7/CAF Project *Comprehensive land management in forestry and agri-food systems of three water basins in Argentina to contribute to Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and to mitigation and adaptation to climate change* (GEF Project ID 10866). Cooperation regarding information exchange about communication strategies to improve local access to quality information on degraded areas; the implementation of improved practices; and the adoption of innovative financing mechanisms.
- GEF 6/UNDP Project *Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation and SLM into Development Planning: Making Environmental Land Use Planning (ELUP) Operational in Argentina* (GEF Project

ID 9583). Cooperation regarding land degradation information management, capacity-building, SLM practices, coordination with provinces, and consultation with local stakeholders, including the private sector, IP and local communities.

- UNDP/GEF Small Grants Program (SGP) in Argentina. Cooperation regarding best practices to address ecosystem degradation in drylands through the enrichment of the native forest and promotion of sustainable production practices, and consultation with local stakeholders, including IP and local communities.

Core Indicators

Indicator 3 Area of land and ecosystems under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
19832	0	0	0

Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration

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

Indicator 3.2 Area of forest and forest land under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
11,932.00			

Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and woodland under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
Natural grass	7,500.00			

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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
400.00			

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)
38080	0	0	0

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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
38,080.00			

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

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

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

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

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

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

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

Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

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

Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Indicator 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	2,650			
Male	2,350			
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)

GEF Core Indicator 3 Area of land and ecosystems under restoration

GEF Core Indicator 3.2: 11,932 Hectares of forest and forest land under restoration.

GEF Core Indicator 3.3: 7,500 Hectares of natural grass and woodlands under restoration.

GEF Core Indicator 3.4: 400 Hectares of wetlands (including estuaries, mangroves) under restoration.

The estimated area for this indicator was defined by the 5 participating provinces that will benefit from community-based restoration activities. Please see the table in Annex C for a detailed list of degraded areas per province and ecoregion, as well as the proposed areas and species to be used for restoration activities.

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

GEF Core Indicator 4.1: 38,080 Hectares of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified).

Indicator 4 refers to 38,080 ha of non-certified landscapes in 7 ecoregions that will benefit from conservation and sustainable use practices. Please see the table in Annex C for a detailed list per province and ecoregion of the proposed areas and species to be promoted for sustainable use/ improved practices.

The exact areas for both Indicators will be confirmed and mapped during the PPG phase.

For Indicator 11, it is estimated that 5,000 people will benefit directly from targeted capacity and awareness building programs implemented at the local and provincial level in the 5 target provinces, as well as at the federal level. These GEF indicators and their corresponding sub-indicators will be confirmed during the PPG.

Risks to Project Preparation and Implementation

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

Risk Categories	Rating	Comments
Climate	Moderate	Argentina’s ecoregions have already begun to experience the impacts of climate change, especially as a result of drought and increased risk of fires in some areas, while flooding of rivers and adjacent lands occurs in others. What was historically known as “seasonal” flooding is now happening throughout the year and is exacerbated by degraded ecosystems and increased pressures from more resistant IAS. Component 2’s implementation of conservation and restoration techniques will specifically address the impacts of climate change such as the flooding of the Parana River basin, and the climate vulnerability of the species selected for the project will be considered. This will provide a ground-truthed model to replicate in other parts of the country that are experiencing similar circumstances.
Environment and Social	Substantial	A pre-SESP was done to determine potential risks and mitigation actions

		to be taken. This is available in Annex D.
Political and Governance	Substantial	<p>The government has signaled its commitment to strengthening and enforcing a regulatory framework that supports BD conservation and restoration. In particular, the government has ratified several international conventions (such as CBD, CITES) and has put in place various national policies to implement these conventions. The development and implementation of a national restoration plan for biodiversity is key to these commitments and the project will develop measures to ensure continuity of this process through: a) promotion of the consolidation of a regulatory framework for BD conservation and restoration, especially through the creation of a national restoration plan; b) homogenization, consolidation and management of ecosystem degradation data by the corresponding national and provincial authorities, initially driven by the project and supported by BD policies agreed upon and accepted by different actors; c) monitoring and control system to identify critical deviations in the agreements reached in the medium and long term, as well as proposed corrective measures; d) the project will carry out a communication campaign with decision makers to increase support for the policy changes that the project will propose and ensure continuous dissemination of good practices and lessons learned; e) the institutionalization of the administrative, regulatory and financial instruments linked to BD conservation, restoration and</p>

