

## Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and restoring forest landscape connectivity in Bago Region, Myanmar

### Basic Information

**GEF ID**

10699

**Countries**

Myanmar

**Project Title**

Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and restoring forest landscape connectivity in Bago Region, Myanmar

**GEF Agency(ies)**

UNDP, WWF-US

**Agency ID**

UNDP: 6507, WWF-US: 0036

**GEF Focal Area(s)**

Multi Focal Area

**Program Manager**

Hannah Fairbank

# PIF

## Part I – Project Informatic

### Focal area elements

1. Is the project/program aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?

#### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

HF October 15, 2020:

Comment cleared.

HF September 27, 2020:

1.) Please correct table A, it erroneously includes IW resources, when in fact it should be marked as LD.

### A. Indicative Focal/Non-Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
BD-1-1	GET	2,759,451	11,000,000
BD-2-7	GET	3,500,000	14,500,000
IW-1-3	GET	863,242	3,430,000
	<b>Total Project Cost (\$)</b>	<b>7,122,693</b>	<b>28,930,000</b>

## Agency Response

13 Oct 2020:

Thanks for pointing this out. This has been corrected.

## Indicative project/program description summary

**2. Are the components in Table B and as described in the PIF sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project/program objectives and the core indicators?**

### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 22, 2020 HF:

Comment cleared. Table fixed.

October 21, 2020 HF:

Project Management Cost – there are two rows in Table B –one with the other without co-financing. Please amend by leaving only one row with the total GEF portion and co-financing portion for PMC, and the total PMC.

HF October 15, 2020:

All comments cleared.

October 6, 2020 HF:

Overall, yes.

1.) Component 3:

- a.) Are there other protected areas in the landscape that the project will engage? Or just NZWS?
- b.) Is there a framework or legal basis for the development for a multi-stakeholder PA committee?

## Agency Response

13 Oct 2020:

Component 3:

1a) NZWS is the only forested PA in the Bago Yoma landscape and is reflected in the PIF.

*Please refer to Table B and Page 14*

1 b) Chapter 2 of the 2018 Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected Areas Law requires formation of regional/state, district, and township-level supporting committees for the administration of PA management in areas that have PAs within their jurisdiction, and village-level committees may be formed if necessary.

*Refer Output 3.1 (p. 34)*

## **Co-financing**

**3. Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines, with a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

HF October 15, 2020:

Comment cleared.

October 6, 2020 HF:

Is there co-finance expected (or possibility of) from UNDP or the private sector? Please include in description.

### **Agency Response**

**13 Oct 2020:**

UNDP has included a cash co-financing of US\$ 200,000 over the duration of the project.

As for the private sector co-financing, potential private sector could not be consulted during the PIF development. Partnership with potential private sector and co-financing will be explored and confirmed during the PPG stage.

*Please refer Table C (p.7) for UNDP's co-financing.*

**GEF Resource Availability**

**4. Is the proposed GEF financing in Table D (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 6, 2020 HF:

Yes

**Agency Response**

**The STAR allocation?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 6, 2020 HF:

Yes

**Agency Response**

**The focal area allocation?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

HF October 15, 2020:

Comment cleared.

October 6, 2020 HF:

Yes, though please see to previous comment regarding erroneous IW designation of funds.

### **Agency Response**

**13 Oct 2020**

This has been corrected.

### **The LDCF under the principle of equitable access**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

### **Agency Response**

### **The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

### **Agency Response**

### **Focal area set-aside?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

Impact Program Incentive?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

Project Preparation Grant

5. Is PPG requested in Table E within the allowable cap? Has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated? (not applicable to PFD)

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 6, 2020 HF:

Yes.

Agency Response

## Core indicators

### 6. Are the identified core indicators in Table F calculated using the methodology included in the correspondent Guidelines? (GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)

#### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 15, 2020 HF:

Comments cleared.

October 6, 2020 HF:

- 1.) Please note that indirect project impacts cannot be counted towards core indicators, but please ensure that the full area that is expected to be directly impacted by improved management of biodiversity via mainstreaming or improved PA management under this project is included in the targets. This includes implementation of policy under the project that is supported directly by GEF funds, project co-finance or government expenditures within the project implementation period.
- 2.) Regarding training PA staff in the Core Indicator notes: we would not count the PA area of the PA manager(s) from those parks as hectares under improved management. Please redact.

#### Agency Response

13 Oct 2020:

- 1) Well noted. The reference to indirect impacts in Table F have been removed.

The area that will be directly impacted by the project through GEF grant, co-financing including government expenditures within the project implementation period are now correctly reflected in table F and Annex B. These include the NZWS protected area of 98,000 ha (CI -1), and within the 367,000 ha landscape (excluding the PA) the following are the targets: 10,000 ha restoration (CI-3) and 357,000 ha under improved practices (CI-4), the latter including 307,000 ha under improved forest management practices and 50,000 ha under improved management through CFs

*Please refer to core indicator notes in Table F (Page 9)*

- 2) Agreed and removed from the CI notes under Table F



## Project/Program taxonomy

### 7. Is the project/ program properly tagged with the appropriate keywords as requested in Table G?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion October 6, 2020 HF:

yes.

