

Strengthening institutional capacities for securing biodiversity conservation commitments

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID

10776

Project Type

FSP

Type of Trust Fund

GET

CBIT/NGI

CBIT No

NGI No

Project Title

Strengthening institutional capacities for securing biodiversity conservation commitments

Countries

India

Agency(ies)

UNDP

Other Executing Partner(s)

Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEFCC) - National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)

Executing Partner Type

Government

GEF Focal Area

Biodiversity

Taxonomy

Sustainable Land Management, Land Degradation, Focal Areas, Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach, Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Fire Management, Income Generating Activities, Sustainable Forest, Nationally Determined Contribution, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Climate Change, Climate Change Adaptation, Climate resilience, Ecosystem-based Adaptation, Sustainable Development Goals, Biodiversity, Species, Threatened Species, Plant Genetic Resources, Invasive Alien Species, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Productive Landscapes, Community Based Natural Resource Mngt, Biomes, Rivers, Tropical Dry Forests, Wetlands, Lakes, Mainstreaming, Extractive Industries, Agriculture and agrobiodiversity, Certification -National Standards, Tourism, Infrastructure, Fisheries, Supplementary Protocol to the CBD, Access to Genetic Resources Benefit Sharing, Financial and Accounting, Payment for Ecosystem Services, Conservation Finance, Demonstrate innovative approaches, Influencing models, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Deploy innovative financial instruments, Type of Engagement, Stakeholders, Participation, Partnership, Information Dissemination, Consultation, Large corporations, Private Sector, Financial intermediaries and market facilitators, SMEs, Communications, Public Campaigns, Behavior change, Education, Awareness Raising, Local Communities, Beneficiaries, Civil Society, Community Based Organization, Academia, Non-Governmental Organization, Gender results areas, Gender Equality, Access and control over natural resources, Capacity Development, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Participation and leadership, Access to benefits and services, Gender Mainstreaming, Gender-sensitive indicators, Women groups, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Enabling Activities, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Targeted Research, Adaptive management, Learning, Indicators to measure change, Theory of change, Knowledge Exchange, Innovation, Knowledge Generation, Indigenous Peoples

Rio Markers**Climate Change Mitigation**

Climate Change Mitigation 1

Climate Change Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation 1

Duration

60 In Months

Agency Fee(\$)

463,600.00

Submission Date

9/13/2021

A. Indicative Focal/Non-Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
BD-1-1	GET	4,000,000.00	24,000,000.00
BD-2-7	GET	880,000.00	5,280,000.00
	Total Project Cost (\$)	4,880,000.00	29,280,000.00

B. Indicative Project description summary

Project Objective

To mainstream biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use/management into village level self-governance institutional planning and budgeting systems in two high biodiversity landscapes in India.

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
Component 1: Mainstreaming biodiversity across two productive and protection landscapes in India	Technical Assistance	<p>Outcome 1: Enabling coordination, regulatory and institutional framework for planning, management and decision-making for biological landscapes developed and implemented as indicated by:</p> <p><i>(i) Management effectiveness of 5 protected areas covering 243,260 hectares improved by 15-20 points from the baseline (to be determined at PPG stage)</i></p> <p><i>(ii) Improved institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring landscape level plans as measured by at least 50% increase in UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard from baseline score</i></p> <p><i>(iii) At least 4,000 hectares of biodiversity rich OECM^[1] areas (community reserves, medicinal plant reserves, sacred groves, International Bird Areas, wetlands, Agriculture Heritage Systems, etc.) under improved</i></p>	<p>Output 1.1: Functional multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder coordination and governance mechanisms facilitate biodiversity in two multiple use landscapes</p> <p>Output 1.2: Landscape level management strategies integrate biodiversity, ecosystem services, sustainable resource use and socio-economic development</p>	GET	2,400,000.00	13,280,000.00

biodiversity-compatible conservation and restoration practices (restoration financed through non-GEF resources)

(iv) At least 320,000 hectares (excluding protected areas) under (i) biodiversity-friendly forest and land management practices implemented in 60,000 hectares through integration into local, block and district level development planning and budgeting processes and (b) improved practices in 260,000 hectares of forests through integration of conservation outcomes in forest management plans[2] (extent to be confirmed at PPG stage)

(v) Strengthened connectivity of nationally mapped critical corridors for elephant and tiger conservation falling within the two landscapes[3]

(vi) Biodiversity Conservation outcomes integrated into at least 400 Gram Panchayat (GP) and Village Employment Council (VEC) Development Plans using the Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC)[4] developed People's Biological Diversity Registers (PBRs) as vehicles for this integration

(vii) Population densities of key globally important species in the target landscapes remain stable or increasing from baseline values for 3-4 target species to be identified at PPG stage

Output 1.3:

Improved tools and procedures facilitate mainstreaming biodiversity and sustainable natural resources into local, block and district-level rural development planning and budgeting systems

Output 1.4:

Institutional and technical capacities strengthened for mainstreaming biodiversity into rural development

Output 1.5:

Conservation and sustainable resource use models developed and implemented at landscape level

Output 1.6:

Indicators and targets to be confirmed at the PPG stage

[1] Twelve categories of OECMs are proposed for India which are geographically defined areas that have some level of governance (government, private or community) and managed by any of the above governance arrangements (Refer Annex D)

[2] Implementation of this target will be supported through central and state funded programs.

[3] This might include (a) no change in forest condition (b) spatial concentration of species (c) reduction in external pressures and threats. Monitoring parameters will be further assessed and developed during the PPG stage.

[4] BMCs as standing committees of the GPs and VECs are responsible for conservation, sustainable resource use, promoting access and benefit sharing and mandated to develop their own People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs) that detail biological resources and traditional knowledge at the local level. District BMCs serve to facilitating aggregation and scaling up to a higher level.

Strengthened Protected Area management to improve habitat connectivity and enhance community collaboration in surveillance, monitoring and enforcement.

Output 1.7:
Output 1.7: Integrated strategies for transitioning towards a green and resilient recovery demonstrated at the local and district level

Component 2: Improved financing and	Investment	Outcome 2: Enhanced financing from public and private sectors to implement actions for biodiversity conservation	Output 2.1: Resource gap assessed, and	GET	1,500,000.00	10,280,000.00
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incentives for biodiversity positive practices in the two landscapes

and sustainable resource use by building on the lessons and learning from BIOFIN.

financial solutions and resource mobilisation strategy developed and tested

(i) At least 5 new biodiversity-friendly financial instruments developed and tested in the two landscapes

(ii) At least 8,000 individuals directly benefitting from new and improved forest-based enterprises including access and benefit sharing arrangements for use of biodiversity resources (with at least 50% women beneficiaries)

(iii) At least 10% increase in funding for biodiversity conservation and activities that focus on sustainable use and management of natural resources in selected villages

(iv) Increase in capacity of small-scale village level enterprises to effectively use new financial instruments (at least 20 enterprises as measured using UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard with 50-50 gender balance)

Indicators and targets to be confirmed at the PPG stage

Output 2.2: Biodiversity-friendly business enterprise ventures promoted to improve community livelihoods and build support for biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource use.

Output 2.3: Institutional and technical capacities of key stakeholders strengthened for implementing new financial instruments

Component 3: Knowledge management,

Technical Assistance

Outcome 3: Improved understanding of stakeholders on benefits of mainstreaming biodiversity

Output 3.1: Improved capacity and

GET

750,000.00

4,110,000.00

communication and digital information management for improving integration of conservation outcomes at local, state and regional levels.

conservation

This will be measured by:

(i) At least 400 Biodiversity Management Committee generated People's Biodiversity Registers digitized and applied for informed decision-making in the two landscapes

(ii) Level of awareness of options for mainstreaming biodiversity, sustainable resource use and benefit sharing increased among BMC members in landscapes as indicated by KAP survey (at least 60% of sampled population aware of the conservation threats and actions for integration) from the baseline to be determined during Y1 using KAP survey (with 50-50 gender balance).

(ii) At least 20 good conservation management practices of integrated conservation, sustainable resource use and access and benefit sharing codified, adapted and disseminated at the state and national, level

Indicators and targets to be confirmed at the PPG stage.

tools for convergence of planning at local level to support analysis, synthesis and integration for improved decision-making in support of biodiversity outcomes

Output 3.2:

Communication strategy developed and implemented to enhance awareness and support biodiversity mainstreaming in development sectors and local level planning.

Output 3.3:

Results from project sites documented and disseminated, learning and experiences shared in national and international fora.

Output 3.4:
Replication of
best practices at
regional and
national level

Output 3.5:
Improved
monitoring and
compliance
strengthened and
supporting
integration of
biodiversity

	Sub Total (\$)	4,650,000.00	27,670,000.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)			
	GET	230,000.00	1,610,000.00
	Sub Total(\$)	230,000.00	1,610,000.00
	Total Project Cost(\$)	4,880,000.00	29,280,000.00

C. Indicative sources of Co-financing for the Project by name and by type

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)- Forest Department	Grant	Investment mobilized	10,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)- Forest Department	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Rural Development	Grant	Investment mobilized	3,500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Panchayati Raj	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,780,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Panchayati Raj	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	600,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) – Department of Animal Husbandry and Department of Fisheries	Grant	Investment mobilized	2,500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Water Resources	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Ayush	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation	Grant	Investment mobilized	500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Textiles	Grant	Investment mobilized	150,000.00

Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Tourism	Grant	Investment mobilized	150,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Government of Meghalaya	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,300,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Government of Meghalaya	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	200,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Government of Tamil Nadu	Grant	Investment mobilized	3,600,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Government of Tamil Nadu	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	400,000.00
GEF Agency	UNDP	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	100,000.00
Total Project Cost(\$)				29,280,000.00

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

Co-financing type has been allocated in accordance with GEF co-financing policy, using conservative estimates and definitions at this early stage. Any budget that cannot be expected to be repeated annually into the future is considered as Investment Mobilized. Recurrent Expenditures are those at past or budget-increment levels (e.g. forming part of annual standard government budget allocations) or that comprise part of ongoing funding allocations.

o Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)- Forest Department – investment mobilized from the following programs relevant to the 2 states, namely: (i). National Mission for a Green India or Green India Mission (ii). The Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act 2016 (iii). The National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board (NAEB) (iv) The National Environment Policy (NEP). Under the MoEFCC, Forest department is implementing State Schemes in Protected Areas. Also includes \$1,000,000 as recurrent expenditure on the basis of staff time, resources and travel costs in support of project related activities from MOEFCC and NBA, (v) Centrally funded Project Tiger Scheme provides around USD 50 million for its 51 tiger reserves tiger for protection (including anti-poaching measures), habitat management, capacity development, research and monitoring, tourism management, village ecodesvelopment in buffer zones and some infrastructure; (vi) Centrally funded scheme for national parks and wildlife sanctuaries (other than tiger reserves) and (viii) centrally-funded “integrated development of wildlife habitats” scheme funds habitat and related management activities in key species habitats (e.g. elephant, tiger, leopard and other species) in areas outside tiger reserves, national parks and sanctuaries.

o Ministry of Rural Development - Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) in Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya apart from the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (S.A.G.Y.).

o The Ministry of Panchayati Raj - Substantial resources channeled to the Gram Panchayats for development and implementation the Gram Panchayat Development plans, plus exclusive programs for biogas, solid waste management, etc. Also includes \$300,000 as recurrent expenditure on the basis of staff time, resources and travel costs in support of project related activities from the PI institutions for mainstreaming biodiversity into the Gram Panchayat

Development Plans. o The MoAFW – (i). Soil Health Card (SHC); Soil Health Management (SHM) Schemes (ii). Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) (iii). Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojna (PKVY) (iv). Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), (v). Sub-Mission on Agroforestry (SMAF) (vi). Mission on Sustainable Dry Land Agriculture (vii). Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) (viii). National Agricultural Development Programme (NADP) (ix). National Food Security Mission for Rice (NFSM-Rice). o The Ministry of Water Resources – Water efficient agricultural practices, village level water management and security programs, watershed management, etc. o The Ministry of Ayush - National Ayush Mission Program to promote the AYUSH medical systems through cost-effective AYUSH services, strengthening of educational systems, facilitate the enforcement of quality control of Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani and Homoeopathy drugs and sustainable availability of raw-materials as means of promotion of ABS agreements o The Ministry of Statistics And Program Implementation (MoS&PI) - Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme. o The Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MOTA) - Van Dhan Vikas Karyakram of TRIFED. First Swadesh Darshan project in Meghalaya o The Ministry of Textiles – Integrated scheme for development of Seri silk to empower and provide sustainable livelihoods, particularly for women o The Ministry of Tourism - “Development of North East Circuit: Umiam (Lake View) - U Lum Sohpetbneng- Mawdiangdiang - Orchid Lake Resort” o Government of Tamil Nadu – (i) Massive Tree Planting Program to increase green cover (ii). Raising Sandal Plantations until 2025 (iii). Raising Teak Plantations (iv). Resolving Man Animal Conflict. (v) Drought Relief Measures taken In Tamil Nadu Forest Department; (vi). Tamil Nadu Innovation Initiatives aimed at restoration of tropical dry evergreen forests, women’s empowerment through conservation of medicinal plants and improved forest surveillance; (vii) improving weather stations to study climate change and associated threats to forest ecosystems. Also includes \$400,000 as recurrent expenditure on the basis of staff time, resources and travel costs in support of project related activities from PA management and forest management staff. o Government of Meghalaya – (i) Mapping and inventory of sacred groves; (ii) Protection and improvement of catchment areas; (iii) Promotion of ecotourism in conservation areas; (iv) Promotion of village ecodevelopment around protected areas; (v) Establishment of community reserves; (vi) creation of parks and botanical gardens to improve awareness; (vii) Meghalaya Forest Training School for imparting professional training in forestry and allied subjects, including frontline protection staff; (viii) human-wildlife conflict management programs etc. Also includes \$200,000 as recurrent expenditure on the basis of staff time, resources and travel costs in support of project related activities from PA and forest management staff.

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

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNDP	GET	India	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	4,880,000	463,600	5,343,600.00
Total GEF Resources(\$)					4,880,000.00	463,600.00	5,343,600.00

E. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required **true**

PPG Amount (\$)

150,000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

14,250

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNDP	GET	India	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	150,000	14,250	164,250.00
Total Project Costs(\$)					150,000.00	14,250.00	164,250.00

Core Indicators

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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
243,260.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

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

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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
243,260.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
Balpakaran National park		National Park	22,000.00						
Mudumalai Tiger Reserve			32,099.00						
Nokrek National Park	555547551	National Park	47,480.00						

Santhaman- galam Tiger Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary	Wilderness Area	141,161.00	
Siju Wildlife Reserve	Wilderness Area	520.00	

Indicator 3 Area of land restored

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
4000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural land restored

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

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Indicator 3.2 Area of Forest and Forest Land restored

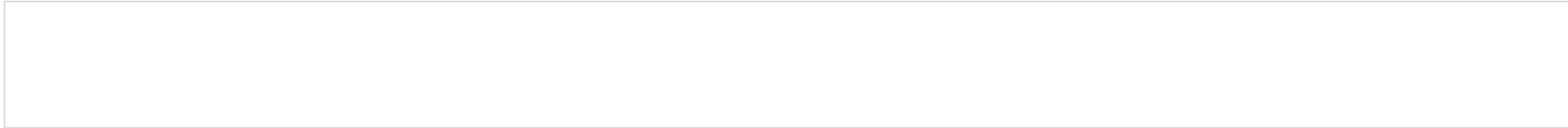
Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
4,000.00			

Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and shrublands restored

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

Indicator 3.4 Area of wetlands (incl. estuaries, mangroves) restored

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



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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
320000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
320,000.00			

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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
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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)
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Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) loss avoided

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
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Documents (Please upload document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Submitted

Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO₂e (direct)	5994373	0	0	0
Expected metric tons of CO₂e (indirect)	0	0	0	0

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

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO₂e (direct)	5,994,373			
Expected metric tons of CO₂e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting	2023			
Duration of accounting	20			

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

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
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Expected metric tons of CO ₂ e (direct)
Expected metric tons of CO ₂ e (indirect)
Anticipated start year of accounting
Duration of accounting

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

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

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

Technology	Capacity (MW) (Expected at PIF)	Capacity (MW) (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at MTR)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at TE)
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Indicator 11 Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	4,000			
Male	4,000			
Total	8000	0	0	0

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

1) Core Indicator 1 - Includes 3 PAs in Meghalaya covering 70,000 hectares (Nokrek NP – 47,480 hectares, Balpakaran NP – 22,000 hectares and Siju Wildlife Reserve -520 hectares) and 2 PAs in Tamil Nadu covering 173,260 hectares (Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve of 141,161 hectares and Mudumalai Tiger Reserve of 32,099 hectares). Total: 243,260 hectares 2) Core Indicator 3 – Restoration and improved management (any restoration activities will be financed with non-GEF financing) of 4,000 hectares covering resource use areas, medicinal plant reserves, community forest reserves, sacred groves, agro-biodiversity rich areas, etc.). It is estimated that the improved management and restoration will take place through participation of local communities (focusing on community forest reserves, medicinal plant gardens, sacred groves, community commons, agriculture heritage sites, etc.) at a modest rate of 8-12 hectares/village (400 GPs/VECs = approximately 4,000 ha). This figure will be validated at the PPG stage with potential opportunities for increase of targets. 3) Core Indicator 4: Area of landscape under improved practices (excluding protected areas) will be achieved through the following: (a) improved biodiversity and environment friendly outcomes achieved through the village (GPs and VECs) Planning systems using the People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs) as vehicles for this integration. This will be promoted through digitalization of PBRs and integration of 400 BMC PBRs into the village plans and will cover around 10-15% of the two landscapes, particularly adjacent to the PAs, biological corridors and HCVPs, making a total of around 60,000 hectares. This figure is calculated at around 150 ha/village to be brought under improved environmental and biodiversity friendly forest and land management measures generated through the local planning processes to benefit biodiversity and (b) improved practices in 260,000 hectares of forests to benefit biodiversity through integration of biodiversity and ecosystem considerations in forest management plans. (This figure will be validated at PPG stage). The implementation of these integrated plans will be supported through co-financing provided via centrally and state funded schemes. The means for monitoring this aspect will be defined at PPG stage with measurable sub-indicators. The Total is 320,000 hectares. 4) Core Indicator 6: Estimates include: 1) 4,000 ha of degraded forest land will be targeted for land restoration-related interventions; 2) the interventions within PAs are predominantly related to improved management to reduce forest cover loss (deforestation) and not so much related to land degradation. Refer Annex H and the EX-ACT spread sheet and forest calculation sheet (Annex H1 & H2). 5) Core Indicator 11: Around 8,000 people (50% women) will directly benefit from the project through small-scale enterprise development centered on NTFP, ecotourism, agricultural value-addition, ABS agreements, etc. On the other hand, members of local level CBOs and governance bodies like the gram panchayat, village councils, women Self Help groups, line departments operating at the local level will also be benefitted through enhanced capacity building on planning and implementation of integrated actions and financial solutions for conservation including OECMs. This figure is calculated at a modest of 20 direct beneficiaries per village (for 250 GPs/VECs). This figure will be validated at PPG stage.