		<p>sustainable use. The project will fortify institutional management through: a) strengthening of inter-institutional coordination mechanisms; b) participation of different governmental institutions in the project, thus reinforcing the internalization of their commitment and participation; c) strengthening of institutional capacities. The risk rating is due to political uncertainty surrounding upcoming elections and potential changes in the institutional structure. UNDP is working closely with proponents to mitigate any disruptions than may result from the change in administration.</p>
Macro-economic	Substantial	<p>Argentina's economy is experiencing a contraction affected by strict import controls, a historic drought, and high inflation. To mitigate this risk, the project will support partnerships with lending institutions and the private sector for financing small producers and investment locally to support the adoption of sustainable restoration and BD use practices, as well as market access and value chain development. The project will also provide technical support and training to stakeholders to access innovative financing mechanisms. During the PPG phase, different financial mechanisms and markets will be explored.</p>
Strategies and Policies	Moderate	<p>Argentina has a number of strong national and provincial strategies and policies in place that provide an important baseline for this project. To mitigate the possibilities of diversion from these strategies and priorities, the project has established strong coordination with the different relevant ministries at the federal and provincial levels to ensure the</p>

		project's goals and approaches are aligned to the national goals and international commitments.
Technical design of project or program	Low	Technical design risks are identified as poor-quality design. UNDP has an extensive quality assurance mechanism to ensure projects are designed appropriately and in line with GEF standards.
Institutional capacity for implementation and sustainability	Moderate	Institutional capacity risks are related to the lack of potential project support from the national counterparts for the implementation of the project. The national institutional counterparts have extensive experience implementing GEF-funded projects and have worked extensively with UNDP. However, past projects have revealed significant capacity constraints at the provincial level that have undermined project progress and financial delivery, so special attention will need to be given to the provincial aspect of implementation to ensure institutional ownership and sustainability.
Fiduciary: Financial Management and Procurement	Low	Financial Management and Procurement risks correspond to any potential mismanagement of funds. The project will follow UNDP and GEF financial rules throughout project implementation. Financial information will be monitored via several M&E mechanisms, such as the PIR, MTR, and annual financial audits. These tools will help identify any irregularities related to the use of project funding.
Stakeholder Engagement	Moderate	The project will reduce the potential risk of stakeholder detachment by contacting all relevant stakeholders identified in the PIF document and expanding consultations of IP, local communities and CSO as early as

		possible. During the PPG stage, a Comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be developed in cooperation with these stakeholders, in line with UNDP's and GEF's guidance.
Other		
Financial Risks for NGI projects		
Overall Risk Rating	Substantial	Through the combination of all identified risks, this assessment concludes that this project risk rating is substantial. However, close monitoring of risks (identified or upcoming) will guarantee adequate identification, management, and mitigation.

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

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

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

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

The proposed project is aligned with the GEF-8 Biodiversity Focal Area, more specifically with Objective 1: To improve conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of natural ecosystems. This objective includes an integrated and complementary approach to sustainable use of biodiversity and management of production landscapes for more durable results in conservation, sustainable use, and restoration. The project will follow a landscape approach to improve conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of degraded ecosystems of Argentina (BD Objective 1). Specifically, the project will support sustainable use of wild and native species from terrestrial ecosystems (BD1-2: Sustainable Use of Biodiversity) through the development of a comprehensive National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity that emphasizes restoration, conservation, and sustainable use of native biodiversity, including the development and strengthening of value-chains for BD-based products in IP and local communities. The project will support the development of a stronger policy and regulatory framework that enables conservation and restoration of priority ecoregions and will support productive activities that are biodiversity positive. The project will also generate secondary benefits to BD1-4: Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species, as reducing the impacts and ensuring the proper management of IAS are a motivating factor in the restoration of priority ecoregions.