#### Agency Response

### art II – Project Justification

#### 1. Has the project/program described the global environmental / adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers that need to be addressed?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 15, 2020 HF:

Comment cleared.

October 6, 2020 HF:

- 1.) Please integrate zoonotic risk in this section if it is indeed an issue.
- 2.) Given the history of the Bago region, and the current context it is clear that political will and a transformation in power dynamics seem to be central to a more sustainable and prosperous path for the region. The bottom-up approach of this project is clear, it is less clear from the concept to what extent the conditions are in place from those perspectives to be able to make progress in addressing the drivers, threats and barriers identified, and how the project will work at both the field, and policy level for sustained improvements.
- 3.) Barrier 1: Please include a discussion of the land tenure issues and status in the landscape (and later on in the concept, how these will be addressed in the project). This should include noting the legal/regulatory basis for CFUGs.

#### Agency Response

## **Agency response**

**13 Oct 2020:**

1) Description on risk related to zoonotic diseases is included both in the narrative as well in the Risk matrix under section 5.

*Please refer page 14-15 and Risk Matrix Section 5 on pages 48-51*

2) A series of new policies and laws pertaining to biodiversity and forest management form the basis for change and for this project and demonstrate the political commitment to address forest threats and barriers. These in particular, include recently approved legislation such as the 2018 revised Forestry Law, the 2018 Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected Areas Law, the 2016 revised National Land Use Policy (2016), the Myanmar Reforestation and Rehabilitation Program (2018), and other national policies and strategies. Taken together these instruments provide policy and legal support for a new inclusive and consultative natural resources management regime, as Myanmar continues to emerge as a democratic and participatory nation. The government has shown considerable proactive movement towards more inclusive land planning processes, for example by initiating Local Community Protected Areas in two regions (Phar Baung Taung Nature Reserve in Mon State, and the Phat Baung Taung Community Conserved Protected Area). Further, government is much more open to the community management of forest areas as CFs, with many such areas now established in Myanmar and exceeding its own NBSAP target. The government target for Bago is to add 18,400 hectares of CF, (which this project will markedly increase). The project will support the government to demonstrate with effective implementation of these national policies through capacity development, engagement of communities in forest management and decision-making and improved approaches at integrated landscape planning that can influence and build capacity for replication.

*Please Refer Section 3 (proposed alternative scenario) on Page 22*

Under Myanmar's Constitution of 2008, all lands belong to the State, where government agencies, private sector companies and individuals may be assigned rights to use the land for varying periods of time. As forestland in the Bago Yoma region is under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department, shifting cultivators in the region normally have no documentary evidence of land rights. The land on which shifting cultivation is practiced may be Forest Land or Vacant, Fallow and Virgin (VFV) land, but without clear demarcation of the land they use, and hence they are vulnerable to land grabs and to loss of access to these lands

To address the issue of land tenure the project will support improved capacity of the CFUGs and land use planning committees to promote active and transparent mechanisms for consultation in decision-making; development of ecosystem-based district forest management plans through a participatory process, establishment of new CFs, Community PAs (ICCAs) and OECMs based on FPIC participation of affected communities and establishment of community forest enterprises and commercial opportunities to improve livelihoods based on community consultation. The participatory forest and management planning and sustainable forest management, OECM planning and ICCA planning will facilitate ensuring that community traditional rights related to shifting cultivation, market gardens and fuel wood collection are recognized.

*Please refer to barrier 1 (page 15)*

## **2. Is the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects appropriately described?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

October 15, 2020 HF:

Comment cleared

Comment cleared.

October 8, 2020 HF:

Please include associated/relevant baseline projects in this section.

### Agency Response

**13 Oct 2020:**

Few baseline projects that are relevant to the proposed project have been included.

*Please refer on Page 21 & 22*

### 3. Does the proposed alternative scenario describe the expected outcomes and components of the project/program?

#### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 15, 2020 HF:

- 1.) Comment cleared.
- 2.) Comment cleared. Please provide further design detail and focus re: OECMs at the CER stage with the understanding that GEF resources should be supporting actions and outcomes for the conservation of globally significant biodiversity from OECMs, keeping in mind that they may have a much broader scope, purview and set of outcomes.
- 3.) Comment cleared.
- 4.) Comment cleared.
- 5.) Comment cleared. To be further addressed during PPG.
- 6.) Comment cleared.

October 6, 2020 HF:

- 1.) C-1, Output 1: Assuming that the intention is increased training for CF on biodiversity values and ES will translate into not just planning, but management of CF's that support conservation and ES management? Please clarify.
- 2.) Output 2.2: What are the OECMs that are referred and planned for this project? And is one of their main objectives biodiversity conservation? Please explain and include in relevant places in the PIF.