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

1a. *Project Description.*

India is a megadiverse country rich in biodiversity and associated traditional knowledge. India has a wide array of ecosystems and habitats. With only 2.4 % of the geographical area of the world, India has nearly 8% of the globally known floral and faunal species. Over 100,690 species of fauna and over 47,800 species of flora have been documented in the 10 Biogeographic zones of the country that supports four of the 34 globally recognized biodiversity hotspots, represented by the Himalayas, the Western Ghats, the Northeast and the Nicobar Islands. India is also an acknowledged center of crop diversity and crop wild relatives. Conservation is a tradition in India, cultures, traditions and festivals of India center around the rich biological resources and traditional knowledge associated with it. According to the National Medicinal Plants Board, of the 17,000-18,000 species of flowering plants, more than 7,000 are estimated to have medicinal usage in folk and documented systems of medicine like Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy. Key economic sectors like food, clothing, pharmaceutical, tourism, cosmetics and many such sectors depend on the provision of nature for the procurement of raw materials for businesses. It is estimated that 70% of the Indian population are directly dependent on the biodiversity for their livelihoods and socio-economic growth.

However, the biodiversity is under immense threat due to growing population pressure, rapid economic growth, changing systems of agriculture production and a major shift from traditional crop varieties to high yielding varieties leading to loss of traditional and climate resistant crop varieties, industrialization, unsustainable cultivation and harvesting of biological resources including medicinal plants and unsustainable mining. For India, conservation of biodiversity is crucial because it is directly linked with providing livelihoods and improving socio economic conditions for millions of its inhabitants, thereby contributing to sustainable development and poverty alleviation. Hence, the conservation of biodiversity is considered as a national priority and incurring investment towards biodiversity conservation is a long-term challenge in securing the wellbeing of the country and its people. However, the lack of protection and restoration of ecosystems and understanding of the critical role of biodiversity in socio-economic development across sectors, is adding to the concern regarding its conservation. This is leading to an unprecedented decline in biodiversity, changes in landscapes, habitat and ecosystem degradation, shrinking genetic diversity, and an increase of alien invasive species. To combat these critical and high priority issues there is an urgent need for accelerating efforts towards conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, through mainstreaming biodiversity in key sectors and local level planning which are dependent on, or impact biodiversity directly or indirectly.

The loss of biodiversity and ecosystem degradation has been estimated to be between USD 2 and 4.5 trillion (3.3-3.75% of global GDP).[1] It is estimated that globally around USD 52 billion is being spent on biodiversity annually against an estimated annual financing need ranging between USD 150-440 billion.[2] Available evidence and decisions adopted by Parties to the CBD indicate that the current levels of investment in biodiversity management are inadequate to achieve the 20 Aichi Targets defined in the CBD's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Financing the gap between resource requirement and resources actually spent towards biodiversity conservation is a major challenge faced by countries/regions across the world. As a conservative estimate, India is spending approximately USD 2 billion annually on biodiversity conservation, but requires between USD 15-45 billion per year to sustain its efforts.[3]

In recognition of the value and need to protect its biological diversity and ecosystems, India has taken a leadership role in developing and implementing relevant legal and policy regimes that support conservation. India is a party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and has well-established institutional mechanisms in place for implementation of the CBD at the national, subnational and local level. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) is the nodal Ministry for implementation of CBD in India. Being party to the CBD, India has developed its National Biodiversity Action Plan, which is the principal instrument for implementing the convention at national level. In pursuance to the CBD, India has enacted the Biological Diversity Act 2002 to implement the provisions of the Convention. This Act is aimed at conservation of biological resources, sustainable use of its resources, and fair and equitable sharing of benefit arising from their use. The objective of the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), which is under the MoEFCC is to implement the Biological Diversity Act so that the objectives of the Convention can be well achieved. The Act mandates the implementation through a decentralized system with National Biodiversity Authority at the national level, the State Biodiversity Boards (SBB) at state level and the Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) at the local and district levels. The act *inter-alia* provides for promotion of *in-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation of biological resources and includes specific provisions for rehabilitation of threatened species, notification and management of biodiversity heritage sites, protection of traditional knowledge related to biological resources, ensuring fair and equitable sharing of benefits from use of biological resources and associated knowledge etc.

Though the institutional mechanisms and regulatory frameworks are in place, its effective implementation will only be possible when biodiversity plans at local and subnational levels are aligned with targets of relevant sectors and biodiversity actions are mainstreamed in development sectors which are dependent on, or have an impact on biodiversity either directly or indirectly for example, in sectors like agriculture, tourism, mining, forest, infrastructure, pharmaceuticals and others. The upcoming post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework stresses the need to mainstream biodiversity and has defined specific targets on mainstreaming biodiversity in public policy and planning as well as in production and supply chains. In this regard, it will also be critical to align policies and programs of socio-economic and environmental sectors at subnational and local levels of government and support the development of integrated action plans to ensure net positive impacts on biodiversity. The focus of the project will be on conservation of biodiversity in selected landscapes by mainstreaming in key priority sectors and supporting its implementation. This will be done through the conservation agencies (forest and wildlife institutions) and decentralized mechanisms at the local and district levels as the means to promote mainstreaming and convergence of the biodiversity actions. In accordance with the Biological Diversity Act, the BMCs are responsible for conservation, sustainable resource use, promoting access and benefit sharing and mandated to develop their own People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs) that detail the biological resources and traditional knowledge at the local level and provide a functional tool that can be effectively used for integration of conservation and sustainable use of natural/genetic resources action into the village development planning process. This is a valuable development, as the GPs and VECs (elected village democratic structure or governing village councils) are the local institutions that are responsible for preparation and implementation of economic development and social justice plans for the area under their jurisdiction. The implementation of these village development plans are funded by the national and state level institutions (mainly through programs of the Rural Development Departments) and thus provide an important vehicle for planning and budgetary support for local level economic development activities.

While, the extent of integration of biodiversity mainstreaming into village development plans is currently limited, there is an increased focus on pro-actively promoting conservation and sustainable natural resources use into their planning processes. Since the village development plans are prepared/ revised on an annual basis, the integration of the conservation outcomes into the planning process can be effectively carried out within the planning cycles of the PBRs and village development plans and/or district development plans.

In the case of both Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya, the administrative governance structure follows a hierarchical pathway, with operational linkages between the different institutional levels. The institutional set up at each level is a cluster of the administrative units (e.g. an aggregate of village level institutions form a district cluster and a cluster of blocks form a district) in particular, to ensure effective coordination and budgetary support. The rationale for filtering the institutional mechanisms into different hierarchy makes for ease of administering governance for a vast and populous country. The reverse is also true in that the aggregation of a number of smaller village units at the district level (and at the intermediate 'block' level as well) helps in replication and up-scaling at higher levels and subsequently at the state level through lessons and experiences gained through the project. Refer Table 1 below:

Table 1: Complimentary Governance Structures for Economic/Rural Development and Biodiversity Planning in Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya

Administrative Levels	Tamil Nadu (PRI system)	Meghalaya (Employment Council Institutional system)	Biodiversity Institutions
Local level (Village level)	Gram Panchayat	Village Employment Council	BMCs at Village Level
Block level (aggregate of villages)	Block Panchayat (Panchayat Samiti)	Block Employment Councils	BMCs at Block Level
District level	Zila Panchayat and District Development Councils	District Employment Council and District Planning and Development Councils	BMCs at District level ^[4]
State level	State Rural Development Department and Panchayat Raj Department	State Rural Development Department	State Biodiversity Boards
National level	Ministry of Panchayat Raj Ministry of Rural Development	Ministry of Rural Development	National Biodiversity Board Ministry of Environment and Climate Change

Key Threats to biodiversity and wildlife

The primary threats to biodiversity and direct causes of ecosystem degradation in India are:

Loss and degradation of Forests and Forest Resources stem from conversion of forest areas to agriculture and encroachment of forestlands and uncontrolled grazing by domestic livestock and poor agricultural practices. Weak management of natural habitats including in formal protected areas is also a contributory factor to loss of biologically important habitats of globally threatened species and unique ecosystems. The primary driver of habitat loss and fragmentation, particularly in the Northeast and Western and Eastern Ghats in the South has been quarrying and mining, forest fires, uncontrolled grazing and encroachment of forest lands. In the Eastern Ghats, seasonal fires are further compounded by high velocity winds, and following the fires, the invasion of invasive alien species. The threat is further compounded when degraded forests are then considered less important for conservation and assigned for other uses, in particular for agriculture. Poverty in the rural areas, coupled with landlessness, and weak tenure security discourages sustainable farming practices leading to the increase in subsistence agriculture. Once agriculture has set in, intensive use of fertilizers and unsustainable land management practices further erode the soil of essential nutrients thus resulting in diminishing harvests, which leads to further expansion of agriculture in forest areas to meet socio economic needs. Deteriorating productivity of upland farms, in particular in the northeast has forced many communities to shorten their fallow periods in between forest clearings thus limiting the time for open forest areas to recover naturally. Most of the deforestation has occurred in areas that are the most accessible and suitable for agriculture (lowland forests in Meghalaya), which are coincidentally the most biodiversity-rich and offers the best quality habitat for some of the threatened species such as elephant, tiger and leopard.

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Over-exploitation of forests and forest resources entails illegal and unsustainable exploitation of forest resources leading to soil erosion and land degradation. As most of the people living in and around forests are primarily dependent on forest products, there is excessive extraction of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) from the protected areas, community forests and village forests. Some of the NTFP extracted from the forested areas include medicinal plants, fruits, vegetables, forest fruits, bamboo, grass material for brooms etc. In Meghalaya, many species of orchids are illegally smuggled out of the reserves and sold in nearby markets by the local villagers. The over-exploitation of medicinal plants has resulted in many species becoming endangered. In the northeast, one of the main reasons for fast depletion of community forests is also intensive extraction of NTFPs. Fresh water fishes are another group of species in which are facing severe threats due to over harvesting. Some of the recent fishing methods such as poison fishing, using poison and toxic chemicals pose a great threat to all the aquatic species and also to the communities dependent on these rivers. In recent years much worse methods of fishing have also emerged, e.g. electric fishing and explosion fishing practices are detrimental to aquatic ecosystem and also to the health of local communities who are dependent on rivers for their daily food requirements.

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Mining and Quarrying is particularly relevant in the northeast, which is extremely rich in mineral wealth. Mining for coal, limestone, sillimanite, clay and other minor minerals in the northeast is further compounded by the provisions of the 6th schedule of the Indian constitution, with the local communities maintaining ownership of the mines. Large areas of forests have been cleared for mining and also forests serve as dumping grounds for coal and limestone tailings. Mining has also caused changes in the physical, chemical and microbial nature of the soil resulting in a depletion of its nutrient content and rendering the soil infertile. Leaching of drainages from the mining areas in streams and rivers has led to the loss of aquatic biodiversity, particularly rich fish diversity. Stone quarrying in the Western and Eastern Ghats and the northeast has reduced forest cover and left the land scarred. Further, pollution and habitat destruction from mining pose threat to the biodiversity, ecosystem health and human wellbeing. These practices involve the use of highly toxic chemicals that in turn, contaminates the water that is used by millions of rural people on a daily basis for cooking, drinking and washing.

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Invasive alien species (IAS) pose one of the greatest threats to biodiversity. IAS can hasten the extinction of threatened species and reduce the diversity of indigenous and endemic species through predation, competition, parasitism, diseases, hybridization, and species displacement caused by environmental and habitat change. Excessive growth of unpalatable species such as Lantana and Eupatorium suppress the regeneration of native species especially ground flora including terrestrial orchids. The uncontrolled spread of IAS is due in part to lack of awareness of IAS and their impacts on the ecosystem to which they are introduced, poor understanding of their ecology and life cycle growth; lack of assessment of the environmental impacts of newly introduced species; and lack of regulation. Contributing to these are the disjointed policies and programs that promote agricultural productivity, that fails to consider the holistic view and recognize the long-term net effects of IAS introduction on farm income, natural resilience of agriculture, and quality and quantity of food production. Introduction of exotic species in critical ecosystems, use of inappropriate species for restoration and heavy reliance on “fast growing”, “high yielding” agricultural and terrestrial crops and aquatic species had the unintended effects of invasion of ecosystems, damaged agricultural crops and have a negative impact on native biodiversity through competition, predation and transmission of diseases. Currently, there is no mechanism to tackle the terrestrial and aquatic invasive species in a coordinated and integrated manner.

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Poaching and illegal trade in wildlife that is practiced mainly in the northeast as part of subsistence hunting has been ongoing from the past. Hunting is thus a major cause of decline of specific species and loss of biodiversity, including disappearance of large mammals. Further, animals are killed as a result of incursion into the crop fields. One of the reasons for difficulty in addressing hunting in some of these areas is interdependence of socio-economic needs and protein requirement of some of the rural and traditional communities. In addition, a number of bird species have become rare, endangered or even extinct due to hunting and trapping for illegal trade.

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Unsustainable Development and Population Pressure Ingress of human settlements in forest areas is one of the major reasons for habitat loss and depletion of forest that cause forest loss, fragment forests, effect the fragile habitats particularly in hill tops, where such clearing can lead to high soil erosion due to loss of vegetation cover. This affects the stability of hillsides and makes them more prone to natural calamities, soil erosion, deficient in water retention and cause biodiversity loss. Particular local species introduced to new natural environment could influence various forms of imbalance to ecological network.

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Climate change is likely to pose problem through unpredictable weather patterns that increase the likelihood of natural disasters and failed crop cultivation. A recent study indicated that El Niño-Southern Oscillation may strengthen under the future climate change conditions and this would lead to increased droughts, disease outbreaks, wildfires and even social unrest in Asia. Studies on climate change in eastern Himalaya indicate that the climatic changes could lead to diminishing crop and livestock diversity, which will have implications for agro-biodiversity and food security. Climate change, especially warming is known to cause upward migration of both plant and animals. Climate change increase risk for species with narrow geographic range or climatic range, particularly larger or more specialized species. At present, studies on effect of climate change on wildlife diversity are generally lacking.

Barriers to biodiversity conservation

Barrier 1: Lack of effective strategies, mechanisms and tools for mainstreaming priority actions for biodiversity conservation at the local, district and landscape levels

There are often a variety of different kinds of land use and land cover heterogeneity that can be recognized in large landscapes. However, the management of this heterogeneity is constrained by the lack of an integrated cross-sectoral effort that recognizes the need for a commonly agreed planning and management framework for all sectors to follow at the local and higher levels. Currently conservation and local government and sector development institutions that operate in the landscape are largely guided by their respective mandates and deliver on their individual stated outcomes. As a consequence, the interplay of various individual institutional policies and programs in the same biological landscape often times result in unintended outcomes due to the absence of a commonly agreed planning and management vision for the landscape.