The project's focus on restoration and sustainable management of BD resources has great potential for contributing to green recovery, as well as the implementation of activities that contribute to MEA (i.e., CBD) and SDGs. It is expected that the multi-focal and integrated nature of the proposed project would contribute to the achievement of:

- The project is aligned with Argentina's recent commitments under the GBF Kunming- Montreal (CBD), specifically to targets 1, 2, 4-6, 8-11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 22 and 23. It contributes to the Kunming-

Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) through Goal A (The integrity of all ecosystems is enhanced, with an increase of at least 15 per cent in the area, connectivity and integrity of natural ecosystems, supporting healthy and resilient populations of all species, the rate of extinctions has been reduced at least tenfold, and the risk of species extinctions across all taxonomic and functional groups, is halved, and genetic diversity of wild and domesticated species is safeguarded, with at least 90 percent of genetic diversity within all species maintained) and Goal B (Nature's contributions to people are valued, maintained or enhanced through conservation and sustainable use supporting the global development agenda for the benefit of all). While specific national action plan and indicators for the national level are not elaborated yet, the Project will elaborate project-tailored detailed targets during the PPG phase.

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) - Achievement of the CBD's goal of conserving biodiversity and promoting sustainable use of its components. Parties to the CBD are required to develop and implement national strategies and plans for biodiversity conservation, and the conservation and restoration of 7 ecoregions can be a key element in these efforts.
- United Nations Framework Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD) – The project will support the development and implementation of a comprehensive National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity, which will contribute to addressing ecosystem degradation, including areas undergoing desertification processes.
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) - The project will play a key role in maintaining healthy forests and regulating carbon storage, which contributes to mitigating climate change. Addressing deforestation in the project target landscapes and restoring degraded forest areas will contribute to UNFCCC's goal of reducing GHGs and promoting sustainable forest management.
- The NDC commitments (UNFCCC), by reducing GHG emissions that result from deforestation and enhancing carbon stocks by restoring degraded areas.
- The project would have direct impacts on at least 9 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG): (1) No poverty, (2) Zero hunger, (5) Gender equality, (8) Decent work and economic growth, (10) Reduced inequalities, (12) Responsible production and consumption, (13) Climate action, (15) Life of terrestrial ecosystems, and (17) Partnerships to achieve the objectives.

Alignment with National Priorities

The project is aligned with the institutional framework of Law 24,375, the NBSAP, and the post-2020 goals that focus on ecosystem restoration. The project is aligned with commitments of the country under the MEAs, particularly to the UNCBD (NBSAPs), UNCCD (voluntary LDN targets) and UNFCCC (NDCs, NAPs), as described above.

D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:

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

Yes

Stakeholder Engagement

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

Yes

Were the following stakeholders consulted during project identification phase:

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities: Yes

Civil Society Organizations: Yes

Private Sector:

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

On 5 January 2023, MAyDS contacted UNDP to confirm its interest in pursuing the development of a PIF in Biodiversity for GEF-8. This was followed by subsequent meetings with project proponents and UNDP on 11 January, 13 February, 3 May and 12 May to map out the different submission options and requirements. These have since become weekly meetings to support the PIF elaboration process.

During July and August, bilateral meetings were held between MAyDS and the following federal institutions: Ministries of Agriculture, Livestock, Mining, Energy, Social Development, Economy, and Labor, as well as the National Agricultural Technology Institute (INTA), National Institute of Industrial Technology (INTI), National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET), Andean-Patagonian Forestry Research and Extension Center (CIEFAP), Misiones Institute of Biodiversity (IMIBIO).

During July and August, bilateral meetings were also held between MAyDS and provincial governments to initiate the definition of potential intervention sites and species within the prioritized ecoregions. Discussions were held with the following:

1. Provincia de Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur
Eugenia Viviana Alvarez Secretaria de Ambiente del Ministerio de Producción y Ambiente
alvarez.eugeniaviviana@gmail.com
2. Provincia de Río Negro
Dina Lina Migani Secretaria de Ambiente y Cambio Climático
dminani@ambiente.rionegro.gov.ar
3. Provincia de Santa Fe
Josefina Obeid Subsecretaria de Protección a la Naturaleza del Ministerio de Ambiente y Cambio Climático
josefinaobeid@gmail.com
4. Provincia de Chaco
Tomás Camarasa Subsecretario de Ambiente de la Secretaria de Desarrollo Territorial y Ambiente
tomascamarasa@chaco.gob.ar
5. Provincia de Misiones
Alan Diego Benitez Vortish Subsecretario de Ecología y Desarrollo Sustentable del Ministerio de Ecología
benitezalan@hotmail.com

On 15 August, bilateral discussions were held with the National Parks Administration (APN) and the National Institute for Indigenous Affairs (INAI), both of which confirmed their interest in partnering with the project. Initially, APN will be an important partner for Components 1 and 2, while the project will engage INAI regarding actions involving Indigenous People in Components 2-4. The details of their involvement will be confirmed during the PPG.

On August 18, discussions were held with the Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina (Manuel Jaramillo, Director General; manuel.jaramillo@vidasilvestre.org.ar and Fernando Oscar Minarro, Director of Conservation: fernando.minarro@vidasilvestre.org.ar), which has expressed interest in collaborating with the project, especially on Components 2 and 3. The details of their participation will be confirmed during the PPG as well as their commitment to the proposed cofinancing.

During the PPG, a full Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process will take place. A socio-economic and gender expert will be hired during the PPG to expand consultations of IP, local communities and CSO as early as possible. Likewise, government institutions will participate in the design of project preparation activities and local stakeholders will be consulted at the intervention sites. A Comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be developed in cooperation with these stakeholders to define and ensure their participation in the full project design as well as implementation.

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

Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

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

Yes

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

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

Yes

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
High or Substantial			

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge management

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

Yes

ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

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

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	GEF Project Grant(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total GEF Financing (\$)
UNDP	GET	Argentina	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	Grant	5,279,452.00	501,548.00	5,781,000.00
Total GEF Resources (\$)						5,279,452.00	501,548.00	5,781,000.00

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Is Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount (\$)

200000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

19000

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non- Grant	PPG(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total PPG Funding(\$)
UNDP	GET	Argentina	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	Grant	200,000.00	19,000.00	219,000.00
Total PPG Amount (\$)						200,000.00	19,000.00	219,000.00

Please provide justification

A higher PPG amount is requested in recognition of the higher costs associated with ensuring a comprehensive stakeholder engagement/commitment process in 7 ecoregions across 5 provinces, many of which have indigenous peoples.

Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Sources of Funds	Total(\$)
UNDP	GET	Argentina	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	6,000,000.00

Total GEF Resources

6,000,000.00

Indicative Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Co-financing(\$)
BD-1-2	GET	5,279,452.00	39200000
Total Project Cost		5,279,452.00	39,200,000.00

Indicative Co-financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAYDS)	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	13500000
Recipient Country Government	Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	4300000
Recipient Country Government	Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria (SAGyP)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	3700000
Recipient Country Government	Secretaría de Industria y Desarrollo Productivo (MEC)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2400000
Recipient Country Government	Secretaría de Minería (MEC)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2100000
Recipient Country Government	Instituto Nacional de Asuntos Indígenas	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1100000
Recipient Country Government	Provincia de Misiones	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2100000
Recipient Country Government	Provincia de Chaco	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1900000
Recipient Country Government	Provincia de Santa Fe	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1100000
Recipient Country Government	Provincia de Río Negro	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2200000
Recipient Country Government	Provincia de Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1400000

Civil Society Organization	Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina	Other	Investment mobilized	1100000
Private Sector	Private Sector	Grant	Investment mobilized	2000000
GEF Agency	UNDP	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	300000
Total Co-financing				39,200,000.00

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

The cofinancing indicated above reflects the Argentina government's commitment to programs that provide a solid baseline and will contribute important technical actions and support during the implementation of this GEF project.