3.) Output 2.4: Will it be possible to include a baseline assessment of the current state of biodiversity in the PIF? Will GEF

3.) Output 2.4: Will these activities be undertaken at the Landscape Scale (see next question on leakage), or just within NZWS? Will CFUGs be involved (if so should likely include in risks/safeguards if undertaking any sort of patrols/enforcement would put them in increased risk)? How does this link to PA management actions?

4.) Output 3.2: Please describe what type of "required facilities" would be supported under this output to enable proper management of the PA?

5.) To what extent has the issue of 'leakage' of illegal activities been considered once the management and enforcement in the target landscape and park is ratcheted up? What are the ways that this can be directly or indirectly addressed?

6.) Output 4.3: Please further elaborate this output, particularly in regards to how it would support and disseminate "a national scaling up model for wider implementation" as this is key to the project's overall incremental reasoning and impact. And specifically also related to the NZWS becoming the demonstration model for PA management.

## Agency Response

### 13 Oct 2020:

1) Thank you for the feedback. The intent of the training provided to CFUGs is to assist them to apply this knowledge in the management of their respective forest areas, as guided early on through the project.

*Please refer to output 1.1 description on Page 29*

2) Output 2.2 also entails assisting the Government establish policy and guidelines for OECMs. The actual types of OECMs will be defined following a mapping exercise and consultation with local communities, and can include CFs, ICCAs, community protected areas, and OECM that promote livelihood opportunities through agroforestry and other biodiversity-friendly forest uses) depending on locations and community interest.

*Refer to Footnote 1 (Table B, p.2) which provides definition of OECM and Output 2.2 (Page 31) describes activities.*

3) The mapping exercise of the landscape envisaged under Output 2.4 is intended to facilitate zoning of the landscape for various activities, including CFs, ICCAs, OECMs as well as to identify 'hotspots' of poaching and IWT to identify locations where monitoring and enforcement action will be most required to effectively reduce illegal activities, partly through SMART (focussed) community patrolling.

*Refer Output 2.4 (page P. 33), and Section 5 Matrix where another risk related to CFUGs involvement in patrolling is presented (Page 46)*

4) This is clarified Output 3.2 narrative as follows: specifically, three small wooden ranger stations will be constructed to provide improved facilities for patrol teams throughout the NZWS, and a small office will be added to support on-site administration.

*Refer Output 3.2 (Page 34)*

5) Thank you for the feedback. Improved enforcement could result in increased illegal activities outside of the project area. The question of leakage or displacement of such illegal actions is difficult to estimate at this stage. This will become clearer during the PPG stage through baseline assessments and consultations with key stakeholders including community. This will be further assessed during the PPG and appropriately addressed in the project strategy.

6) Output 4.3: would support the analysis, documentation and dissemination of best practices and lessons learned that deliver tangible

o) Output 4.5. would support the analysis, documentation and dissemination of best practices and lessons learned that deliver tangible improvements in biodiversity and natural resources status, provide inputs to future land use policy review and practice to provide examples for replication. It would also entail participation in regional and international workshops, including GWP events, conferences and field visits for national and sub-national staff to improve learning and exchange of experiences in mainstreaming biodiversity considerations, and integrated landscape and biodiversity management, protected area management and sectoral planning and practices. Based on these best practices and lessons learned, including from NZWS, the project will support the preparation of a replication strategy for developing a national scaling up model for wider implementation across much of Myanmar in the future. The replication strategy will assess the required institutional and coordination arrangements, financial and human resources and partnership commitments necessary for ensuring replication across the country. This strategy will form the basis for consultation with government (national and provincial), private sector and NGOs to develop a roadmap for national scaling up.

*Refer Output 4.3 (Page 36)*

**16 Oct 2020:**

- 2) Additional comments well noted. This will be assessed during the PPG and reported/updated at the CEO ER stage.
  
- 5) This comment is also well noted and assessed during the PPG stage.

**4. Is the project/program aligned with focal area and/or Impact Program strategies?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

October 15, 2020 HF:

Comment cleared.

October 6, 2020 HF:

Please include a discussion of the overall value of the project region from the perspective of globally significant biodiversity (beyond NZ PA).

**Agency Response**

**13 Oct 2020:**

The Bago Region lies within the globally important, and endangered, Indo-Myanmar (Burma) Biodiversity Hotspot. Myanmar has some of the most diverse habitats in the tropics, owing to its varied topography and north to south distinct variation in climate. The Bago semi-evergreen forest (which extends across much of the Bago region) is classified as one of only two critically endangered forest ecosystems in Myanmar, therefore indicating the urgency for large scale conservation interventions in this region. IUCN lists 14 globally threatened or endangered

mammals and reptiles on the project landscape, and it is likely that there is also at least 5 endangered avian species (data uncertain as yet).