State forest and wildlife agencies are responsible for management of the conservation estate, they lack the skills, capacity and mandates to manage and/or influence management in the wider heterogeneous areas. Other government agencies such as rural development, animal husbandry and agriculture often operate within their respective sector interests within these landscapes. As a consequence, there are currently no formal multi-sector and multi-stakeholder landscape-scale plans and mechanisms being developed and implemented to: (i) safeguard dispersal corridors between adjacent, but separate protected areas, forest reserves and other natural areas to benefit species populations; (ii) maintain the genetic variations of key species such as the elephant, tiger and other animal populations; (iii) secure the conservation status of key prey species; and (iv) ensure the resilience of ecosystems to the effects of climate change. This effort is constrained by the fact that government agencies have little experience in developing strategic plans to mainstream biological considerations when planning and undertaking their respective sector activities and there is limited opportunity for multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder cooperation and collaboration and decision-making processes. Similarly local communities lack economic incentives, along with awareness, capacity and financial support for the planning and sustainable management of forests, grasslands and agricultural for biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation.

In terms of specifically, the local or village development planning process, relevant agencies within the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and the BMCs, Panchayat Raj Institutions in Tamil Nadu and Employment Council institutions in Meghalaya are mandated through their respective decentralization processes to work at the village level. This provides an opportunity through these legally decentralized mechanisms to mainstream biodiversity in key sectors of local economic development that is a much-needed step to conserve and manage the wealth of biodiversity that existing in such areas. This should be accompanied by financial and material benefits to local communities for improved livelihoods, improved productivity, small and medium enterprises and value chains, including benefits from the commercialization of biological resources extracted from rural areas of the country that can duly contribute to the long-term sustainable management of the sector. In this regard, the role of business sectors in integrating biodiversity conservation as part of responsible business will also be imperative. Despite the legal framework existing to support mainstreaming, there has been so far, limited effective integration of biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use and management in the development plans and programs at the village level. This is further constrained by the absence of effective guidelines, protocols, tools and capacity to ensure effective integration of biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource management practices and use of traditional knowledge (including information generated through the PBRs) into the village economic development planning processes.

Overall, the broader integration of conservation and economic development is constrained at the district, landscape and state level for lack of: (i) effective coordination arrangements that can bring varied stakeholders and sector entities together to deliver on a common vision that integrates conservation and economic development outcomes; (ii) political recognition of the multiple benefits of integrated multi-sectoral approaches to rural development; (iii)

recognition of the immense role that local communities can play in support of biodiversity conservation and the economic benefits they can derive from sustainable use and management of biological resources; and (iv) recognition of the interconnectivity of various ecosystems in the landscapes and the ecological processes and functions that are derived from this.

Barrier 2: Inadequate funding to integrate biodiversity conservation programs into local and district level economic development planning and implementation

The CBD's report for implementing post 2020 global biodiversity framework indicated the failure to raise adequate resources for effective implementation of the new framework and inability to raise resources. In addition, the WWF Global Futures report estimates that large sums of money are lost annually (USD 500 billion) in terms of reduced economic growth. It is also estimated that the costs of expanding the global PA coverage by 30% by 2030 will be greatly offset by the increase in future revenues generated from agriculture, fisheries and nature tourism sectors as a consequence of the conservation benefits derived from the PAs. Thus, there is a compelling economic argument for investing in biodiversity conservation. In this regard, the need to generate additional financing for conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services from existing and new sources – both globally and in India – is well recognized as an important barrier to promote conservation. In the case of India, national level assessments done under the Gol-UNDP BIOFIN project indicate a national level annual finance gap of USD 6.5 billion for implementation of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). It also identified various sources of biodiversity finance in the country and it emerged that public financing is the key source of biodiversity financing in the country with 116 biodiversity relevant central level public schemes having potential to contribute nearly USD 10 billion annually towards biodiversity-attributable financing. Based on national level assessment of finance gap, sources of finance, screening of finance solutions, large number of consultations with line ministries and departments/private sectors, academia, NGOs etc., a national biodiversity finance plan has been developed, under BIOFIN India, which includes 12 country specific finance solutions having potential to reduce the biodiversity finance gap in the country. However, at the local level (and landscape level, in particular), there is limited understanding of finance gap for implementing integrated action plans for biodiversity conservation and innovative finance solutions to enhance funding for conservation action. This is a key barrier. Such landscape level assessments will provide an avenue for identification and adaptation of available financial models that can be applied, with potential seepage to the local level. For example, payments for ecosystem services, enhancing public finance for biodiversity by way of mainstreaming, green funds and other fiscal instruments could be instrumental in mobilising resources for implementing actions for biodiversity at the landscape level and consequently derived at the local level, but this is currently constrained by limited capacities to do such assessments and make a business case for investing in priority areas of biodiversity conservation.

Despite the opportunities to promote the use of genetic resources for economic benefit to local communities are immense, and the administrative and permitting systems are in place to facilitate such ABS agreements, this potential has not been effectively utilized for lack of capacity, technical support and biological assessments. As a consequence, the lack of sustainable alternative livelihoods and absence of financial/social incentives for resource-dependent communities, along with the lack of integration of biodiversity consideration into development planning around biodiversity-rich areas have been identified as adding to the threats to biodiversity. In terms of the terrestrial environments, there has been limited application of alternative and sustainable economic models at the community levels to promote small-scale community enterprises in support of NTFP and non-forest related value addition, sustainable apiculture, value chains and post-harvest fisheries operations and community ecotourism to enable a shift from destructive practices that threatened the terrestrial and marine environments. Similarly, the lack of methodologies for assessment of sector wide ABS potentials and monitoring and enforcement of

existing ABS administrative and permitting requirements have deprived opportunities for generating financial revenues to benefit traditional knowledge holders and channeling resources back to conservation. As a consequence, only 4 states in the country have been able to generate some financial resources for ABS related agreements, although this is a promising financing solution for reducing the financial gap for conservation.

Businesses in rural economic sectors that have direct impacts on biodiversity are one of the key stakeholders for implementing integrated action plans for positive biodiversity outcomes and enhancing biodiversity finance - through greening of technologies and practices in their supply, trade and value chains. Similarly, financial sector/institutions in the country can play a critical role in developing and integrating biodiversity risk assessment and monitoring policies and processes in their business development as well as in implementing innovative financing tools for biodiversity. However, the lower level of understanding and appreciation among the corporate sector and financial institutions on the potential options at their disposal for integrating biodiversity concerns into their business programs, policies, monitoring and financing tools for sustainable business and net positive biodiversity outcomes has not materialized.

Barrier 3: Institutional and technical capacities for effective integration of biodiversity plans and regulatory frameworks at local level in a truly interdisciplinary and integrated way, is inadequate.

Biodiversity is a cross sectoral subject and implementation of Biological Diversity Act is dependent on the capacity of institutions that are mandated to implement the Act. At the same time, it is equally important for other development planning and sector agencies to understand their role and linkage of biodiversity in their sectoral programs and, their capacities to mainstream biodiversity actions in their respective sector plans and programs so as to ensure long term sustainability and economic growth and to reduce negative externalities. These negative externalities can include pollution, habitat degradation, climate change, impact on health and well-being, emergence of zoonotic diseases, loss of fertile soil, ecosystem instability, food, livelihood and health insecurity, lowering of water table, increase in invasive species, etc. While there is a huge potential to alter the business-as-usual scenario to make more favourable conditions for conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services, this is currently constrained by available training and capacity building of institutions (at all levels) to make these linkages and to empower them with capacity and skills as an urgent need. This is also constrained by the lack of required tools, curriculum and training modules and technical resource persons to provide such training that would enable integration of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into the local economic development planning system.

The National Biodiversity Target 1 states that “By 2020, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably. However, while there are national level programs and schemes on environmental awareness, these are mainly aimed at school children. There is limited programs that target rural youth, local level institutions, private sector, women, and others. There is need to have a focused local level communication program on biodiversity to bring about transformational behavioral change. Consultations done with various stakeholders for the BIOFIN project clearly established the need for such a program. Further during interactions, many local communities and private stakeholders have shown interest in investing in biodiversity however, limited understanding on action that they can take to protect biodiversity; the perceivable linkage between biodiversity and their respective area of work; and the lack of viable small-scale local projects on biodiversity has limited their ability to actively engage in conservation action.

Unlike the visible impacts of climate change to which the general public can relate, it is more difficult to directly recognize the impact of loss of biodiversity on people's lives, livelihoods and economies. Sensitizing local youth and engaging them in green action is an urgent need of the hour to ensure conservation of India's diverse natural resources. There is a need to establish, connect and showcase how these inter-linkages between health, climate change, natural disasters, increasing vector borne diseases, food security etc. and biodiversity loss. There is a need to develop a national communication plan that can showcase such links to different stakeholders and target groups so as to make them aware of human actions that can protect biodiversity and ensure living in harmony with nature. The global community needs to share good practices and successful actions in this regard.

Project conceptual model: The complex interacting web of factors that threaten globally significant biodiversity and ecosystems in the high biodiversity areas in India is illustrated in a conceptual model in Figure 1. This indicates the key areas (indirect and direct factors) and the points where project intervention can contribute towards a reduction in the level of development and economic-related threats, and therefore contribute towards the conservation of biological diversity and globally threatened species – and the integrity of the ecosystems they inhabit. The main project intervention strategies are shown as yellow hexagons in Figure 1. The main elements of these strategies are summarized in the Theory of Change diagram (Figure 2).

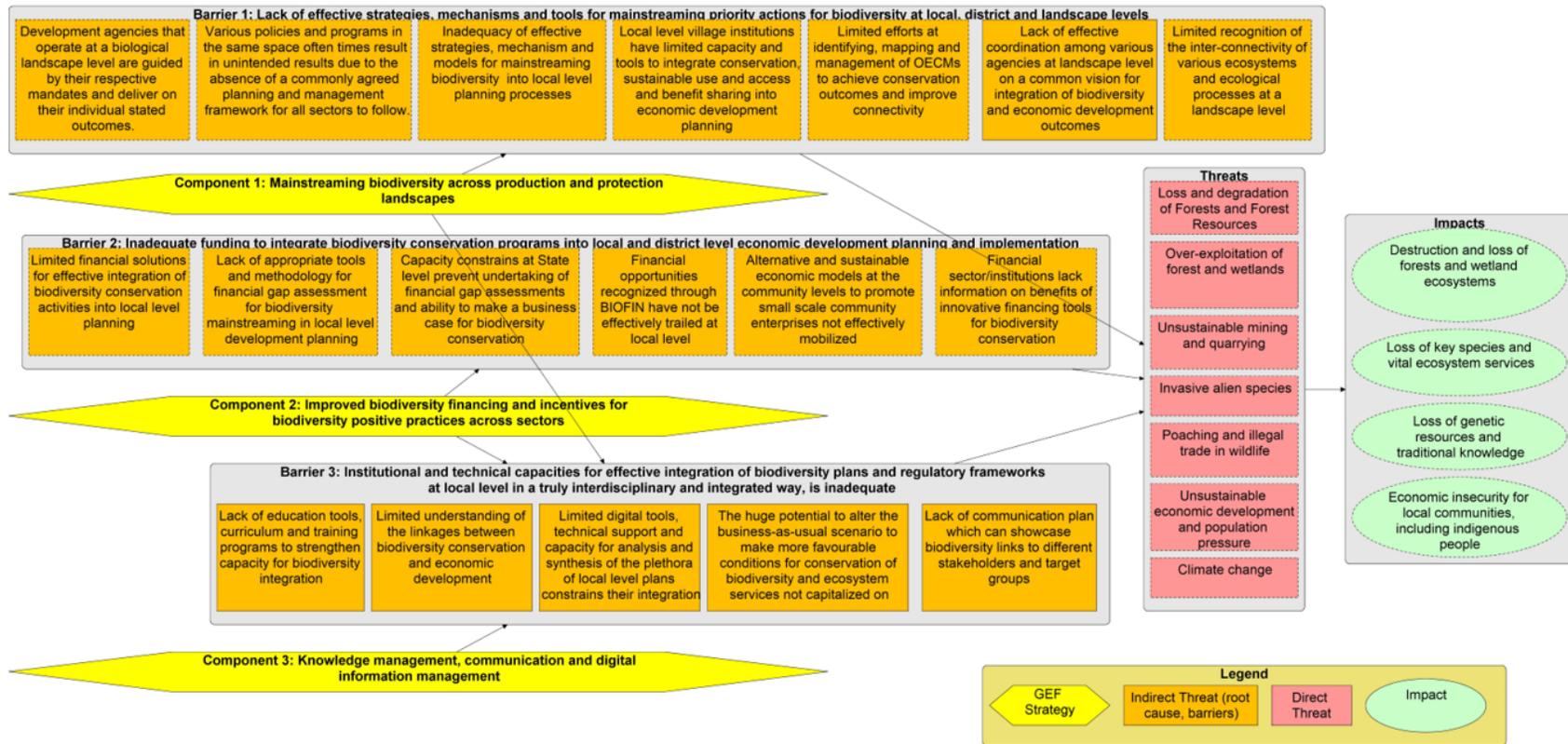
[1] The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB), Cost of Policy Inaction Report, 2008

[2] High-Level Panel on Global Assessment of Resources for Implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (2012) -(HLP, 2012)

[3] <https://www.biodiversityfinance.net/news-and-media/india-joins-biofin-looking-financing-options-reverse-biodiversity-loss>

[4] In addition, a Technical Support Group (TSG) at the district level in Meghalaya provides oversight and guidance to the BMCs and VECs and provides an organic link between the traditional institutions at the village and district levels.

Figure 1: Conceptual model of the factors influencing the project targets, with project interventions



Project Geographical Focus

Trends in biodiversity conservation and associated limitation in proposed project states: The proposed states for the project are Meghalaya and Tamil Nadu. These states fall within two ecoregions namely North-East and Eastern Ghats bio-geographic regions, that are both rich in biological diversity. **Meghalaya**, a state located in the northeastern part of the country, represents an important part of the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot, which is one of the 4 bio-diversity hotspots in India among the 34 in the world. The state of Meghalaya has been identified as a Key Biodiversity Area due to its high species diversity and high level of endemism. A total of 9 Important Bird Areas have been identified in the State. Tawny-breasted Wren babbler (*Spelaornis longicaudatus*) is a Globally Vulnerable bird, which is restricted to the hills of Meghalaya. **Tamil Nadu** situated in the southern part of India has rich biodiversity. The state has 3 Biosphere Reserves: 5 National Parks, 30 Sanctuaries and 4 Tiger reserves.

Garó Hills Landscape – Meghalaya: The Garó Hills landscape site in Meghalaya covers around 205,000 hectares and encompasses three protected areas, namely the Nokrek National Park (47,480 hectares), the Balpakaran National Park (22,000 hectares) and the Siju Wildlife Sanctuary (520 hectares). The landscape also includes the Nokrek Biosphere reserve (82,000 hectares), with its core area comprising the Nokrek National Park. This landscape falls within the South Garó Hills and the West Garó districts. Located in the junction between the East Garó Hills, West Garó Hills and South Garó Hills, this landscape follows mountainous ridges and is located in the high biodiversity region of the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot. The forests are mainly of Tropical Evergreen, Moist Deciduous, Tropical Evergreen, Sub-tropical Evergreen forests and Riverine forests. The fauna include many threatened and endangered species of mammals, including the Asian elephant. This landscape is particularly relevant for the Asian elephant, as it includes several corridors to link the habitat of the elephant between the Nokrek and Balpakaran national parks, other reserved forests and along their traditional migratory route to Assam. Eight species of cats including leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*), golden cat (*Catopuma temminckii*), clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosi*), marbled cat (*Pardofelis marmorata*), Fishing cat (*prionailurus viverrinus*), jungle cat (*Felis chaus*) and leopard (*Panthera pardus*) are reported from this area. The landscape also includes other important species such as golden jackal (*Canis aureus*) and wild dog (*Cuon alpinus*), as well as the Asiatic black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*), sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*), and many ungulates. The latter include the Red panda (*Ailuris fulgens*), Binturong (*Arctictis binturong*), slow loris (*Nycticebus bengalensis*), pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca Leonina*), stump-tailed macaque (*Macaca arctoides*), rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*), capped langur (*Trachypithecus plieatus*) and western hoolock gibbon (*Hoolock hoolock*).