The Investment Mobilized from MAyDS will come from the following:

- B3:E22 Promotion Program for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Agroecosystems
- National Strategy for Invasive Exotic Species
- Inclusive Conservation Program
- Primate Conservation Plan
- Yaguareté Conservation Plan
- National Action Program to Combat Desertification, Land Degradation and Droughts

The Investment Mobilized will be provided by the Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina and the private sector (financial institutions involved in Component 3). The project is in preliminary discussions with potential private sector co-financiers and will provide specific names during the PPG. The project will consider the potential to work with private banks, insurance, derisking, voluntary carbon markets, etc. to increase the scale of impact. While there are entities that are known to partner with local producers, the full identification and confirmation of specific private sector partners will begin during the PPG.

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

GEF Agency(ies) Certification

GEF Agency Type	Name	Date	Project Contact Person	Phone	Email
Project Coordinator	UNDP		Alexandra Fischer, Senior Regional Technical Advisor		alexandra.fischer@undp.org
GEF Agency Coordinator	UNDP		Pradeep Kurukulasuriya		pradeep.kurukulasuriya@undp.org

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

Name	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

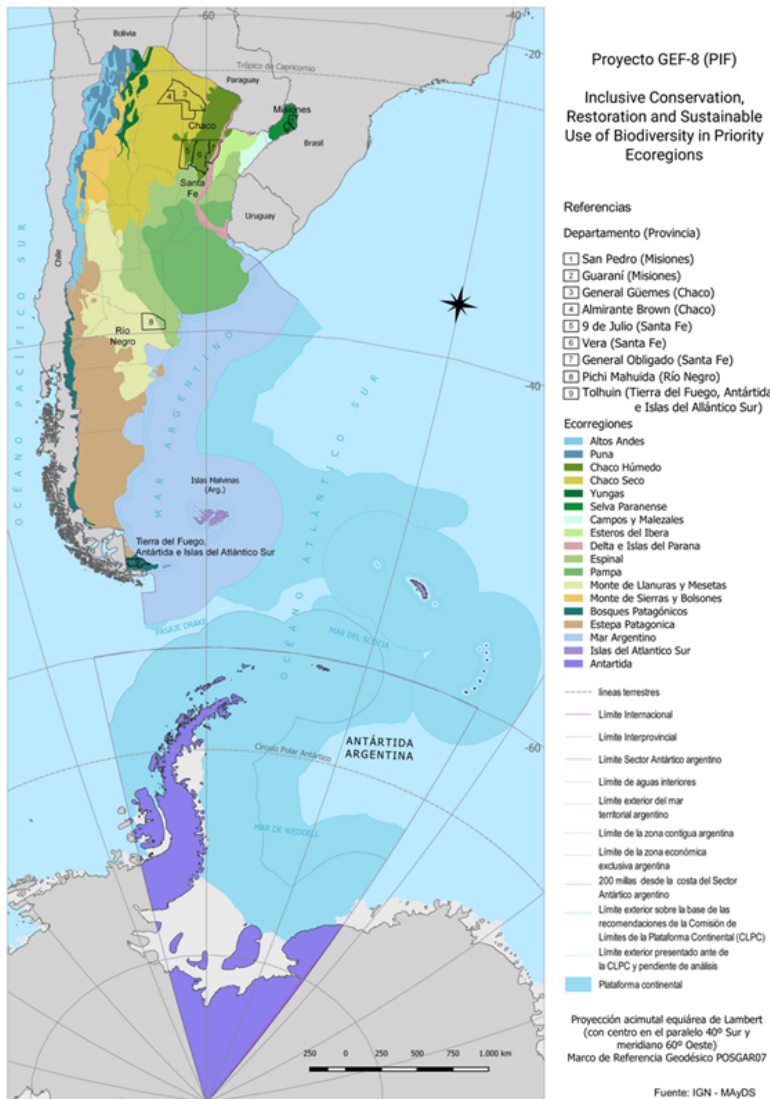
Martin Manuel Illescas	Dirección General de Proyectos con Financiamiento Externo y Cooperación Internacional	Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible	11/16/2023
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ANNEX C: PROJECT LOCATION

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

The project will work in 3 regions comprised of 5 provinces across 7 ecoregions:

Region	Province	Ecoregion	Hectares to be restored	Hectares of landscapes targeted to be under improved practices
North	Misiones	- Upper Parana Atlantic Forest	2,932 ha	3,580 ha
	Chaco	- Dry Chaco	10,000 ha	30,000 ha
Center	Santa Fe	- Humid Chaco	3,400 ha	6,000 ha
		- Parana Delta & Flooded Savannah		
South	Rio Negro	- Low Monte	1,000 ha	1,000 ha
		- Espinal		
	Tierra del Fuego	- Patagonian Andean Forest	2,500 ha	2,500 ha
Total hectares			19,832	38,080



Argentina is one of the countries with the largest number of ecoregions in the world (Lean et al. 1990) due to its great ecogeographic diversity, both latitudinal and altitudinal (Morello et al. 2012). The country has significant geographic and environmental complexity and, as a result, significant diversity in landscapes, climates, ecosystems, and biodiversity. The geographical breadth of the Project's selection is based on the variability of ecoregions present in Argentina and the need to test restoration techniques in different ecosystems to transform those results into a comprehensive National Restoration Plan for Biodiversity. The selection process for this project significantly reduced potential intervention sites while maintaining ecoregion variability; seven of the 18 ecoregions have been classified as having the highest priorities for conservation (Dinerstein et al. 1995). Furthermore, in recognition of the level of responsibility assigned to provinces to manage biodiversity, 5 provinces were selected based on their technical and institutional capacity to address restoration, conservation, and sustainable use of biodiversity covering 19,832 hectares to be restored and 38,080 hectares under improved practices.

The precise number of intervention sites will be defined during the PPG. As such, each province will focus on developing expertise in 1 or 2 ecoregions. This will make monitoring and reporting more efficient as only one province will be assigned to work in each ecoregion. The project will work with provincial and local authorities to design, implement and monitor restoration, conservation and sustainable use models tailored to each ecoregion. As such, the project will build upon and strengthen provincial programmes that focus on

restoration, conservation, and sustainable use of biodiversity within their ecoregions. These provinces cover the biodiverse regions of Argentina's territory, north, center, south, with a history of having worked in recent years with the Ministry of Environment and having good results in cooperation, execution and reporting, policy and institutionality. All of them have shown the capacity to sustainably use biodiversity, all with local communities and indigenous peoples, especially Misiones, Chaco and Río Negro. The intervention sites will be defined with the provinces so that they indicate concrete possibilities of where the project can implement aspects of conservation, sustainable use, restoration, and compensation. As such, the project proponents will work with stakeholders at all levels to acquire the endorsement of the jurisdictions to indicate the specific sites. Depending on the provincial agreements, the specific territories of intervention will be confirmed by way of provincial agreements, as well as the specific species and products to be included in the project with regards to sustainable use of biodiversity. In Río Negro and Tierra del Fuego, for example, the project will build upon successful previous interventions in order to address the need to continue with the control and management of invasive alien species.

The following site selection criteria were considered:

- Sites with better and more effective conservation results at the landscape scale with the economic resources available. This regional connectivity may generate a greater cost effectiveness in the implementation of the measures.
- Participation of all stakeholders to be validated during the PRODOC. In this first instance, the provinces defined the sites.
- During the design and implementation stages of compensation measures, free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples must be ensured in accordance with ILO-UN Convention 169 and Law 24.071 of 1989, and the effective public participation of the authorities, competent authorities, experts and civil society, to guarantee multicultural decision-making that respects the rights and knowledge of the parties, and promotes transparent communication to contribute to the sustainability of actions according to Law 27566 of 2020 'Escazú Agreement'.
- Inclusive conservation. The implementation of compensation measures through biodiversity restoration includes people and communities to ensure sustainability (adapted from MAyDS, 2021).
- Gender and diversity approach: It is necessary to incorporate the gender and diversity approach in all measures for the restoration, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Incorporating this perspective invites reflection on practices, concepts and policies. Argentina has a Gender Identity Law 26,743 that is a pioneer in the world and that recognizes people's right to gender identity, and defines it based on their own self-perception (MAyDS, 2021).
- Scientific knowledge approach: Scientific research is essential to know, understand and conserve biodiversity. For this reason, this approach must be transversal to any approach to biodiversity. Scientific information not only includes practices related to the knowledge, evaluation, monitoring and conservation of biodiversity from a basic and applied science perspective, but also involves different fields and disciplines (including contributions from the economic, social, health and education sciences, among others) (MAyDS, 2021).
- Areas that have degraded areas but to a degree where BD conservation and restoration actions are possible
- Areas of importance for the conservation of the BD according to the ENB
- Presence of endemic and threatened species that would benefit from restoration actions
- Indigenous and peasant communities that would benefit from restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity

- Sites where the conservation tools of the MAyDS DB (restoration, sustainable use, management of exotics, agroecological management) can be integrated at the farm level based on the development of science-based techniques during the project. This integration will also occur with techniques from other public bodies and civil society organizations.

With regards to the total area to be restored and brought under improved practices, the project recognizes that ecological restoration techniques are intensive and require a small area to be developed. By testing different models for 7 priority ecoregions in 5 provinces that have a strong programmatic, technical, and institutional baseline, the project will develop cost-effective models for restoration, conservation, and sustainable use of biodiversity, laying the groundwork for replication in other provinces with shared ecoregions and ultimately contributing to the development of a comprehensive National Restoration Programme for Biodiversity.

All of this will be confirmed during the PPG based on in-depth consultations with the project partners at the federal, provincial and local levels.

Table: Areas of Intervention for Restoration, Conservation and Sustainable Use

Region	Ecoregion	Hectares of degraded/deforested area	Hectares to be restored	Hectares of landscapes targeted to be under improved practices	Species to conserve and/or restore	Priority species for sustainable use in the project	IAS related to areas to be restored and/or sustainable use
North:							
Misiones	Upper Parana Atlantic Forest	2,932 ha (2021)	2,932 ha	3,580 ha	Timbo (<i>Enterolobium contortisiliquum</i>) and different legumes (high nitrogen capacity) and species such as Guayubira (<i>Cordia americana</i>), Inga (<i>Inga uraguensis</i>), and fruit trees in Lote 8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – pitanga (<i>Eugenia uniflora</i>): sweets and other food products – native melipona bees: honey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Flora: pathodea campanulata, Leucaena leucocephala; – Fauna: Axis Deer (<i>Axis axis</i>), Bullfrog (<i>Lithobates catesbeianus</i>) – Snails, like the deer and the leucaena affect plant species of sustainable use. – Axis deer also affect the sustainable use of fauna.
Chaco	Dry Chaco	21,460 ha (2021)	10,000 ha	30,000 ha	– Quebracho colorado or Chaqueño (<i>Schinopsis balansae</i>) and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – native melipona bees: honey – Carob (<i>Schinopsis</i>) 	

					<p>Santiagoño (<i>Schinopsis brasiliensis</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Palo Santo – Carob (Algarrobo) – Chaguar – Meliponas 	<i>balansae</i> : flour	
Center							
Santa Fe	Humid Chaco Parana Delta & Flooded Savanna	3,764 (2021)	3,400 ha	6,000 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Aguará Guazú (<i>Chrysocyon brachyurus</i>) – Yellow Cardinal (<i>Gubernatrix cristata</i>), – Crowned Eagle (<i>Buteogallus coronatus</i>) – Pampas Deer (<i>Ozotoceros bezoarticus</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Eugenia uniflora</i>: sweets and other food products – Carob (<i>Schinopsis balansae</i>): flour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Axis deer (<i>Axis axis</i>) – Wild Boar (<i>Sus scrofa</i>) – Cimarron Pig (<i>Sus scrofa domestica</i>)
South							
Rio Negro	Low Monte Espinal	10,000 ha	1,000 ha	1,000 ha	Yellow Cardinal (<i>Gubernatrix cristata</i>) and the Crowned Eagle (<i>Buteogallus coronatus</i>) and their habitat: small nurseries of native trees, with species such as Caldén (<i>Neltuma caldenia</i>) and Carob (<i>Schinopsis balansae</i>), to reforest in areas of the northeastern	– Carob (<i>Schinopsis balansae</i>): flour	Wild Boar (<i>Sus scrofa</i>). In the sector where the restoration of yellow cardinal habitat will be addressed, the wild boar is well-established and causes severe damage to the ecosystem.