*Refer Section 1 (p.10), Section 4 (p.37) and section 6 (p.39-40).*

## **5. Is the incremental / additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

October 15, 2020 HF:

All comments cleared.

October 6, 2020 HF:

- 1.) This project has a strong theory of change and project justification, well articulated Components and outputs but the Incremental cost reasoning/GEF increment needs to be reworked. Please clearly articulate "the role for the GEF in the context of the expected agreed global environmental benefits from a proposed project. It is based on an assessment of the value added by involving the GEF" [for the production of GEBs for globally significant biodiversity].
- 2.) Please also note that no GEF resources will go to support the facilities to house and rehabilitate confiscated wildlife under this project.

### **Agency Response**

#### **13 Oct 2020:**

1) The proposed GEF project will build on recent government environmental policy and laws to test new approaches at CFs, ICCAs and mainstreaming of biodiversity in sector and local planning at the landscape level. This project will draw together multiple components (planning, zoning, PA management, SFM, enforcement, livelihood options), based on new mapping and participatory planning, to improve landscape connectivity, habitat conditions, and wildlife protection to achieve global benefits for a suite of globally endangered wildlife, and using the NZWS as an anchor and refugium

*Refer Section 5 Page 38*

The intent is not to seek GEF resources to support facilities to house and rehabilitate confiscated wildlife. Such resources, if needed would be sought from co-financing.

*Refer Output 3.1 Page 34*

## **6. Are the project's/program's indicative targeted contributions to global environmental benefits (measured through core**

c. Are the projects/programs indicative targeted contributions to global environmental benefits (measured through core indicators) reasonable and achievable? Or for adaptation benefits?

### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 16, 2020 HF:

2.) Comment cleared. Though I think there was some confusion in this. The text explaining the cost/hectare calculations should remain in the PIF in the Core Indicators section (under: "Provide additional explanation on targets, other methodologies used"). This can be further explained/addressed/included at CER stage.

October 15, 2020 HF:

1.) Comment cleared.

2.) Please include or better label Annex D-don't see. Can remove text from Section 5.

October 6, 2020 HF:

1.) Please ensure that the targets account for all the hectares impacted by the land use and forest plans; it is not clear to me if they all are captured in either CI 1 and CI 4. Please revise as needed.

2.) Please include an explanation for the cost per hectare of this project.

### Agency Response

#### 13 Oct 2020:

1) Revised accordingly for consistency throughout.

*Refer Table F (p.8-9)*

2) Based on a GEF grant of \$7,112,693 and co-financing of \$28,932,000 a total area of 465,000 ha is covered, the per hectare cost estimate comes to around \$80 (and \$16/ha as per GEF financing), and the cost /tCO<sub>2</sub>e is a very low \$5.00 (including GEF and co-financing) especially considering that much of the amount is from avoided forest loss. The actual amount dedicated to any activity are of course confounded by the various expenditures for each component of the study and their actual contribution to the per ha cost. The mapping and zoning will be an expensive component

an expensive component.

*Refer Section 5 (page 39) and Annex D (p.77)*

### **16 Oct 2020**

A total of 465,000 ha (see core indicators 1,3, and 4) will be positively impacted by the project through various activities described in the PIF. The total project GEF grant is approximately \$7.1 million and approximately \$29.1 million co-financing will be secured from several sources, totaling a project investment of \$37.2 million approximately. However, cost per hectare of this project is not evenly distributed across all activities. Primarily, the cost per hectare can be divided into two groups a) restoration of 10,000 hectare of land and b) all other project activities.

Global average cost per hectare for restoration of land ranges between \$300 to \$3,800 depending on the local wages, geographic location, type of forests, to name a few factors. These range is based on wide array of sources (desk and field research, past projects, modelling, etc.) which were curated by organizations such the convention of biological diversity, the world resources institute and IUCN. For this project, based on the consultation with the national experts, the cost for the project target area restoration is estimated at \$675 per hectare. In this project, we are not expecting to restore heavily degraded area, instead improving restoring areas to a more diverse pseudo-plantations to improve connectivity. The total cost is estimated \$6.80 million for 10,000 hectares. And the remaining project activities (core indicator 1 and 4) cost per hectare is at \$67.

We have not included this in the text of the PIF.

Annex D refers to GGH estimate using the FAO ExACT tool. Reference to this has been removed as suggested.

## **7. Is there potential for innovation, sustainability and scaling up in this project?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

October 15, 2020 HF:

All comments cleared.

October 6, 2020 HF:

- 1.) Is there a financial sustainability plan being developed for the national wildlife ranger training center at NZWS based on public resources? What is the basis of this financial planning?
- 2.) Please explain what is meant by "inherently sustainable" and why it is presumed to be (or take it out and just explain why these community activities/investment would be sustainable).
- 3.) There are great opportunities/possibilities for scaling-up impacts from this project. Please link this section better within the KM output and KM approach for the project.