This is also an important bird area, with Nokrek national park having globally threatened, restricted range and biome-restricted species. About 150 bird species are recorded from the park, including one restricted ranged species Grey sibia (*Hetreophausa gracilis*) and 36 Biome species. Balpakaran national park also has other endangered species (in addition to those mentioned for Nokrek) like the Oriental pied hornbill (*Anthracoseros albirostris*) and great pied hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*), Whitecheeked hill-partridge (*Arborophila atrogularis*), peacock pheasant (*Polyplectron bicalcaratum*) and Kaleej pheasant (*Lophura leucomelanos*) and many restricted range species. Siju wildlife reserve is an important bird diversity complex lying between the Nokrek (part of UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve) and Balpakaran national parks. The wildlife reserve supports 12 floral species that are listed under CITES. Within the landscape, the rivers are also rich in fishes, a significant number of species are either threatened, endangered or vulnerable, while 30% of amphibian species in the state are endemic to the state, while there is a very diverse array of reptiles. The Garó Hills also holds the endangered pitcher plant (*Nepenthes khasiana*).

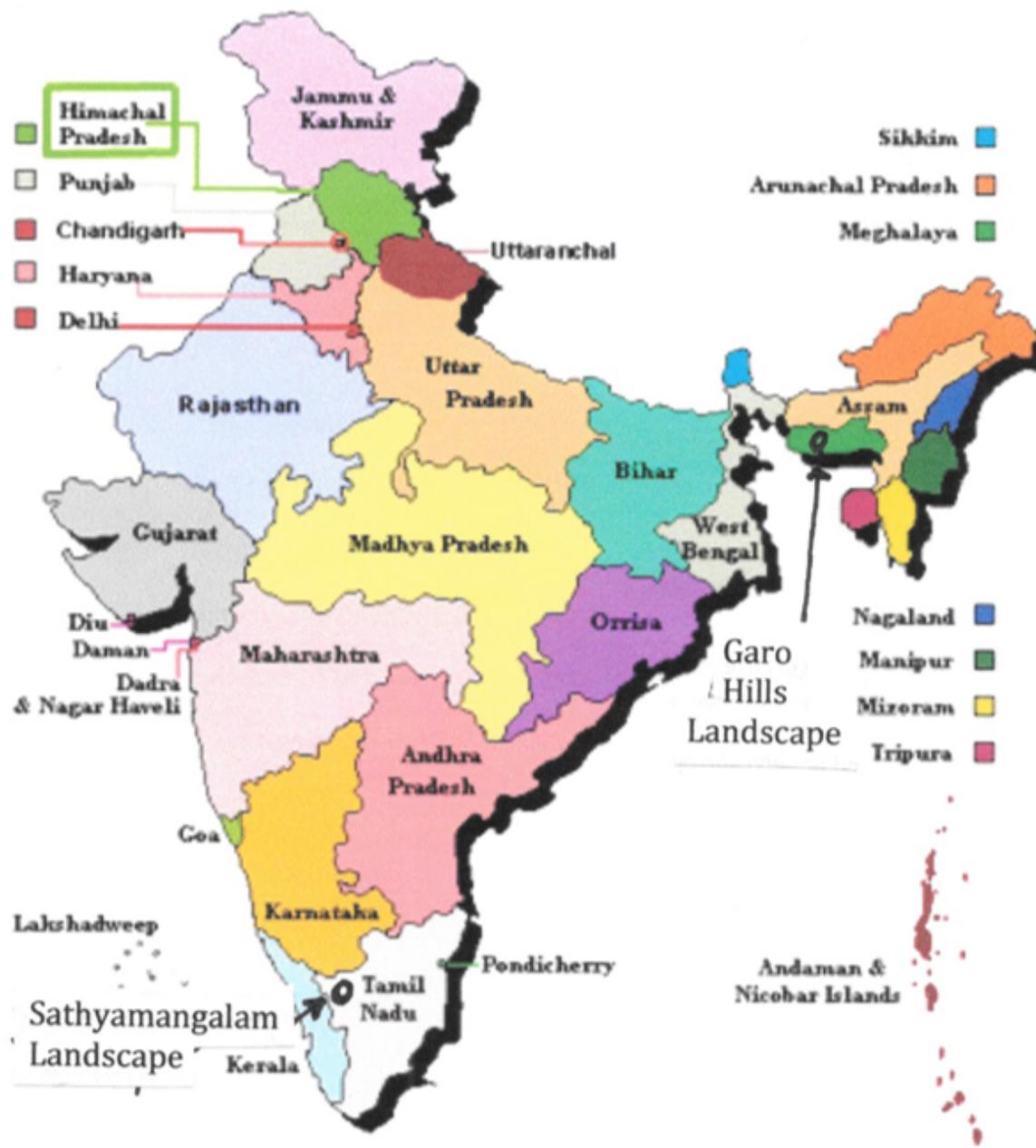
While settled agriculture is common practice, there is significant slash and burn practices (jhum) that is taking place, resulting in a yearly loss of about 7,000 hectares of forests. There are three main indigenous communities in Meghalaya, namely the Khasi, Garó and Jaintia, with the Khasi and Garó found the landscape site. The local administration is vested with the Garó Hills Autonomous District, the Khasi Hills Autonomous District and the Jaintia Hills Autonomous District, with the District Councils, under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution enjoying legislative, executive and judicial powers mainly over land and reserve forests, regulation of jhum, village and town administration, etc. According to the 6th Schedule, land ownership is under either customary land system or the riotway system. Under the riotway system, as practiced in the Garó Hills, the individuals do not own the village land, but have the right on a portion of the village land for shifting cultivation, but private ownership has emerged in areas of wet rice. The customary land in the Garó Hills is under the control of the clan, which is headed by a Nokma, or female head. The people have a close relationship with the forest and depend on the forest for their livelihood as well as play a very important role in the cultural and traditional lives of the people. The forest is accorded various forms of protection by the ruling class and the villages. There are two main types of forest systems, the state controlled forests and the community forests that are controlled by the respective autonomous district councils. Sacred groves, medicinal plant groves, village forest are accorded protection by the communities. Community forest reserves are considered as a special category of protected areas, which serve as buffer zones to national parks and sanctuaries or corridors between PAs. The

community forest reserves are the largest number for any Indian state and covers around 20,000 hectares in the project landscapes comprising 41 such reserves. The government mainly owns these, but community and private ownership exists with substantial rights to the communities. The state has recognized that there are a number of gaps in its conservation program, including coverage of protected areas, community forests and reserved forests, species management and conservation, conservation of agro-biodiversity, planning and resource allocation for biodiversity conservation, capacity building, information and research, and access and benefit sharing.

Sathya Mangalam landscape – Tamil Nadu: The Sathya Mangalam landscape covers about 600,000 hectares and is located in the gateway to [Eastern Ghats](#), is a significant ecosystem and a [wildlife corridor](#) in the [Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve](#) between the Western Ghats and the rest of the [Eastern Ghats](#) and a genetic link between the five other protected areas which it adjoins. The landscape is the confluence of two distinct geographical regions of biodiversity, the Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats. The landscape largely falls within the Nilgiris district and Erode district, but its fringes lie within Coimbatore and Salem districts. The diversity of habitats has resulted in an assemblage of several species of rare plants, animals, birds, invertebrates, fishes, amphibians and reptiles. [ecoregion](#). There are five distinct forest types: [tropical evergreen \(Shola\)](#), semi-evergreen, mixed-deciduous, dry deciduous and [thorn forests](#). Evergreen forests are restricted to small patches in a few high altitude hills that lie between 750 -1,650 meters. The landscape is famous for the Asian elephant, Bengal tiger, gaur and leopards as it is part of the larger Nilgiri reserve complex and represents the home for about quarter of the elephant population of India and a significant portion of the country's tiger population. Other key species are the horned antelope, spotted deer (*Axis axis*), Sambhar deer, barking deer, four-horned antelope and sloth bear. The endemic fauna are the Jerdon's courser (*Rhinoptilus bitorquatus*) and grey slender loris (*Loris lydekkerianus*). The rare Indian golden gecko (*Calodactylodes aureus*), rock gecko (*Hemiphyllodactylus aurantiacus*) and Sharma's skink (*Eutropis nagarjuni*) is also found here. The landscape boasts of 40 species of large mammals, 225 species of birds, 30 species of reptiles, 15 species of amphibians and 10 species of freshwater fish.

This landscape overall has many revenue villages and forest settlements, including in the two tiger reserves and revenue villages within the tiger reserve and engage in collection of honey and minor forest products. The Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary (141,161 hectares) is surrounded by large contiguous forests adjacent to it. Eco sensitive zones have been created around the tiger reserve covering around 29 villages. These forests are the home to the Irula and Soliga tribal groups. These tribes live in 7 forest settlements and 12 revenue villages within the tiger reserve and engage in collection of honey and minor forest products. The Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (32,099 hectares) that is contiguous with the Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve has tropical moist forests, tropical dry forests and scrub forests. This landscape also includes the Nilgiri North and South Forest Division, Coimbatore Forest Division and the Erode and Salem Forest Divisions, making it an important ecological landscape for key species. Within this landscape there are many varieties of non-timber forest produce and 250 medicinal plants, significant number of which are found in the landscape. The tribal collect them for household purpose and also for sale. The major sources of income are bidi leaves (*Diospyros melanoxylon*), bamboo (*Dendrocalamus strictus*), gum, resin, oil seeds (*Madhuca indica*, *Sterculia urens*, *Pongamia pinnata*, *Azadirchta indica*), essential oils (*Santalum album*), lemon grass and eucalyptus. They also make plates and cups from leaves of *Bauhinia Vahlia*.

The key threats are poaching, habitat degradation from grazing and firewood collection, forest fires, IAS, human-wildlife conflict, religious tourism and communicable diseases that could be transferred from livestock to the wildlife.



Map 1: Map showing landscape locations (Map disclaimer: The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations or UNDP concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries)

Please refer to **Annex A** for project landscape

2. The Baseline Scenario and Associated Projects

The baseline scenario and associated baseline projects (conservation related) can be grouped into two thematic areas: (i) Biodiversity relevant programs and schemes which has the potential to complement the proposed actions under the GEF project; and (ii) baseline investments in biodiversity conservation at the two demonstration sites.

Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats: The Government of India provides financial and technical assistance to the governments of States and Union Territories for activities aimed at wildlife conservation through this Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS). This includes crop compensation, conservation outside protected areas, recovery of critically endangered species, and addressing the human wildlife conflict. The scheme has three components: support to protected areas (National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves); protection of wildlife outside protected areas; recovery programs for saving critically endangered species and habitats. The scheme operates in all States and has an annual budget of about USD 60 million.

Centrally funded Project Tiger scheme provides financial assistance to tiger reserves for (1) protection (anti-poaching), (ii) strengthening infrastructure within tiger reserves (iii) habitat improvement and water development (iv) addressing man-animal conflicts (v) co-existence agenda in buffer / fringe areas with landscape approach (vi) deciding inviolate spaces for crucial tiger habitats (vii) support to States for research and field equipment (ix) staff development and capacity building in tiger reserves (x) managing wildlife concerns in tiger bearing forests outside tiger reserves, and fostering corridor conservation in such areas through restorative strategy involving local people to arrest fragmentation of habitats (xi) safeguards / retrofitting measures in and around tiger reserves and tiger bearing forests for wildlife conservation (xii) strengthening the infrastructure of National Tiger Conservation Authority at the Centre. (xiii) carrying out independent monitoring and the evaluation of tiger reserves (ix) village ecodevelopment in buffer areas, and (x) providing assistance to States for fostering ecotourism to benefit local people. The annual outlay for this scheme is about USD 40 million.

Centrally funded Project Elephant Scheme provides financial and technical support of wildlife management efforts by states for their free ranging populations of wild Asian Elephants. This includes support for (i) ecological restoration of existing natural habitats and migratory routes of elephants, (ii) development of scientific and planned management for conservation of elephant habitats and viable population of Wild Asiatic elephants in India, (iii) promotion of measures for mitigation of man elephant conflict in crucial habitats and moderating pressures of human and domestic stock activities in crucial elephant habitats; (iv) strengthening of measures for protection of Wild elephants from poachers and unnatural causes of death; (v) public education and awareness programs; (vi) village ecodevelopment, (v) veterinary care and elephant rescue. The annual outlay for this scheme is about USD 5 million

Central sector scheme on medicinal plants is a Central Sector Scheme of Government of India for conservation, development and sustainable management of medicinal plants. The Scheme aims to (a) Strengthen the Medicinal Plant Conservation Areas (MPCAs) by systematic survey, geo referencing of existing natural population of medicinal and native aromatic species having medicinal use. (b) Enhance conservation through in-situ and ex-situ resource augmentation and artificial re-generation of local populations of medicinal and aromatic plant species. (c) Expand area under medicinal and aromatic plants

species of medicinal values linked with creation of nurseries to maintain good quality propagation material. (d) Promote R & D to address the technology gaps particularly with respect to quality, documentation, identification of substitutes for important medicinal plants including RET listed plants and species with high demand in trade and bio-activity guided Phyto-chemical studies, etc. (e) Improve production, post-harvest technologies, and certification mechanisms for quality standards, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Good Field Collection Practices (GFCP) and Good Storage Practices (GSP) value addition and marketing infrastructure. (f) Stay abreast of International Developments impacting conservation, availability, trade, quality assurance of medicinal plants; and (g) Provide livelihoods and economic benefit to forest dwellers, cultivators, local healers and other stakeholders. The scheme also focuses on institutional strengthening of State Medicinal Plants Boards. The scheme operates in all States with a total outlay of USD 9 million annually..

Ecological Fiscal Transfer: Incentivizing forest conservation in states - The 14th finance commission of India included forest cover as one of the criteria for devolution of central taxes to states. The 14th Finance Commission decided to assign 7.5% weight in devolution recognizing that a large forest cover provides huge ecological benefits and that there is also an opportunity cost in terms of area not available for other economic activities, which it treated as an important indicator of fiscal disability. To determine inter-state distribution of the grant, the area under moderately dense and very dense forest cover of state in relation to total forest cover of the country in these two categories was adopted as the yardstick. The Government of India estimated in its 2015 India's Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) for climate change, that, in accordance with the award of the 14th Finance Commission, between USD 6.9-12 billion per year will be transferred to states proportional to their forest cover.

Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) is a legislative measure of the Government of India which are meant to promote afforestation and regeneration activities as a way of compensating for forest land diverted to non-forest uses. "State Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority" (State CAMPA) is an institutional mechanism developed under CAMPA to undertake and accelerate activities for preservation of natural forests, management of wildlife, infrastructure development in the sector and other allied works. The State CAMPA receives monies collected from user agencies towards compensatory afforestation, additional compensatory afforestation, penal compensatory afforestation, Net Present Value (NPV) and all other amounts recovered from such agencies and utilizes the monies collected for undertaking compensatory afforestation, assisted natural regeneration, conservation and protection of forests, infrastructure development, wildlife conservation and protection and other related activities and for related matters. In 2019 USD 6.6 billion was transferred to 27 States/UTs under CAMPA funds.

Environment Education, Awareness and Training is a central sector Scheme of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, which aims to promote environment awareness amongst school and college level students and is being implemented across the country. 90,000 Eco clubs developed under this scheme involves school students in 18 – 20 states/union territories in environment related activities like waste segregation, celebration of important environment days, cleanliness drives and plantation drive in and around the school campus. A financial assistance of USD 70/- per school/college with the ceiling of 250 schools per district is being provided under National Green Corps program of this scheme. The scheme operates in all States.

State Institute of Rural Development under Ministry of Panchayati Raj offers programs on Capacity building, training, research and consultancy services. The focus of training is on capacity building of development functionaries, both officials and non-officials who are involved in the implementation of flagship programs of the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR). This also includes officials' functionaries from the state,

district, block and village levels, Volunteers of NGOs. Members of Self-Help Groups, Representatives from Universities and colleges, youth etc. Training and capacity building modules on biodiversity, including development of People's Biodiversity Registers, cross sectoral linkage of biodiversity, areas of convergence etc. The scheme operates in all States.

Panchayat Award: Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India has been incentivizing the best performing Panchayats recommended by the State Governments/UT Administrations since 2011-12. Natural Resource Management is also one of the thematic areas for recognition of best performing Gram Panchayat in this area. This is given under a special award category namely Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar. Members of Gram Panchayats in proposed project states can be encouraged to act for conservation and management of local biodiversity and nominated for this award.

Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority (PPVFRA)

In order to provide for the establishment of an effective system for protection of plant varieties, the rights of farmers and plant breeders and to encourage the development of new varieties of plants it has been considered necessary to recognize and protect the rights of the farmers in respect of their contribution made at any time in conserving, improving and making available plant genetic resources for the development of the new plant varieties. Moreover, to accelerate agricultural development, it is necessary to protect plants breeders' rights to stimulate investment for research and development for the development of new plant varieties. The NBA has advised the State Biodiversity Boards to harmonize the BD Act with PPVFRA and encourage the BMCs to submit the applications for registration of farmers' varieties and applications for Plant Genome Savior Award/Recognition to PPVFRA. It has also been suggested to seek financial assistance from National Gene Fund for supporting conservation and sustainable use of Plant Genetic Resources for in-situ and ex-situ conservation and for strengthening the capability of the Panchayats and local bodies towards conservation and sustainable use and ex-situ conservation in agro-biodiversity hotspots.

GoI-UNDP India Biodiversity Awards- Launched in 2012, the India Biodiversity Awards is a unique initiative to recognize and honor outstanding models of biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and governance at the grassroots level. Four rounds of the Awards have been jointly organized by the Ministry, NBA and UNDP in the years 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018 respectively. The Award process was institutionalized in NBA in 2017 and UNDP continues its support as knowledge partner for the India Biodiversity Awards. More than 600 good practices on biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of biological resources, access & benefit-sharing and biodiversity governance have been gathered through the four rounds of India Biodiversity Awards. 47 good practices have been recognized for their contribution towards biodiversity conservation, sustainable use, access and benefit sharing and governance at subnational and local levels.

NBA's Grant-In-Aid for awareness program on Biodiversity The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) provides financial support by way of Grants-in-aid for short-term result-oriented activities which aim at implementing the mandate of National Biodiversity Act, 2002 and conserving the rich natural heritage of India by generating mass awareness among the people at large and stakeholders.

NBA-UNDP Biodiversity Samrakshan Internship Program- launched in October 2019 and it was the internship program aims to engage Youth and embed them in State Biodiversity Boards to support in implementation of relevant activities at the subnational level. Currently 10 interns engaged through this program are required to support the projects of NBA and UNDP in 9 project States and Union Territories and would assist in the constitution of Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), assist BMCs in the preparation of People's Biodiversity Registers and assist in the GOI-NBA-UNDP India Biodiversity Awards 2020 process. The duration of the internship is for 6 months subject to extension for another 6 months, based on performance. Interns are given a stipend of USD 165/month. The minimum qualification to apply for the internship is a Master's degree in any discipline and the selection is done through a competitive process.

Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) is a UNDP-managed global partnership^[1] seeking to address the biodiversity finance challenge in a comprehensive manner. The aim is to define biodiversity finance needs and gaps with greater precision through detailed national-level assessments, to determine challenges and opportunities for resource mobilization, and to build a stronger case for increased biodiversity investment. India is one of the participating countries in BIOFIN, and the government is collaborating with UNDP and other partners to implement the BIOFIN methodology at the national level, and also pilot it in two states. The project has supported the government in assessment of National level finance gap for implementing the National Biodiversity Action Plan and in identification of 12 country specific finance solutions which has been documented in the national biodiversity finance plan developed under the project. Out of these 12-finance solutions, 3 solutions are being piloted to demonstrate its potential to leverage finance for biodiversity in the country. This include, mainstreaming biodiversity in public finance (in agriculture sector), Corporate Social Responsibility and Access and Benefit Sharing. State Biodiversity Action Plans were also developed for Maharashtra and Uttarakhand under BIOFIN and BIOFIN methodology is being replicated to support 5 other states and 1 Union territory.

Recent progress updates include the following: (i) methodology developed to assess the attributable expenditure of relevant programs and schemes (of various central level sectoral Ministries and Departments) towards biodiversity conservation; (ii) initial assessment of expenditure on biodiversity conservation from various sources (public programs/ schemes, public and private corporate entities including under CSR obligations, funds from international donors, and expenditures on biodiversity conservation by CSOs) has been conducted; (iii) 116 national schemes of 24 ministries and approximately 200 schemes of Maharashtra and Uttarakhand states have been identified for their relevance to biodiversity conservation and assessed for their expenditure on biodiversity conservation; (iv) detailed review of 60 public sector undertakings and 150 private corporations to assess their expenditure/ investments for biodiversity conservation; (v) opportunities have been identified to leverage resources for biodiversity conservation through various sources, involving multi-stakeholder partnerships; and (vi) Finance needs assessment for implementation of National Biodiversity Action Plan completed; (vii) Based on the assessed finance gap a national biodiversity plan developed which includes 12 potential finance solutions to bridge the biodiversity finance gap . The entire process was highly participatory and consultative and included regular consultations and validation of results by 24 central line ministries/departments, private sector, NGOs, academia, State Biodiversity Boards etc. The project is anchored in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and hosted in the National Biodiversity Authority. Refer Section II.6, Table 5 for complementarity and means of collaboration with this GEF project.

India Business and Biodiversity Initiative (IBBI) - A platform anchored in the Confederation of Indian Industries aims to engage businesses in conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. IBBI has currently around 25 member companies who have signed self-declaration to mainstream sustainable management of biological diversity in business.

GEF 7 project ID 10204, Transforming agricultural systems and strengthening local economies in high biodiversity areas of India through sustainable landscape management and public-private finance, UNEP: While there is a priori no geographic overlap, this mainstreaming project also includes multi-stakeholder coordination and plans to work with Gram Panchayat in SLM and biodiversity conservation in micro-production landscapes and extrapolated to the landscape level. It has also particular relevance as the proposed project entails strengthening producer organizations, financial instruments, public-private partnerships and sustainable production systems. Refer Section II.6, Table 5 for complementarity and means of collaboration with this GEF project.

GEF 7 project ID 10125 Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program in India, UNDP; which plans to have interventions in both States targeted by this proposal and notably in Khasi Hills, nearby one of the target landscape. The project will bring important learning in terms of community small grants to conserve biodiversity, sustainable use of biological resources, stimulating agro-ecological practices by small farmers, biodiversity-based organic green product developments, creation of stakeholder platforms, landscape governance arrangements, private-civil society partnerships, etc. At PPG stage, the learning from this small grants project will be assessed to identify potential opportunities, in particular for sustainable use of biodiversity, green enterprises, etc. for inclusion in the GEF 7 project. Refer Section II.6, Table 5 for complementarity and means of collaboration with this GEF project.

GEF 7 project ID 10385 Mainstreaming Natural Capital Values into Planning and Implementation for Sustainable Blue Economic Growth in Indian Coastal Districts, UNEP: The project focuses on development of a national framework for natural capital accounting focusing on transport infrastructure and tourism to identify measures to avoid or mitigate unnecessary loss and impacts on natural capital as well as integration on natural capital objectives in planning and development of district blue economies related to these two sectors. There a priori no geographic overlap but the project is also a BD mainstreaming one. If the dimension related to the recognition of biodiversity values is retained in the current proposal, it might be worth exploring coordination. Refer Section II.6, Table 5 for complementarity and means of collaboration with this GEF project.

State Supported Projects – Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Conservation and Greening Project: Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) aided Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Conservation and Greening Project (TBGP) with an expenditure of USD 71 million has been implemented as a eight year project, from 2011-12 to 2018-19. The project has been instrumental in reducing the threats to the native Biodiversity of the State and in enhancing the natural resource base besides improving the capacity of field staff. 80 million seedlings have been planted under Tree Cultivation in Private Lands from the beginning of the project covering an area of 1.43 million hectares farmland benefiting 87,299 farmers. The lessons emanating from the project that are useful include - strengthening of partnerships between conservation institutions (PAs and Forest Reserves) and Gram Panchayats and communities living in the vicinity of these areas to engage in resource protection through increased surveillance, monitoring and patrolling; monitoring threatened species; developing strategies to mitigate human-wildlife conflict, wildlife crime and illegal logging.

Resolving Human Animal Conflicts: Mitigating the man-animal conflict is of greatest concern of Tamil Nadu Forest Department. To ensure that the affected persons should be compensated adequately, the compensation for the damage of crops, loss of human life etc., the quantum of amount has been considerably enhanced linking cases of “human animal conflict” with the “Disaster Management” vide G.O Ms. No.141 E&F, FR.6. Dated 25.11.2016. The compensation for human death and permanent incapacitation is USD 5,500 and for major injuries, it is USD 820. Further to enhance the institutional capacity and to strategically improve its veterinary support services to the forest and wildlife areas in order to deal with emerging wildlife health induced crisis situations and to manage the human wildlife situations, three Forest Veterinary Units at Erode, Krishnagiri and Tirunelveli have been established at a cost of USD 540,000.

State Supported Projects – Meghalaya

Meghalaya Community Led Landscape Management Project supported by World Bank (2018-2023) USD 60 million. The project will cover the entire state of Meghalaya and implementation of community led plans will be rolled out in phase manner throughout the state. The Meghalaya Community Led Landscape Management Project (MCLLMP) will work with the communities broadly in the area of forest and water and will help in identifying activities for degraded forest, soil and water conservation, restoration of springs and water bodies, nature based tourism, agro-forestry and homestead forestry. Managing natural resources in an integrated way across different land uses and connecting them at the landscape level provides the basis for enhancing people’s livelihoods, security, and resilience to climate variability and change. For policy-makers, it is a chance to plan across sectors by focusing on development challenges at the right scale by minimizing trade-offs and reaping more value from existing resources.

Garo Green Spine Conservation Project - World Land Trust with support from corporate partner, The Body Shop. The overarching aim is to connect the fragmented forest patches located between the West Garo Hills and Nokrek National Park, with a view to establishing an unbroken wilderness links. This network of forest patches forms the backbone of the region’s biodiversity and has been designated the **Garo Green Spine**.

Community benefits from India conservation project: World Land Trust - India: local communities who support the conservation of forests and wildlife around their homes, a one-day free Medical Health Camp was arranged for the residents of five villages in Garo Hills, north eastern India. The camp was part of the Garo Green Spine Conservation Project run by Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) and World Land Trust (WLT), a project that has worked with the local community for over a decade to restore and protect forests, which will reconnect the Meghalaya elephant landscape for wildlife.

Project for Sustainable Community Forest Management in Meghalaya – JICA from 2020-2030 (10,397 million Japanese Yen): The objective of the Project is to enhance the quality of forest by implementing the participatory forest ecosystem conservation activities and creating the means for alternative livelihood of the people thereby contributing to the conservation of environment and improvement of livelihood of people in Meghalaya. It aims to alleviate poverty and emphasized inclusive sustainable development through sustainable community forest management, grassroots planning by adopting participatory development approach. The project visualizes the need for integration of area specific cross cutting interventions including rejuvenation of springs/water streams, forest fire management, restoration of the degraded community forests through restoring 22,500 ha of degraded forest areas; 1,600 ha of Timber

Resources (with Enrichment Plantation); 7,700 ha of Natural Vegetation, promotion of livelihood oriented forestry including medicinal plants, bamboo cultivation, reclaiming of shifting cultivation area, REDD Plus/Carbon finance pilots, 1,000 Self Help Groups will be supported, and community gender sensitization activities will be held to create awareness and value chain development and economic amelioration for the targeted rural communities.

3) THE PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE SCENARIO WITH A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECT

The proposed alternative scenario involves a substantively inclusive and participatory approach to mainstreaming biodiversity conservation to reach an agreement on a common framework among various stakeholders to bring about a more integrated approach to conservation management of the multi-use landscape that then filters down to the district, block and subsequently to the village level. The intent is to ensure integrated planning of production and protection areas within the two landscapes, including mainstreaming biodiversity and sustainable natural resources management into economic development to bring about a more environmental friendly approach to management of the two landscapes. Promotion of this approach entails improving inter-sectoral coordination between rural development and conservation entities and vertical coordination across the hierarchical administrative structures that operate in the landscape and providing the tools that are easily accessible, easy to apply and there is willingness and uptake by users to facilitate integrated planning approaches. Further, in order to achieve a complementary, integrated approach to landscape management, the alternative approach requires that public and private finance is directed in a more targeted and cost-effective manner to achieve desired conservation outcomes and targets, while maintain adequate economic incentives for local communities to actively participate.

Achieving the above scenario would result in the following:

- Ensuring that India's biodiversity, ecosystems and landscapes are resilient, protected and with reduced risks from key threats posed by unsustainable economic development and resource use practices by development sectors.
- Maintaining populations of native species and improved quality of their habitats; better managed landscapes for biodiversity at larger scales; improved managed agricultural and livestock production areas; reduced forest fires and degradation; maintenance and enhancement of ecosystem services across landscapes; and sequestration of carbon and avoidance of its loss.
- Improved livelihoods and production systems that meet the economic well being of local communities.

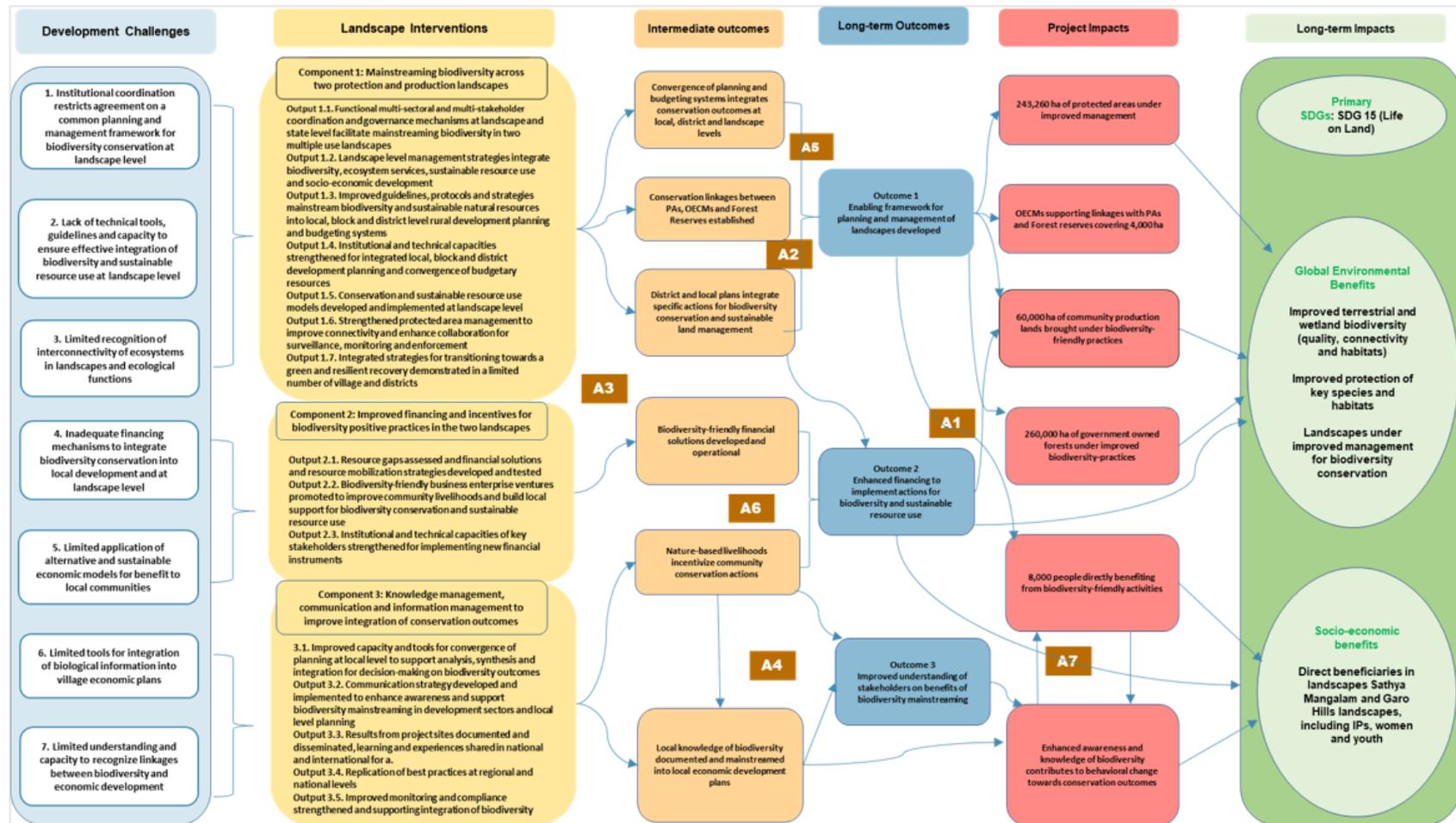
The Theory of Change provides the potential pathways used to inform the project's components and integrated approach. It is based on the premise that biodiversity and ecosystems degradation are fundamentally inter-connected and can be successfully resolved by addressing them simultaneously in ways that deliver benefits to local communities. There are explicit assumptions that must be met in order to achieve the intended results as described in the TOC, this include:

- Stakeholders and sector entities within the landscapes are willing to accept biodiversity-based development as an approach. It is generally accepted that environmental-friendly approaches to economic development is more sustainable and beneficial than approaches that are driven by economic benefits alone (A1).
- Tools and guidelines for integration of biodiversity into economic development are practical and easy to use, training and capacity development is incorporated into available regular training programs of SIRD, there is willingness and uptake by users and outcomes of integration are beneficial to communities (A2).
- Private financial groups and institutions recognize that it is in their long-term business interest to support conservation and biodiversity-friendly measures. Public financing institutions are willing to continue to support conservation investments (A3).
- Knowledge gaps, attitudes and factors affecting unsustainable practices are identified and communication priorities and selection of appropriate communication means to reach target groups are acted upon (A4).
- State and landscape coordination mechanisms are effective in bringing about collaboration among diverse agencies for improving conservation planning and management actions (A5).
- Public financing institutions are willing to tweet existing financing options to deliver more cost-effective conservation measures, realign expenditures to reduce negative impacts and improve positive outcomes, and make policy changes to ensure that expenditures are more strategic (A6).