					portion of the province (Guanaco (<i>Lama guanicoe</i>), Choique (<i>Rhea pennata</i>), Chinchillón (<i>Lagidium viscacia</i>), Mara (<i>Dolichotis patagonum</i>), Cauquen colorado (<i>Chloephaga rubidiceps</i>), Felines and Wild Carnivores)		
Tierra del Fuego	Patagonian Andean Forest	20,000 ha	2,500 ha	2,500 ha.	Lenga forests in the Reserva forestal Milna-AP Rio Valdez-Comunidad Selknam-Sup	– Calafate (<i>Berberis microphylla</i>) : sweets	– Beaver (<i>Castor canadensis</i>) – Hyeraciyum – Mink (<i>Neovison vison</i>) – Bagual cattle
TOTAL		58,156	19,832	38,080			

The following is a summary of the methodology to implement for pilot activities in Component 2:

-COLLECTION OF INPUTS-GERMOPLASM OR SEEDS BANK

- Identification of seed stands by ecoregion and by province, articulation with REA (Argentine Ecological Restoration Network).
- Identification of starter or pioneer species.
- Seed test, its viability and germinating power. Harvest calendar.
- Infrastructure of the seed bank.

-NURSERY BY ECOREGION AND BY PROVINCE.

- Harvest. Planting nursery. Breeding nursery. Rustification Area/Hardiness Zone (prior to transplant). Strengthen the REVINA group.
- Seed bank. Infrastructure.
- Certification.

-RESTORATION

- Identification of pilot restoration sites.
- Logistics of transfer to destination.
- Monitoring and Follow-up.

-INPUTS and MATERIALS.

Trainings:

- Restoration.
- Agroecological approach.
- Gender inclusion and sensitivity.
- Use of sustainable firewood. Inti Solar Cooker.
- Use of native fruits.
- Day of exchange between the experiences of each ecoregion.
- Food for cattle, sheep and goats.
- Food for human consumption.

ANNEX D: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING

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

Title

PIMS 9523 ARG GEF8 PIF Biodiversity Cleared PreSESP

ANNEX E: RIO MARKERS

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

ANNEX F: TAXONOMY WORKSHEET

Influencing models	Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making		
	Deploy innovative financial instruments		
Stakeholders	Indigenous Peoples		
	Private Sector		
		Financial intermediaries and market facilitators	
		Individuals/Entrepreneurs	
	Beneficiaries		
	Local Communities		
	Civil Society		
		Community Based Organization	
		Non-Governmental Organization	
		Academia	
	Type of Engagement		
		Information Dissemination	
		Consultation	
		Participation	
	Communications		
		Awareness Raising	
		Public Campaigns	
Capacity, Knowledge and Research			

	Capacity Development		
	Knowledge Generation and Exchange		
	Knowledge and Learning		
		Knowledge Management	
		Innovation	
		Capacity Development	
		Learning	
	Stakeholder Engagement Plan		
Gender Equality			
	Gender Mainstreaming		
		Beneficiaries	
		Sex-disaggregated indicators	
	Gender results areas		
		Access and control over natural resources	
		Participation and leadership	
		Access to benefits and services	
		Capacity development	
		Awareness raising	
Focal Areas/Theme			
	Biodiversity		
		Protected Areas and Landscapes	
			Terrestrial Protected Areas
			Productive Landscapes
			Community Based Natural Resource Management
		Species	
			Wildlife for Sustainable Development
			Invasive Alien Species (IAS)
		Biomes	
			Wetlands
			Temperate Forests
			Grasslands
		Financial and Accounting	
			Conservation Finance
	Forests		
		Forest and Landscape Restoration	
	Land Degradation		
		Sustainable Land Management	
			Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands
			Ecosystem Approach
			Community-Based NRM
			Sustainable Livelihoods
			Income Generating Activities
			Sustainable Forest/Woodland Management
			Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques
	Climate Change		
		Climate Change Mitigation	
			Agriculture, Forestry, and other Land Use
	Rio Markers		
		Sustainable Development Goals	
		Climate Change Mitigation 1	
		Climate Change Adaptation 1	