## Agency Response

13 Oct 2020:

1) Yes, and now reflected in the Output. This now an output of 3.3.

*Refer Output 3.3 on Page 34 and Section 7 Page 42*

2) This is now clarified  
*Refer Section 7 Page 41*

3) The project is designed to provide demonstration models for up-scaling in Myanmar. In particular, the capacity building and support for district forest management planning, district land use planning, landscape planning, and OECMs including ICCA approaches, the latter based on the New Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected Area law (2018) will likely help support opportunities for national scaling up. Ensuring that activities, impacts and lessons learnt from the demonstration landscape and NZWS sites are disseminated widely helps generate a bottom-up demand for similar activities throughout the country. The Project's investment component will seek to develop synergies among sub-national, district and rural development actors, community institutions and programs with an objective of raising additional support to expand models of conservation, resource use and alternative livelihood activities within and outside of the targeted biological landscape. The replication and scaling up strategy to be developed (Output 4.3) will assess sustainable financial and institutional arrangements for scaling up, support identification of new biological landscapes, develop a best practice manual and conduct dissemination events to encourage uptake of such concepts as discussed above to other sites in the country.

*Refer Section 7 Pages 43-44*

## Project/Program Map and Coordinates

Is there a preliminary geo-reference to the project's/program's intended location?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 6, 2020 HF:

Yes

Agency Response

## Stakeholders

Does the PIF/PFD include indicative information on Stakeholders engagement to date? If not, is the justification provided appropriate? Does the PIF/PFD include information about the proposed means of future engagement?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 15, 2020 HF:

Comment cleared.

October 8, 2020 HF:

Please include the "means of engagement" in the stakeholder table."

### Agency Response

13 Oct 2020:

This is now reflected as a new fourth column in the Stakeholder table.

*Refer Part 2 Stakeholder Table (pages 45-47)*

## Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Is the articulation of gender context and indicative information on the importance and need to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, adequate?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 15, 2020 HF:

Comment cleared.

October 6, 2020 HF:

Please explain why a 30% target for representation of women has been set for this project?

### **Agency Response**

**13 Oct 2020:**

Although, 30% women's participation is defined at PIF stage, during PPG stage, a gender specialist will assess the current baseline of women's representation in meetings and livelihood activities, identify key activities currently being undertaken by women and facilitate further development and develop women's specific investments options at PPG stage with the intent to increase women's participation beyond the 30%. This figure will be accordingly adjusted at PPG stage.

*Refer Table F and Part 3 "Gender" Page 48*

### **Private Sector Engagement**

**Is the case made for private sector engagement consistent with the proposed approach?**

#### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

October 15, 2020 HF:

Comment cleared.

October 8, 2020 HF:

Please address the potential and ideas for engagement of the private sector in the development of sustainable livelihoods.

### **Agency Response**

**13 Oct 2020**

The project will engage the private sector to assist in undertaking assessments to identify potential value chains and products through a supply and demand analysis. They will provide technical assistance and training for value chain development and help identify markets and provide potential financing.

*Refer part II, Section 4 on Page 49*

## **Risks to Achieving Project Objectives**

**Does the project/program consider potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved or may be resulting from project/program implementation, and propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

October 15, 2020 HF:

Comments cleared.

October 8, 2020 HF:

- 1.) Disinterest of communities in CFUGs-I would imagine there is a deep well of knowledge and good practice around community engagement and formation of CFUGs (particularly in Asia) and that the use and application of this would be a critical mitigation measure for this risk. If so, please include.
- 2.) Vested Interests: May make sense to include political will in here.
- 3.) Limited capacity to sustain improvements: Should likely include in this risk, or as a separate risk the issue of financial sustainability.
- 4.) Please rework the risk mitigation measures proposed for the OECM risk as they are not clear as written.
- 5.) Is there a GRM planned for the project (in addition to the one for issues concerning EAOs and government).
- 6.) GWP is mentioned in the COVID-19 opportunity analysis. Please clarify how this links to this FSP.

### **Agency Response**

**13 Oct 2020**

- 1) The management response to this risk has been revised to reflect the knowledge and good practice around community engagement and formation of CFUGs that exists
- 2) This is now reflected in the Risk Matrix
- 3) Reflected in the risk matrix
- 4) This is now revised.
- 5) A GRM will be prepared during the PPG stage that will be applied during the project implementation to provide a mechanism for communities, IPs and other stakeholders to have their grievances heard and resolved. The grievance mechanism must be applied to all parts of the project. As there is no armed conflict in the project landscape, the reference to EAOs is removed.
- 6) The project will seek coordination opportunities with the GWP

*Please Refer to Part II, Sec. 5 Risk Table (Page 49 – 53) & “Covid-19 Opportunity Analysis (pages 54-55)*

## **Coordination**

**Is the institutional arrangement for project/program coordination including management, monitoring and evaluation outlined?  
Is there a description of possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project/program area?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

October 16, 2020 HF

Comment cleared. The execution arrangement and parties for this project is clearly a critical element of the PPG phase given the low level of detail available at PIF. Project execution should be well defined early on in project development and will be reviewed at CER.