Knowledge sharing reaches all communities and different groups in the project landscape, including women, youth, and vulnerable and marginalized people (A7).

[1] Funding comes from the European Commission, the governments of Germany, Switzerland, Norway, and Flanders.

Figure 2: Theory of Change



The

need for establishing a common framework under which integrated planning and management can be achieved at different levels is discussed herewith. At the decentralized administrative levels, both the environmental and local government institutions have legal mandates related to their individual responsibilities. The proposed project strategy is to facilitate coordination between these two decentralized institutional structures to enable integration of biodiversity and its sustainable resource use at the ground level through the village (and subsequently through the block and district) planning processes. These complementary institutional structures provide the genesis of the GEF project and its proposed approach. While there are policy decisions (and emerging support) that the Gram Panchayats and VECs should support the BMCs and their PBRs for integration of biodiversity and sustainable use, this practice has not fully materialized because of the barriers presented in the earlier section. The PBRs that are produced by the BMCs are often not used in the local planning process (either at the village or district level) for the lack of effective tools, procedures and capacity for integration into village/district planning and budgeting systems. At the decentralized level, the focus of this project is to capitalize on the enabling policy, legislative and decentralized institutional structures to demonstrate the feasibility of mainstreaming biodiversity into planning processes at these levels. To do so, the project has will work in

landscapes in the two states with a limited number of the village institutions to develop (and/or refine) tools, manuals, guidelines and learning resources to enhance capacity of the village institutions and BMCs to test/facilitate the convergence of planning and budgetary systems to enable improved integration of economic development and biodiversity outcomes. The expectation is that the experience from the project can generate learning and best practices that can facilitate scaling up initially at the block and district levels (through the Block Panchayats and Zila Parishads in Tamil Nadu and the Block and District Employment Councils in Meghalaya) and later at the state level. This is further discussed in Annex D. The local level participatory mainstreaming process (supported by the aggregation and scaling up at the higher district level) can help populate a range of such practices throughout the two landscapes, so as to test the effectiveness of local community level conservation actions over a large expanse of land, where the communities are the key actors in this process.

Coupled with this approach, the project's strategy is to improve conservation action (beyond the area under the jurisdiction of the local community institutions) through strengthened PA management effectiveness, promote conservation practices in forest reserves and rehabilitation/restoration of forest and riparian habitats.

The above will be realized through the following Components, Outcomes and Outputs as described below:

Component 1: Mainstreaming biodiversity across productive and protection landscapes in India. This will entail strengthening the institutional framework (including establishment of functional multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder coordination and governance mechanisms) to enable the participation of all relevant public, NGOs, and private stakeholders to develop integrated strategies for conservation of biodiversity and sustainable management within the landscapes and its constituent parts in consonance with sustainable and environmental friendly economic development activities. At the broader landscape level, this component will support landscape level conservation outcomes through a common framework agreed by all stakeholders that integrates protected areas, forest reserves, biodiversity rich areas and corridors outside protected areas and sustainable practices within community productive use areas. In particular, this would entail the strengthening of multi-level governance frameworks and capacities for management of the two landscapes to enable the convergence of planning, manpower and financial resources. Site-specific participatory natural resources management plans especially for buffer zones of high protected areas, forest reserves, high conservation value forests (HCVFs), OECMs, riparian corridors and critical elephant and tiger corridors in the conservation landscapes, ensuring optimal allocation of land resources to generate development benefits and critical environmental benefits (including avoided degradation, conflict reduction, threatened species conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation and community sustainable use and livelihoods) in tandem. These integrated strategies will include targets for biodiversity conservation in alignment with key socio-economic and developmental targets for sustainable rural and economic development including within agriculture, water conservation, tourism, fisheries, rural infrastructure and related sectors at the landscape level.

The project will strengthen the local level institutional coordination systems for village planning through training, planning support, new tools and extension support to facilitate clarification of functional assignments, in particular relating to integration of natural resources management approaches with economic development. In both states, the project will facilitate actions for biodiversity conservation for the short, medium and long term in the proposed landscapes.

Biodiversity relevant public and private schemes and programs will be reviewed and recommendations will be implemented to mainstream biodiversity in rural development sector by way of demonstration in tourism, forestry, infrastructure, agriculture, fisheries etc. depending upon state priorities to emerge from the process.

Around 400 villages will be selected from the two landscapes for project planning interventions (that accounts for about 5% of total villages in the landscapes). The villages will be selected based on the following criteria: (i) located within the vicinity of a designated PAs or high biodiversity area where opportunities for enhanced conservation outcomes and connective are high; (ii) these village areas have reasonable genetic resources that can support sustainable resource use (through ABS and other relevant mechanisms); and (iii) potential to cluster villages to provide a critical mass in selected high biodiversity locations so as to ensure an impact at the higher hierarchical levels. The GEF grant will be used to facilitate planning process (including guidelines, manuals, training, etc.) at the village level to enhance the integration of conservation and sustainable use practices in the local planning processes, but actual funding for investments on-the-ground would be financed through regular national and state budgetary resources available at the village, block and district levels.

This component will be implemented through seven outputs.

Output 1.1: Functional multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder coordination and governance mechanisms facilitate mainstreaming biodiversity in two multiple use landscapes

Under this Output, the project will support the establishment of multi-stakeholder platforms at the landscape and state-levels for ensuring coordination, convergence and synergy of approaches across the development and budgetary processes that operate at the landscape levels. Additionally, these coordination mechanisms will facilitate mainstreaming of biodiversity and ecosystem services into local and district level integrated development and economic planning and sector operations. The platforms will bring together a range of stakeholders across government, industry and community into a common dialogue on the biodiversity assets and approaches for their long-term management and sustainable use that would build lessons and experiences for replication and scaling up beyond the landscape level. These multi-sectoral platforms will provide a participatory mechanism for the identification of landscape-level conservation priorities that can facilitate: (i) integration of protected areas, forest reserves and other key biodiversity areas as integral parts of larger viable conservation units; (ii) testing the concept of OECMs in the Indian context as an innovative mechanism for extending the conservation estate in the country and facilitating connectivity between PAs, forest reserves and key biodiversity areas; (iii) mainstreaming of biodiversity, sustainable resource use and improved benefit sharing from genetic resources into the village-level development planning systems (and upscaling later to the block and district levels); and (iv) supporting 'green' recovery through enhancing the productive assets of community through the emerging interest in promotion of the 'One Health' strategy for India.

The proposed multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder platforms will include (i) State-level Coordination Committees (SCCs) that would be constituted under the chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary of Forests. The SCC would be responsible for policy decisions related to program implementation, ensure national and state government funding support, promote private financing, human resource development and scaling up and replication and (ii) Landscape-level Coordination Committees to ensure effective integration of conservation and sustainable resource use, facilitate convergence of planning and budgeting between government institutions (development and conservation institutions), private sector and community-based organizations that operate within the landscape, support implementation and oversee annual work plans, progress and budgets of the project in the state, ensure consistency and synergy and of approaches with the other ongoing development projects and processes in the state, and support annual work-plan development and implementation. The Committee would also facilitate block, district and sector agency participation in the landscape level planning operations at village level to ensure convergence of manpower and financial resources.

The best format and positioning for the LLCCs and SCCs to ensure proper functioning and legitimacy vis-a-vis existing institutional arrangement/structures including sustainability beyond project's lifetime will be determined during the PPG.

Output 1.2: Landscape level management strategies integrate biodiversity, ecosystem services, sustainable resource use and socio-economic development

Under this Output, the project will build on to the strong baselines in terms of the on-going conservation and local-level economic development activities and support integration of spatially-explicit biodiversity and ecosystem services considerations into landscape planning and management. As part of this activity, the project will develop broad-based conservation and restoration strategies for the landscapes, identifying the locations of priority within the two landscapes in terms of: (i) high conservation value (particularly outside the PAs) that are important for conservation and/or improving habitat connectivity, (ii) opportunities for integration of OECMs as integral components of the biological landscape; (iii) priority village areas (Gram Panchayat or Village Development areas) where the integration of the economic, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem values within the village domain can help to enhance the overall conservation values of the landscape and/or manage existing threats; and (iv) suitable locations to pilot the 'One-Health' concept. This output will entail a number of key steps such as (a) delineation and mapping (land use, land cover and flagship species) to highlight strategic conservation areas, strategic watershed and headwaters protection areas, habitat connectivity, etc.; (b) social surveys to map the quality of life and social development indicators; (c) identification of locations of biological-social interface, in particular conflict-risk areas and; (d) development of a participatory and shared vision for the landscape that ensures biodiversity compatible development within the whole landscape; and (c) a conservation landscape design or landscape perspective framework that has multi-stakeholder support regarding appropriate management options for different priority areas of the landscape (PA management, forest planning and management, OECMs, village-level economic development, etc.). The intent of these frameworks is to secure effective management agreement from diverse stakeholders for conservation outcomes and threat reduction in the protected areas and other conservation lands, and ensure compatible land use and livelihood development actions in areas outside the protected areas, particular in Gram Panchayat and Village Development areas. *Refer Annex G for description of proposed participatory landscape conservation planning process (this will be further elaborated during PPG stage).*

Output 1.3: Improved tools and procedures facilitate mainstreaming biodiversity and sustainable natural resource use at the local, block and district level rural development planning and budgeting systems. The intent of this Output is to provide appropriate tools that are needed to integrate biodiversity outcomes into the development strategies of key sectors for rural development in two project landscapes. This will be achieved through development of the following: (i) guidelines and manual on procedures for biodiversity mainstreaming in local plans and its implementation; (ii) revised guidelines and templates for strengthening preparation and utilization of PBRs so that they are more relevant and effective for integration into village development plans; (iii) development of a biodiversity mainstreaming index that would assess the presence or absence of a PBR, quality of the PBR, number of actions integrated into local and district planning processes, expenditure incurred and benefits derived, etc.; (iv) guidelines and procedures for integration of PBRs into the spatial database and tools available to the disposal of villages for planning purposes; and (iv) assessing any policy changes that might be required to enhance integration. Under this Output, the project will provide technical support to develop and update the relevant guidelines, tools, protocols and planning frameworks for mainstreaming biodiversity in the identified sectors and sub-national and local development plans (as discussed above).

Output 1.4: Institutional and technical capacities strengthened for mainstreaming biodiversity into rural development. The project will support training to improve capacity of existing Planning/Facilitation Teams, as well as the existing Technical Support Group and Community Coordinators in Meghalaya on mainstreaming biodiversity into the village and district planning processes. Based on the identification of capacity needs (covering village, block and district levels) through a range of learning resources such as training manuals, guidance documents, customized training and capacity building modules will be developed and implemented with the revised guidelines for GP/VEC plans (discussed in Output 1.3) to support mainstreaming. These training programs will be imparted in partnership with, among others, the State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD) that is mandated to provide participatory capacity building training for various official and non-official rural development functionaries that are directly or indirectly involved in the process of rural development. The project will provide technical support to SIRDs to integrate the application of these new tools and mechanisms in their regular training curriculum (through training of trainers, curriculum development and training modules) for rural development institutions (including GPs and VECs), while the extension arms of the state forest and conservation institutions will facilitate this process during the implementation process, as these institutions are mandated to provide facilitation support to GP and VEC planning processes for integration purposes. The institutionalization of the biodiversity aspects in the SIRD training programs will ensure that training is regular and available despite the turnover of elected representatives every five years.

Output 1.5 Conservation and sustainable resource use models developed and implemented at landscape level. This output will be linked to the landscape level strategies developed and supported under Output 1.2 and the mechanisms and tools strengthened under Output 1.3. The intent is to also ensure that critical conservation, sustainable resource use and ABS actions will get integrated in the planning, budgeting and decision-making process at the village (and other local and district integrated development and sectoral plans) in the two landscape sites. The overall expectation is that through this process, conservation and sustainable resource management actions are integrated into the village planning process, and scaled-up at the district level to help populate a range of such practices, particularly at the village-forest interface throughout the two landscapes, to test the effectiveness of local community level conservation actions over a large expanse of land, where the communities are the key actors in this process. The project will support the conversion of the PBRs of around 400 BMCs in the two landscapes into budgeted conservation planning instruments that can facilitate the integration into the village development plans. The financing for the locale specific actions will be generated through the planning and budgeting systems of the PRI and Rural Development agencies which are the institutions through which development and budgetary support from the national, state and sectors are channeled to the local and district level. Through this effort, it is expected that around 10-15% of the area (excluding PAs) or around 60,000 hectares would benefit from improved biodiversity and natural resource friendly practices in key sectors (such as agriculture, land and forest management, water and soil management, grazing, fisheries, village infrastructure development, etc.) that would be

achieved through the integration of conservation and environment friendly practices through local development planning process. This effort will be supported through existing budgetary allocations of central and state schemes available to the village and district levels as well as additional resources that might be envisaged under Outputs 2.1.

Beyond, the domain of the local level, the intent is to ensure integration of the production landscapes within the village domain with other larger protection elements of the landscape (protected areas and forest reserves) to overall enhance the conservation values of the landscape as a whole. This would require a collaborative effort to enhance the viability of the natural ecosystems, improve connectivity of habitats (through conservation actions in intervening village production areas and forest reserves), improved management effectiveness of HCVMs in areas outside PAs (including Reserved Forests, Protection Forests, Unclassified forests, community reserves, Biodiversity Heritage sites, Sacred groves and medicinal plant reserves, etc.) in consonance with Output 1.5 and promote opportunities for protection and rehabilitation/restoration of these important biodiversity habitats. This will be initiated through a range of potential approaches (building on existing guidelines, regulations and other instruments that will be strengthened and tested for identification, planning and improved management effectiveness of Other effective area-based conservation measures – OECMs in the two landscapes). The Government of India has developed criteria and guidelines for identification of OECMs that are specific to the country for the primary purposes of conserving ecosystems and natural habitats, maintenance and recovery of viable populations, protection native species and enhancing ecological connectivity (Refer Annex E).[1] Through this effort, the project will help enhance habitat connectivity and protect critical species and habitats (outside PAs) through (i) identification and mapping of the OECMs that exist in the landscape; (ii) promotion of improved conservation management of the OECMs; and (iii) technical and planning support for improving management of OECMs. Under this Output, the project will support strengthening of community forest reserve, their management and options for enhancing benefit sharing. The proposed activities in OECMs will be supported through financing from sector programs, private sector and community efforts, as well as through Component 2 (which proposes to seek new and innovative financial solutions) to support conservation activities within the OECMs. The intent is to support conservation, restoration and protection measures through a range of existing sector programs and rehabilitation/restoration of about 4,000 hectares. This would entail the conservation and restoration of these OECMs through simple protection measures, including control of grazing and fires, and supporting assisted natural regeneration activities. Refer Annex E for additional details regarding OECMs.

In the reserved forests, protected forests and village forests that are categorized under the Indian Forest Act, and based on the mapping exercise undertaken in Output 1.2 locations of high biodiversity and connectivity within the landscapes would be identified. This output will work towards mainstreaming SFM principles and practices in the forest working plans (that provide the main prescriptions, methods and tools for sustainable management of a forest management unit). This Output will support revisiting of the forest working plans through technical support and training to incorporate strengthened measures related to Criteria and Indicators defined in the National Working Plan Code (2014) for sustainable forest management (such as biodiversity monitoring and conservation, management of NTFP, soil and water conservation, riparian corridors, forest health, fire management, climate mitigation and sustainable societal use) in the selected locations as a means to enhance biodiversity, ecosystem values and connectivity. It is anticipated that around 260,000 hectares of forests will be under improved management through this activity.

Output 1.6: Strengthened Protected Area management to improve habitat connectivity and enhance community collaboration in surveillance, monitoring and enforcement. Under this output the project will support specific activities within the 5 PAs covering around 243,260 hectares and in their buffer zones where there is some community use of resources. This will particularly entail some limited level of spatial mapping to identify hotspots of conservation immediately outside the limits of the PA to enhance connectivity, in particular to improve linkages with OECMs (refer Output 1.4) and other forest areas, so as to enhance the ecological viability of the PAs. Additionally, this output will support improved practices related to implementation of SMART patrols, particularly in the more vulnerable locations to deter poaching and illegal activities. The SMART patrols will incorporate collaboration with local community members to improve

surveillance, monitor and report on illegal activities and improve enforcement. It will also support the development and implementation of measurable, reportable and verification (MRVs) protocols for monitoring key threatened species and their habitats as well as illegal activities in PAs to inform management. The park staff will enhance collaboration with law enforcement entities to address illegal activities and monitor and enforce infringements to PA regimes. Furthermore, PA staff will collaborate and enhance working relationships with neighboring villages to ensure complementarity with PA conservation outcomes, ensure that livelihood and income generation activities are commensurate with good conservation practices. All PAs will be registered in the WPDA database during the life of the project.

Output 1.7: Integrated strategies for transitioning towards a green and resilient recovery demonstrated at the local and district level. Under this output, the project will help strengthen capacity, provide technical support and strategies to help design programs, strategies and guidance to achieve better health outcomes for the human, animal and environment. The intent is to develop and trial this approach in a limited number of villages in the two project landscapes as part of an effort to develop modalities for its effective implementation. In an effort to promote this approach, the project will support creating awareness among the decision-makers at the village and district levels, including sector institutions that operate at that level through advocacy, sensitizing staff in the livestock, health and wildlife sectors on awareness of zoonotic diseases and the link with environmental factors. It will undertake: (i) mapping villages that are hotspots for joint planning and actions for disease outbreak prevention and containment; (ii) facilitate coordination between key agencies (health, agriculture, livestock, PA and forest agencies and local development institutions) to encourage disease control and actions; and (iii) facilitating mainstreaming biodiversity conservation outcomes in health and agriculture at the village level, through capacitating extension work, assessment of ecological health and the use of the ecosystem health index (EHI). At the respective village levels, the project will engage local community participation and ownership through the BMCs to recognize the interconnectedness between people, livestock, wildlife and their shared environment, and support the development of a framework for multi-sectoral coordination at the local level in reporting and communication that will enable information sharing, etc. The focus will be on villages that are located within a few “sentinel” sites, which in this case will be selected buffer zones to protected areas, where awareness and collaboration will be strengthened to gather information from communities on the detectable health of forests, livestock, soil and ecosystems so as to enhance understanding and processes of change which can serve as early warning signs of deteriorating environmental conditions, so that steps can be taken to minimize impacts. This output will be further developed at PPG stage, in particular to assess to what extent this strategy can help support “green” recovery, in particular opportunities for enhancing productive assets of the community (dairy and animal husbandry, ecotourism through healthy forest and environment, climate smart agriculture, etc.) given that there is emerging interest in India to promote an India specific “One Health” strategy, and the output design will support the trialing of such an approach within few villages in the two landscape sites, including specifically as it relates to the health of wildlife, livestock, soil and forests.

Component 2: Improved financing and incentives for biodiversity positive practices in the two landscapes.

Building on the findings of BIOFIN analysis^[2], there are a number of innovative financial instruments that can be piloted to test their viability in India. As part of this process, the GEF project will attempt to mobilize potential sources of financing conservation activities. The Biodiversity Finance Plan for India has identified a mix of potential replicable and scalable financial solutions (e.g. corporate social responsibility, ecological fiscal transfers, augmentation of public funds, access and benefit sharing and PES) and various potential funding sources (public, private, ODA, etc.) for filling the funding gap, recognizing that public financing has been and will remain the mainstay of biodiversity finance in India. The project will support a very targeted, but limited biodiversity funding gap analysis (based on already piloted district level assessments in other States) and mapping at the district level (and later extrapolated to the landscape level) to

help identify the relevant public and private sector institutions and programs that can effectively support conservation. The plan is to aim for at least few financing mechanisms to enhance current funding mechanisms, and to provide additional resources for integration of biodiversity outcomes at the broader landscape level. The project will build on the discussion already ongoing with different stakeholders, JICA and the Royal Bank of Scotland that has shown interest in developing and implementing projects to support conservation initiatives in critical landscapes of Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya. Other partnerships will be explored during the PPG stage to develop and implement locale specific blended financial solutions.

Output 2.1: Resource gap assessed and financial solutions and resource mobilisation strategy developed and tested. Under this output, the project will provide technical support and training to initially undertake resource gap assessment for the key districts (about 2 in each landscape) in the landscapes. The district level resource gap assessment will define biodiversity goals and targets, based on which a resource mobilization strategy will be extrapolated (combining assessment in the relevant districts) to the level of each landscape. The solutions will use four strategic approaches related to conservation, namely: (i) avoidance of future expenditures by employing strategic biodiversity investments and policy changes to generate conservation outcomes; (ii) deliver better cost-effective conservation outcomes; (iii) generate sustainable revenues targeted towards conservation; and (iv) realign expenditures to reduce negative impacts and improve nature-positive outcomes. This will be backed by relevant institutional structures, processes and responsibilities for mobilizing new resources and for increasing flows from existing (and potentially new sources) to implement the integrated village and district plans in select natural resource sectors (e.g. agriculture, forestry, fisheries, animal husbandry and tourism) and support conservation outcomes in the broader landscape through innovative/blended financial solutions.

This output will assist in supporting the implementation of key elements of the landscape level conservation plan, particularly in resource constraint areas and sectors to demonstrate scalable financial solutions for implementation of priority conservation action. In particular, the key targets for resource use would likely be for the following new activities: (i) support for continued engagement and dialogue with key stakeholders to monitor emerging threats to biodiversity within the landscape and, design and implement adaptive measures to manage such threats (Output 1.2); (ii) (a) provision of technical support for mapping and planning of conservation activities in OECMs, targeted management of species and ecosystem within OECMs, monitoring status of species and ecosystems within OECMs, etc. (b) technical support to facilitate planning teams at GP and VEC level to improve integration of biodiversity information into village level planning, supporting technical oversight for implementation of conservation actions and monitoring outcomes; and (c) continued support for engagement of community teams for monitoring and surveillance (Output 1.5); (iii) expanding opportunities for promotion of better health outcomes in multi-use landscapes and promotion of 'green' job creation (Output 1.7). The potential financial instruments that could be tested include (i) leveraging existing government sectoral budgets for biodiversity conservation through mainstreaming biodiversity in public finance; (ii) leveraging private sector finance; (iii) AI, Blockchain Corporate Social Responsibility; (iv) PA financing; (v) market for green products; and (vi) ABS agreements that support resource transfer for conservation and to benefit community. Selection of financial solutions will be based on some level of feasibility studies, screening and prioritisation of finance solutions and most suited finance solutions will be chosen for implementation in consultation with stakeholders, in whole or part of the two landscapes. The state finance departments will be engaged in this exercise so as to be able to guide and support this effort and facilitate any subsequent fiscal reforms that can help formalize and scale-up such instruments in their respective states.

Output 2.2: Biodiversity-friendly business ventures promoted to improve community livelihoods and build support for biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource use. Output 2.2 is aimed at supporting community-based biodiversity-friendly small enterprise and livelihood improvements using financial instruments (particularly those tested in Output 2.1) to avoid biodiversity loss and promote sustainability. Number of options will be evaluated and implemented, including rehabilitation of degraded agricultural lands, organic farming, NTFP-based enterprises, community-based ecotourism, forest and wetland-based livelihoods and sustainable fisheries-related activities, etc. It will also support the preparation of a database of biodiversity-friendly enterprises that might be promising in the two landscapes that will be updated as new and innovative value chain opportunities become available. To ensure that biological and other risks in terms of selected value chains are managed, an assessment will be undertaken for each proposed enterprise, including the value chain feasibility assessment, supply and demand, availability of raw materials and the feasibility of the intermediary processes, marketing and linkages with service providers, as well as their environmental and social impacts. Capacity building and skills development for a selected number of small-scale community enterprises (around 20) and micro-grants will support this effort. The feasibility of these enterprises, the interest of the community, capacity needs and availability of service providers will be assessed during the PPG stage and a number of suitable value chains will be identified and developed.

The intent of this Output is to introduce sustainable low impact livelihood activities that support species and habitat conservation as described above. Alternative models will be based on assessment of their economic feasibility and demand, ensure that these are environmentally and socially sound, and be supported by reciprocal commitments from beneficiaries to conservation outcomes that includes agreement to curtail unsustainable activities that will be monitored by the BMCs to ensure compliance. Based on results from other similar programs in India, the design of the livelihood and community enterprise activities will be developed to ensure a balance between conservation and livelihood improvement. This would particularly entail that inclusion of the following design features: (i) criteria for determining the eligibility of livelihood and enterprise investments that takes into consideration technical feasibility, social acceptability, environmental sustainability, equitable benefit distribution, gender equity, and institutional and financial feasibility; (ii) there is a clear and transparent linkage between improving conservation (or reducing threat) and/or sustainable resource use and the proposed livelihood and/or enterprise investments; (iii) identification of measurable actions that beneficiaries agree to, that supports conservation (and/or threat reduction) and sustainable use of natural resources; (iv) training and capacity development to support the livelihood and enterprise investments and create awareness of linkages between conservation impact and livelihoods; (v) participatory consultative framework that ensures that the livelihood and/or enterprise activities are selected and owned by local communities; (vi) monitoring framework that supports participatory monitoring of livelihood (and enterprise) impacts, community commitments to conservation (and/or threat reduction) and on-the-ground conservation impacts; and (vii) reciprocal community agreement for the maintenance of livelihood and enterprise assets created, and agreement to refrain from unsustainable activities

Output 2.3: Institutional and technical capacities of key stakeholders strengthened for implementing new financial instruments. This will also entail building institutional capacity at the Gram Panchayat, VECs, BMC and District institutions in tracking and tagging biodiversity expenditures, biodiversity budgeting, mechanisms for leveraging existing sectoral budgets for positive biodiversity outcomes, identifying and implementing innovative financial mechanisms.

Component 3: Knowledge management, communication and digital information management for improving integration of conservation outcomes at local, state and regional levels.

Project's innovative practices, lessons and knowledge generated will be identified, documented and disseminated under Outputs 3.3 and 3.4 that will contribute to learning and facilitate replication and scaling up in other parts of the country in terms of mainstreaming biodiversity, sustainable use and benefit sharing practices. This would be achieved through: (i) documentation and dissemination of best practices and enhanced communication; (ii) preparation of policy guidance notes to address current gaps; (iii) technical reports, publications and other knowledge management products; (iv) national and sub-national workshops to facilitate dissemination and promote replication; (v) preparation of replication and scaling up strategy and (vi) preparation of an implementers' Manual and Lessons Learned Guide to support replication. The project will also establish an effective M&E system that adheres to GEF requirements, enables effective evaluation of project progress and impact, and that is inclusive of the needs of women and opportunities to strengthen gender mainstreaming through project activities. Monitoring and evaluation plans will be developed to assess project impacts.

Output 3.1: Improved capacity and tools for convergence of planning at local level to support analysis, synthesis and integration for improved decision-making in support of conservation outcomes. As a measure to help improve integration of local level planning and budgeting systems, this output will support the piloting and trialing of "Digital India" - an emerging concept in India to enable the digital convergence of mapping and planning systems that operate at the local level (village and/or Gram Panchayat). This will include integration of GPDPs, PBRs, ecodevelopment plans, joint forest management plans and other local level plans as well as support the traditional knowledge digital library for the protection of India's traditional knowledge as part of the effort to enhance opportunities for bio-prospecting and use of its genetic resources for economic benefit to local communities, as part of the emerging national effort. While data used by villages are all available in spatial planning format, the biodiversity layer in the PBRs is missing in the digitized format for integration into the village level plans. The innovative aspect of the project is that it will support the digitization of the PBRs and conversion to ePBRs so that this information can be easily integrated into the spatial planning layers available for village level planning. In this regard, the project will focus on digitization of the PBRs (as a pilot in the two project landscapes) that contain information on biological resources and traditional knowledge with the intent that it would facilitate the mainstreaming of this information in the village planning process so as to generate local action for conservation of biodiversity, improve sustainable natural resources management and support options for bio-prospecting. The digitalization of these plans and maps developed as part of the PBRs will help analysis, synthesis and integration of these plans in the village planning process.

Output 3.2: Communication strategy developed and implemented to enhance awareness and support biodiversity mainstreaming strategies in development sectors and local level planning. Communication, education and public awareness are the key to mainstreaming biodiversity across sectors and implement priority biodiversity actions with involvement of all stakeholders. This would also ensure that concerns of biodiversity are mainstreamed in decision making at all levels. In order to ensure awareness and enhance understanding of biodiversity among range of stakeholders, a communication strategy will be developed to implement integrated plan to mainstream biodiversity in rural development. Special action will be targeted towards youth, where youth interns including (50% of which would be women) will become aware of biodiversity conservation actions and would be placed in Biodiversity Management Committees, line departments of rural development, and State Biodiversity Boards of the two project states.

Output 3.3: Results from project sites documented and disseminated, learning and experiences shared in national and international fora. As part of an effort to promote scaling up, this output will support the following activities: (i) documentation and dissemination of case studies, best practices and experiences emanating from the project to be used for targeted decision-making bodies at the local and state levels; (ii) development of policy guidance notes to address gaps and constraints of existing policies that favor mainstreaming; (iii) technical reports, publications and other knowledge management products in English

and local languages; (iv) documentation of traditional knowledge related to biodiversity conservation and natural resources management; (v) state workshops to facilitate dissemination of field lessons; and (vi) inter-state site visits to share lessons on PRI, rural development department of forest and wildlife institution websites.

Output 3.4: Replication of best practices at regional and national level. As a means of replication regionally and nationally, the project will support the following actions: (i) institutionalization of best practices through promotion of sectoral and local level planning instruments in order to secure replication through strengthening capacity of National Institute for Rural Development (NIRD) that is the apex national institution for undertaking training, research and development assignments for the rural development sector in India. NIRD focuses on policies and programs that benefit rural communities, democratic decentralization process and operational efficiency of rural development and PRI functionaries. Based on lessons emanating from the two landscapes, the project will support development of policy papers for biodiversity mainstreaming in rural development, facilitate development of curriculum and training modules within the current training programs to enhance capacity of village communities and district committees in application of tools and procedures for improving mainstreaming of biodiversity and sustainable practices in the village planning process; (ii) replication/up-scaling strategy developed based on lessons and experiences from the project. The replication strategy will provide guidance on key factors that define the successes (institutional, financial and political decision-making), planning and consultative practices (including participatory methodology), sequencing of activities that are linked to capacity assessment and skills development, tools for adaptive management and monitoring, technical and extension support, etc. This will be further defined under the project and support provided to enable uptake through training, technical support, identification of financial mechanisms, etc.; (iii) a National Biodiversity Authority Implementer's manual and lessons learned guide that provides a step-by-step approach for mainstreaming of biodiversity management interventions in village and district development plans, other sector plans, etc. Additionally, the project (to be further defined at PPG stage) will (iv) define financial mechanisms (Component 2) to support landscape conservation approaches; (v) conduct regional workshops and support site visits from other states to build learning and capacity for replication; (vi) identify a 2-3 additional landscapes in other states for potential replication, and provide technical support and training for development of proposals for initiation of replication; (vii) through NBA and based on lessons from the project, work towards formal government recognition of OECMs as an instrument for achieving national conservation commitments and formalization of national budgetary support for OECMs (similar to national government support programs for protected areas); and (viii) ensure formal recognition of the role of BMCs and mechanisms for integration of biodiversity outcomes in village rural development.

Output 3.5 Improved monitoring and compliance strengthened and supporting integration of biodiversity This Output will focus on providing technical support and limited financing to establish monitoring protocols and initiate monitoring of the project outcomes in terms on integration of biodiversity conservation at the landscape level (within forest working plans, OECM plans, district, block and village level plans) in the two project landscapes. It will support also the mid-term and term evaluation, revision and update of monitoring protocol and ensure that the monitoring results provide input to enable adaptive management.

4) Alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies.

The project is consistent with BD 1-1: Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes through biodiversity mainstreaming in priority sectors, and BD 2-7: Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate. In terms of BD 1-1, the project will focus on mainstreaming biodiversity and sustainable natural resource use at the landscape level (Outputs 1.2 and 1.5) as well as the local development planning and regional development sectors (Outputs 1.3,1.4 and 1.5), across the two biodiversity landscapes, the latter in key development sector namely agriculture, forest, fisheries, small scale irrigation, animal husbandry and other disciplines and aim to improve/enhance positive environmental practices in these sectors. As part of this effort, it would improve guidelines, protocols and planning strategies and build institutional capacities at the landscape, district and local levels to better integrate conservation outcomes in respective planning processes. The intent is to use the BMCs as the key vehicle for delivery of conservation actions at the community level, so that local communities become agents of change in managing biodiversity. Without the GEF project, it is likely that there will be limited effort at integration of biodiversity in local development and will result in further loss of biodiversity and associated habitats. This will be corrected through improved mapping and digitization of biological resources at the BMC level (Output 3.1), and developing integrated planning of GPDPs and VECs (Output 1.4). Project components include improved planning processes and addressing direct threat and habitat loss by increasing habitats through improved PA management effectiveness (Output 1.5); enhancing conservation in forests and other natural and productive use areas (agriculture, grazing, etc.); BMC capacity enhancement and preparation and implementation of PBRs; capacity building and improved community surveillance and monitoring to reduce threats (Output 1.3). It will also support community livelihood improvement to reduce unsustainable practices (Output 2.2).