October 15, 2020 HF:

In coordination section, please explain who will be executing this project and their role(s) e.g. the execution arrangement.

All other comments cleared.

October 8, 2020 HF:

- 1.) As this is a jointly implemented project, please clarify how the safeguards will be handled between the two IAs. It is unclear given the pre-screening materials submitted.
- 2.) Given WWF's relationship, commitment and current activities in the NZWS, please explain how WWF plans to play the IA role alongside

the executor for parallel activities and grants in this site and ensure that these lines are clear, coordinated and well managed? Further, how will the activities in NZWS be executed given WWF will be playing an IA role despite current and past engagement in site as an executor of other activities/grants?

## **Agency Response**

### **13 Oct 2020:**

UNDP and WWF now have experience in coordinating safeguards for the two agencies in one project, through the UNDP/WWF GEF India Small Wild Cats project under GWP, which will serve as guidance for coordinating safeguards for this Myanmar project. During PPG stage a safeguard specialist will be hired to undertake the safeguard assessment for the project and ensure complementarity between the UNDP and WWF safeguard processes and that the overall risks are fully captured. A common safeguard approach (including the GRM) will be defined for the project to manage and monitor project risks. There will be a more detailed safeguards screening by each agency, with each agency's screen focused on the activities financed by the agency. This will inform a categorization by each agency. One TOR will be developed to procure an environmental and social safeguards specialist to conduct the assessments and mitigation plans required under each agency and to develop one GRM process recommendation for the whole project. This will all be summarized in one joint ProDoc and CEO Endorsement Request Document, and the mitigation plans from both Agencies will be uploaded at submission. In project implementation, there will be one PMU and one safeguard specialist will be positioned in the PMU to ensure implementation of the safeguards mitigation plans developed under the policies of each Agency.

*Refer Part II, sec. 6 Coordination Pages 58-59*

WWF will play the GEF Agency role through a cooperative team between WWF US (GEF Agency host) and WWF Myanmar, following the procedures and policies of WWF and GEF and ultimately reporting to a Project Manager in the WWF GEF Agency Unit. WWF US will issue a Grant Agreement to one primary recipient (potentially a government agency or an NGO, pending assessment and due diligence in project development). Sub-grants would then be issued through that party. Activities in NZWS will be executed through the project budget by non-WWF parties, either the primary grant recipient or sub-grantees.

### **16 Oct. 2020:**

The project will be executed by Forest Department and supported by the Project Management Unit. Other partners both local government, NGOs (international and local) will be identified at the PPG stage in consultation with the Forest department and the IAs' due diligence process.

## **Consistency with National Priorities**

**Has the project/program cited alignment with any of the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

October 8, 2020 HF:

Yes.

**Agency Response**

## **Knowledge Management**

**Is the proposed "knowledge management (KM) approach" in line with GEF requirements to foster learning and sharing from relevant projects/programs, initiatives and evaluations; and contribute to the project's/program's overall impact and sustainability?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

October 15, 2020 HF:

Comment cleared.

October 8, 2020 HF:

Please link more closely to efforts to scale-up project impacts.

**Agency Response**

**13 Oct 2020:**

This has been elaborated in the PIF now.

## **Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)**

**Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately documented at this stage and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

October 16, 2020 HF:

Comment cleared.

October 15, 2020 HF:

UNDP pre-screen typo. Please remove “?” from this sentence: The Project may decide not to implement certain Outputs in areas that are not under Government control. To be determined during design?

All other comments clear.

October 8, 2020 HF:

### **Project safeguards-both**

- 1.) How are the review and application of safeguard and mitigation measures divided between the IAs? Looks as though UNDP pre-screening addresses all the components, including those that WWF is IA for whereas the WWF pre-screening focuses on those components that WWF is the IA for. Please clarify how these processes come together under this co-implemented project.
- 2.) Please ensure there is close coordination between IAs to avoid seemingly mis-aligned or contradictory screening outcomes-or in case of this please explain. A couple of these examples include: labor standards and children’s rights risk, in relation to eco-tourism and other forest enterprises as noted in UNDP risk pre-screening; and the critical and natural habitat conversion risks.
- 3.) Does this project deal with armed conflict areas? PIF risk table language vs the UNDP pre-screening documents vs the WWF document seem to indicate different messages on this. Please clarify and explain.
- 4.) GRM for both the project (UNDP and WWF activities) and for the CF/EOA/government relationship? Process for doing so?
- 5.) Current land tenure context, how project will engage, mitigation measures built in for conflict mitigation?



## **UNDP pre-screening document**

- 6.) "Curtailement of land" and "displacement of community" is mentioned as a moderate risk (risk 4 UNDP document). Please ensure that this project does not result in any displacement of people from their land or resettlement (voluntary or involuntary). Please ensure that the government agencies, in particular the EA, is aware and in agreement with this provision.
- 7.) Risks 12 & 15 "comments" columns are not consistent with the other risks in the table. Please revise the "comments" section to unpack the noted risk (rather than discuss mitigation measures as it currently does). Can consolidate all mitigation plans and measures to far right column.
- 8.) Pre-screening for Risk 19 seems to be missing. Please complete
- 9.) Project rated as HIGH risk. Noting that 9 out of 19 risks are rated "high risk" and the others are "moderate"
- 10.) How will this project avoid the issues encountered with the recently suspended UNDP project?

## **WWF pre-screening document**

- 11.) WWF-Risk screening document is uneven on the inclusion of potential mitigation measures. Please revise accordingly.
- 12.) Although pre-screening states WWF won't be involve in involuntary resettlement, please ensure that this project does not result in any displacement of people from their land or resettlement (voluntary or involuntary). Please ensure that the government agencies, in particular the EA, is aware and in agreement with this provision.

## **Agency Response**

### **13 Oct 2020**

The safeguards and mitigation measures are divided between UNDP and WWF per the GEF financing – safeguards policy of UNDP applies to UNDP GEF funded project strategy (C1,2,4) and WWF policies apply to WWF GEF funded project strategy (some of C2, C3). The UNDP SESP has been updated to focus on C1,2,4. PPG and implementation process is described above.

2) Agreed that UNDP and WWF will have close coordination to ensure common guidance to the project development team, executing agencies, and PMU in implementation. The UNDP SESP and WWF Pre-Screen have been reviewed and discussed by the two Agencies. Noted that there are some different screening outcomes, and we do not see a problem with that at this early stage. Reaching different conclusions in pre-screens at this stage can happen for three reasons: a) WWF and UNDP do not have identical safeguards policies or process, b) the difference in scope of what was originally screened (WWF components vs all components) and c) two due diligence processes that independently try to surface risks have identified different things, and we see that as a positive, comprehensive approach as it is a double check for potential issues and ensures an exploration of these issues.

3) The project does not deal with armed conflict areas and mention of EAO has been clarified in the PIF.

4) The project will develop one project-level GRM for the whole project. This will be developed by the joint safeguards consultation, as one

consistent and encompassing system.

5) The land tenure context and potential conflict and risk has now been added to the risk table.

*Refer Part II, Section 5 Page 51-52*

6) This is now rectified. No physical displacement of communities are anticipated under the project. However economic displacement is possible due to re-wilding, ICCA and CFs and is now addressed under Risk 4.

7) Risks 12 and 15 have been revised to ensure that 'Comments' reflects the explanation of the risk rather than the mitigation measure which is discussed accordingly in Column "Question 6" (Management Measures)

8) Pre-screening of Risk 19 has been added

9) This is correct. As per UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards (SES), even if there is only one high risk, that will trigger the overall project risk rating as 'High' and accordingly management measures will have to be developed. As most of the project activities are linked with policy, programs and plans and community engagement, significance of impacts can be moderate to high risks based on level of community sensitivity to proposed activities and outcomes from policy related works.

10) The project will undertake a thorough risk assessment by engaging a safeguards specialist during the PPG. Stakeholder engagement and consultation must be thorough with all the affected stakeholders, and where consents are required, this must be appropriately sought or brought to the notice of EA, UNDP and WWF during the PPG stage. The project must ensure that the stakeholders are willing to participate and cooperate in the project implementation. This is the lesson from R2R project where FPIC hasn't been sought during the project development while consultations have been held with the stakeholders.

*Please refer to UNDP's revised pre-SESP*

11) The document is a pre-screen and as such is not intended to identify mitigation measures. We note that there were measures mentioned in the sections on climate change, conflict sensitivity and human rights, and these have now been removed. An ESSF screening (more detailed than the pre-screen) will be undertaken once specific activities and intervention sites have been detailed. That will inform the Categorization Memo and a consultant TOR to develop safeguards assessments and mitigation measures.

12) Confirmed that WWF GEF will ensure that the project finance does not result in any displacement of people or resettlement (voluntary or involuntary) and the WWF Myanmar team will discuss this with the Department of Forestry and other project partners in the earliest stages of project development and throughout the project cycle.

*Please refer to the revised WWF pre-screen*

**16 Oct. 2020**

This has been removed.

### **art III – Country Endorsements**

**Has the project/program been endorsed by the country's GEF Operational Focal Point and has the name and position been checked against the GEF data base?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

October 22, 2020 HF:

Comment cleared. Titles now match.

October 21, 2020 HF:

The project title in Portal differs from that of the LOE. Please amend the Portal title to match the LOE (presuming this is the easiest way to go).

October 8, 2020 HF:

Yes

**Agency Response**

**Termsheet, reflow table and agency capacity in NGI Projects**

**Does the project provide sufficient detail in Annex A (indicative termsheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table in Annex B to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. After reading the questionnaire in Annex C, is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

NA

**Agency Response**

**EFSEC DECISION**

## RECOMMENDATION

**Is the PIF/PFD recommended for technical clearance? Is the PPG (if requested) being recommended for clearance?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

October 22, 2020 HF:

Yes, all comments cleared. PM recommending technical clearance.

October 21, 2020 HF:

Please resolve two remaining issues: Project title in Portal and PMC in Table B. See highlights above.

In addition, please remove all highlights from the project documents.

October 16, 2020 HF:

Yes, all comments cleared. I technically clear.

October 15, 2020 HF:

No, please address the couple of remaining issues in review sheet.

October 8, 2020 HF:

No, not yet. Please see comments in review sheet.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

**Additional recommendations to be considered by Agency at the time of CEO endorsement/approval.**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

October 15, 2020 HF:

- 1.) Please provide further design detail and focus re: OECMs at the CER stage with the understanding that GEF resources should be supporting actions and outcomes for the conservation of globally significant biodiversity from OECMs, keeping in mind that they may have a much broader scope, purview and set of outcomes.
- 2.) Please include an examination and any potential actions to address "leakage" once enforcement and other management measures are increased in the PA and landscape.
- 3.) The execution arrangement and parties for this project is clearly a critical element of the PPG phase given the low level of detail available at PIF. Project execution should be well defined early on in project development and will be reviewed at CER.

### **Review Dates**

	<b>PIF Review</b>	<b>Agency Response</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>10/8/2020</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>10/15/2020</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>10/16/2020</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>10/21/2020</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>10/22/2020</b>	

### **PIF Recommendation to CEO**

#### **Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval**

The objective of this project is to improve landscape-level land-use planning and promote community land management for conservation of globally significant biodiversity, including Asian elephants, in Myanmar. This project will draw together multiple components (planning, zoning, PA management, SFM, enforcement, livelihood options), based on new mapping and participatory planning, to improve landscape

connectivity, habitat conditions, and wildlife protection to achieve global benefits for a suite of globally endangered wildlife, and using the North Zamari Wildlife Sanctuary (NZWS) as a refugium and anchor for broader landscape level conservation effort. Under this GEF project, the NZWS becomes a fully functioning well-managed protected area (PA), serving as a model for other protected areas in the country. The Bago Region of Myanmar lies within the globally important, and endangered, Indo-Myanmar (Burma) Biodiversity Hotspot. Myanmar has some of the most diverse habitats in the tropics, owing to its varied topography and north to south distinct variation in climate. Lying between the largest city of Yangon, and the capital Naypyitaw, the Bago Region (about 2 million ha) is an important rural area for wildlife, forestry, and agriculture and is the "Home of Teak". This region has had some of the highest deforestation rates in the world resulting in forest loss, loss of habitats and ecosystem services. Further, as agriculture and human populations have expanded, human-elephant conflicts (HEC), including revenge-killings of elephants, are increasingly common in the Bago Yoma. Increased access has also resulted in reduced forest habitat and fragmentation of former intact areas, as well as enabling the increased illegal killing of elephants for skin and ivory for a persistent market, and for other species as bushmeat, including endangered pangolins. Elephant numbers in Myanmar have fallen from 10,000 in the 1940s to now under 2000.

Loss of forest and associated habitats, and land degradation has resulted in considerable economic, ecosystem service and biodiversity losses in the Bago Region, requiring action to reverse. This project is important step in restoring ecosystem services at large scale across the Bago region, including the long-term prevention of zoonoses through the conservation, re-wilding, and sustainable management of intact forest landscapes. Project has four components: C-1: Mainstream biodiversity conservation approaches in land use and development sector planning; C-2. Implementing sustainable land management, biodiversity conservation and forest restoration at the landscape level; C-3. Improve National Protected Area Management Effectiveness and Capacity Development, with emphasis on NZWS; C- 4: Knowledge Management, Awareness, gender inclusion and women's empowerment, and M&E.

There are many innovations in this project for Myanmar including application of bottom-up cooperative landscape planning and management; Use of multi-pronged approach to controlling illegal activities, including using and marrying a combination of advanced technologies, hotspot identification, enforcement training, and economic development; addressing Human Elephant Conflict; and the establishment of the country's first ranger training center and model PA.

Project costs: GEFTF: \$7,122,693 (BD/LD MFA) and \$29,130,000 co-financing resulting in 465,000 ha under improved management, mitigating 6,789,096 CO<sub>2</sub>e in GHG emissions and reaching at least 5200 beneficiaries.