The project will directly address BD 2-7 - improving financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global Protected Area estate. Project components include identification and implementation of blended/innovative/incentive-based finance solutions to bridge the finance gap for implementation of biodiversity actions in particular for promotion of innovative collaborative measures with local communities and OECMs partners to improve and enhance connectivity of habitats, conserve species, strengthen monitoring of species and habitats, improve surveillance, enforcement and threat reduction measures. In this regard it will also demonstrate implementation of locally-based financial solutions, such as linking with government sector financing, the use of genetic resources and traditional knowledge for improving financing for conservation and community revenue generation as well as supporting biodiversity-friendly small-scale enterprises that will build community support for conservation. Additionally, Output 1.5 will focus on enhancing management effectiveness of 5 PAs to enhance connectivity and collaboration with high biodiversity areas (including OECMs) adjacent to the PAs to strengthen and improve the viability of the PA network. As a measure of improving the coverage of protected area estate, Output 1.4 focuses on identifying, mapping and improving management of a range of OECM categories that lie within the landscapes, representing the first major effort in India to leverage OECMs to meet India's obligation to meeting Aichi target 11.

5) Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing.

State of ecosystems under baseline	Summary of GEF scenario	Increment
Biodiversity		
- Limited local community involvement in I	Sectoral activities in proposed la	Improved multi-stakeholder coordinati

ocal resource management decisions; mistrust of government actions and motives; little to no possibility of integrated management of landscapes and limited possibility for promotion of community managed reserves, access and benefit sharing agreements and support for community-based small scale sustainable enterprise development

- There is little practical knowledge and experience at the community level in developing and effectively implementing Biodiversity Management Community PBRs, including community governance, nor on the implementation of appropriate financial mechanisms

-Deforestation and fragmentation will lead to further loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services and the reduction of populations of elephants, tigers and other threatened species within the selected target landscapes.

- Loss of wetland and forest resources on account of unsustainable resource use practices.

- Most biologically rich areas outside PAs are very poorly resourced and small leading to an inability to effectively manage the threats to biodiversity in these areas

- Various public and private programs and

andscape states (for example, in sectors like fisheries, forests, agriculture, infrastructure, tourism etc.,) mainstreams biodiversity concerns in planning, programming and decision-making at the local level.

Financial resources mobilized to implement improved and effective management and conservation of biodiversity.

Enhanced capacities of relevant stakeholders (at all levels) to design and implement biodiversity friendly programs and schemes and regulatory frameworks.

Improved and integrated spatial and management plans that reduce habitat destruction of endangered species and increase the sustainable use of land/natural resources for community livelihoods.

Strengthened landscape management for biodiversity conservation, through enhanced capacities, provision of resources, and coordination of biodiversity conservation action at the community level.

on at landscape level enabling collective decision-making and actions for biodiversity conservation at landscape level and strengthened connectivity in nationally mapped critical corridors for elephant and tiger conservation falling within the two landscapes as measured by (a) no change in forest condition, (b) spatial concentration of species, (c) reduction on external pressures and threats.

Biodiversity actions and targets internalized in around 400 village plans and aggregated at district/landscape level

At least 243,260 hectares within 5 protected areas in the two landscape sites under improved management effectiveness.

Populations of globally important species (CR, EN, VU on IUCN Red List) at pilot sites are stable or show improvement (3-4 target species will be identified during the PPG)

Reduced threats and enhanced protection of threatened biodiversity, including elephants, primates, and other endangered species (to be defined at PPG stage)

Habitat degradation and disturbance t

<p>schemes exist at the central and state level with potential to generate positive biodiversity outcomes. However, the targets and activities of relevant sectors having high impact and dependency on biodiversity and sectors having high potential to influence biodiversity conservation in a positive way are not well aligned. There is also a limitation of replicable and scalable models in priority areas.</p> <p>- First level assessment of finance gap for biodiversity conservation at the national level under the BIOFIN initiative and nascent attempt to pilot few finance solutions in a limited way.</p> <p>- Limited capacities of biodiversity institutions and line departments in implementation of priority actions for biodiversity, mobilising resources for conservation and mainstreaming biodiversity across relevant sectors.</p>	<p>Application of OECM approaches to enhance connectivity and protect critical habitats as a policy model.</p> <p>Trained state level government staff and community members are well-capable of managing biodiversity-related conflicts.</p> <p>Biodiversity Management Committees at local level developed to improve and institute biodiversity objectives within their village plans.</p>	<p>10 globally important species reduced over an estimated area of 4,000 ha (This area might increase during PPG stage following further consultations and mapping of other effective areas-based conservation measures in the state)</p> <p>Improved management practices in 320,000 hectares resulting in improved forest and watershed management, biodiversity conservation and improved ecological services through (a) biodiversity mainstreaming in village and district planning process in 60,000 hectares and (b) 260,000 hectares with improved management plans and practices that integrated biodiversity and ecosystem services.</p> <p>5,994,373 tCO₂eq emission avoided during a 20-year period.</p> <p>At least 8,000 people with at least 50% women (to be further assessed during gender analysis at PPG stage) directly benefiting from improved natural resources and land management practices, community based small scale enterprises and ABS agreements</p>
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6) Global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF).

The two landscapes in Meghalaya and Tamil Nadu being proposed under this project for demonstration, harbour several endemic species which are highly threatened. As explained in section 1 above, several government programs are being implemented in these states. However, the activities proposed in this concept, will generate incremental benefits by piloting a number of innovative activities for improving conservation and management status of areas of importance for biodiversity especially habitats of threatened species. In this regard, novel conservation measures will be implemented in areas with high biodiversity values and areas under threat (including both legally notified protected areas and conservation areas outside PAs). Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM) identified and documented from other parts of the country, will also be demonstrated in the project sites to enhance conservation of terrestrial and wetlands areas in the project states. In addition, the project will build capacities of local communities for undertaking inclusive conservation measures within their respective village development planning process. This collective action in a large number of villages will help populate conservation action through significant parts of the two landscapes, particularly in areas of high biodiversity to enhance connectivity and protect threatened and endangered species. The project will also leverage financial resources for biodiversity at the sub-national level through various innovative financial instruments, which would contribute to the achievement of national and global targets for biodiversity conservation and management.

Meghalaya has been identified as a Key Biodiversity Area due to its high species diversity and high level of endemism, including key species such as the Tawny-breasted Wren babbler (*Spelaeornis longicaudatus*), which is a Globally Vulnerable bird that is restricted to the hills of Meghalaya. In addition, there are at least 6 plant species and 5 animal species on the verge of extinction, under section 38 of the Biological Diversity Act 2002, as well as number of important primates, amphibian, mammal and reptile species. The South Bank-Western Areas of North East India including Assam and Meghalaya (including the Garo Hills landscape) remain a important area for around 3,000 elephants.

Tamil Nadu is endowed with rich biodiversity, right from marine coastal systems in the Gulf of Manner to terrestrial evergreen forests in the Western Ghats. Tamil Nadu shares the Western Ghats with the States of Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Gujarat. It shares the Eastern Ghats with the States of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. According to the Conservation Assessment and Management Plan (CAMP) reports the red-listed species in the state include 126 species of fishes, 56 species of amphibians, 77 species of reptiles, 32 species of birds and 40 species of mammals. The endemic fauna includes 36 species of amphibians, 63 species of reptiles, 17 species of birds and 24 species of mammals. Many faunal species have been included in the various schedules of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972, considering their endangered status. Schedule I animals include 22 species of mammals, 42 species of birds and 9 species of reptiles. Schedule II includes 13 species of mammals. Schedule III includes 5 species of mammals and Schedule IV includes 5 species of mammals, 367 species of birds, 109 species of reptiles and 23 species of amphibians. Schedule V incorporates 13 species of mammals and 1 species of birds. Refer Section on "Project Geographical Focus" for detailed biological information on the two landscape sites. The Sathyamangalam landscape that is part of the larger Nilgiri complex of reserves is one of the most critical conservation areas of India harboring about one-fourth of India's elephant population[3] and a sizeable part of the country's tiger population.

The range of activities proposed under the project from integration of conservation and sustainable use outcomes in the local planning process and improved PA management effectiveness, promotion of community-based conservation programs (community forest reserves, sacred groves, medicinal plant reserves and other activities) will help enhance the protection of species, habitats and biodiversity in the two landscapes.

7) Innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up

Innovation: Through a participatory whole of government approach, the project is innovative in that it will strengthen mechanisms to ensure integration of key sectors and stakeholder interests within a broader landscape to support a conservation agenda that is cognizant of the economic needs of the local people. It will also strengthen existing local governance institutions in developing conservation approaches at the grassroots level for integration into the local development planning process. This is particularly relevant as the Gram Panchayat and VEC planning process serves as a vehicle for convergence of a number of rural development subjects and there is enormous potential to influence mainstreaming of biodiversity into these different subjects. Building on the local-level planning process, the project will bring a cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach to management of multiple use landscapes. In particular, this will be achieved through the following innovations:

- (1) Support community generated biodiversity e-registers as a means for integration of biodiversity information into local economic spatial planning systems;
- (2) Testing the use of mandated decentralized institutional structures in the environment (BMCs) and local economic development sectors to forge alliances for building biodiversity conservation outcomes in local economic development;
- (3) Piloting ABS approaches at the local level to serve as a means to generate revenues for local community beneficiaries using community generated biodiversity registers as a means to identify such opportunities;
- (4) Undertaking the testing of financial instruments for biodiversity conservation at the landscape level to complement previous assessments that were undertaken through the BIOFIN;
- (5) Identifying and testing innovative resource mobilization and blended financial solutions for establishing very localized and cost-effective models for biodiversity conservation that will be beneficial at the village level.

Other important innovations at the landscape level include:

- (6) Application of a holistic approach to management of conservation outcomes at the landscape level;
- (7) Trialing the application of OECM approach in the two landscapes as a means to test Government of India's approach to using OECMs as a mechanism to meet India's Aichi target 11;
- (8) Seeking to broaden PA management to integrate cooperative agreements with local communities and OECM management to enhance connectivity and viability of the PA network, strengthen surveillance, monitoring and enforcement of illegal activities and improve monitoring of species and threats; and
- (9) Trialing the development and application of "One Health" approach at the landscape level to achieve better health outcomes for human, animal and environment as a means to develop local approaches to predict and manage potential future zoonotic outbreaks.

Sustainability: The project will build on the learning and results of Global BIOFIN program led by UNDP in India, and test innovative financial mechanisms to support biodiversity conservation, particularly in high value biodiversity sites outside protected areas. This will also serve as a catalyst to encourage other development sectors and local communities to integrate biodiversity conservation outcomes in their individual plans and programs. The project will promote self-sustainability in the long run at the landscape level, with focus also at the local-level (village or panchayat level) as it focuses on building technical, financial and institutional capacities across local institutions and sectors for mainstreaming biodiversity which will not only ensure enhanced biodiversity outcomes but will also ensure sustainability of developmental and economic sectors. In terms of financial sustainability, the project will apply the following

approaches: (i) avoidance of future expenditures by employing strategic biodiversity investments and policy changes to generate conservation outcomes; (ii) deliver better cost-effective conservation outcomes; (iii) generate sustainable revenues targeted towards conservation; and (iv) realign expenditures to reduce negative impacts and improve positive outcomes. The project also aims to bring in the knowledge base and technical skills of statutory technical committees being planned to complement the implementation of Biological Diversity Act 2002, Rules 2004 and its relevant provisions of Access and Benefit Sharing Mechanisms. The committees will establish guidance norms for work planned in the project. The systemic capacity building efforts involving scientific, technical and administrative activities of the institutions involved in the implementation of statutory work will help in sustaining the work beyond the gestation period of the project.

As a measure to ensure sustainability, the State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD) that offers programs on capacity building, training, research and consultancy services, including to the village committees (GPs and VECs) will be strengthened with enhanced capacity, new manuals, guidelines, resource materials and teaching tools to help integrate application of biodiversity considerations into the curriculum for development of the GPDP and VEC development plans. The focus of the training is on capacity building of development functionaries- both officials and non-officials who are involved in the implementation of flagship programs of the Ministry of Rural Development (MORD) and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MPR). This also includes officials from the state, district, block and village levels, volunteers of NGOs, members of Self-Help Groups, representatives from Universities and colleges, youth, etc. Training and capacity building modules developed under the project will be institutionalized in SIRD of project states.

The institutional sustainability of the Landscape Level Coordination Committees (LLCCs) and State Coordination Committees (SCCs) beyond the project period is anticipated for the reasons provided herewith. In terms of the LLCCs, membership is composed of existing senior officials of concerned conservation and rural development agencies (under the chairmanship of the Resident Commission) who are mandated for ensuring related functions within the landscape that go beyond the confines of the project. The project will also build on examples already implemented through past GEF and non-GEF funded projects in sustaining these landscape structures, such as the GEF-funded Mangrove and Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Conservation Foundation that was established in the state of Maharashtra in order to bring in continuation of the key activities initiated under the Project, as well as considering the need for the conservation of coastal and marine biodiversity along the coast of Maharashtra. East Godavari River Estuarine Ecosystem (EGREE) Foundation established under the GEF-funded Mainstreaming Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Conservation into Production Sectors in the East Godavari River Estuarine Ecosystem project provides a cross-sectoral platform to facilitate implementation of biodiversity conservation initiatives through the production sectors operating in the EGREE. Similarly, there are many other examples that provide lessons for ensuring sustainability such as the Periyar Tiger Foundation, Chilika lake landscape Authority and Greater Himalayan National Park Biodiversity Committee that will be assessed at PPG stage. In terms of the SCCs, the Additional Chief Secretary/Forests has overall responsibility for ensuring conservation outcomes in the state that go beyond the mandate of the institutions responsible for conservation and forest management and hence require coordination with other agencies that operate within the state, such as the rural development institutions. There are already functioning state level coordination structures that can provide examples to ensure sustainability, such as the state level wetland committees. Additionally, this project provides an opportunity to strengthen the role of the State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) in promoting broader agendas that support coordination at state level. This will be further assessed at PPG stage.

Scaling-up: The project is designed to provide demonstration models for scaling-up. In particular, the capacity building and support for state and local administrative entities and BMCs in development and implementation of local level actions for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation within their respective planning and programs, and OECMs (that might include BHS, medicinal plant reserves, genetic resources management and ABS agreements, etc.), will likely help support opportunities for state level scaling up initially. Ensuring that activities, impacts and lessons learnt from the demonstration landscapes are disseminated widely will help generate a bottom-up demand for similar activities throughout the country. The Project's approach to develop new and innovative financial instruments in consonance with sub-national, district and rural development entities (e.g. rural development sector), community institutions and programs with an objective of raising a mix of funding support will help expand and sustain community and local level models of

conservation, resource use and alternative livelihood activities within and outside of the targeted biological landscapes. The replication and scaling up strategy to be developed (Output 3.4) will assess sustainable financial and institutional arrangements for scaling up, support identification of priority biological landscapes for potential replication, develop a best practice manual and conduct dissemination and communication events to encourage uptake of such concepts as discussed above to other sites in the country. This will be clearly articulated in the communication strategy to be developed in the first year of the project. In particular, activities to be undertaken as part of the effort of scaling up, will include specific training and cross visits for other interested states, conduct of dissemination events, promotion of knowledge management products, public engagement, replication strategy, etc. This work has very high potential for scaling up initiatives planned under the current priorities set by the Government of India. The uniqueness of this work is also to help build the relationship with other statutory regulators working within Government of India; this will help in exchange of knowledge base and complement the work being carried out across India dealing with bio-resources. At the state level, scaling up at both the landscape and local levels will be facilitated through the State-level Coordinating Committee that will be multi-institutional structures mandated to facilitate coordination of mainstreaming of biodiversity and its sustainable use. To facilitate coordination and scaling up, the SCC will co-opt relevant institutions at the State level to ensure convergence of planning and budgeting at the district and landscape level initially, and later at the State level. This will be supported by making available tools and guidelines defined for improved mainstreaming at landscape and village level, improving capacity of the SIRD to enhance their capacity to impart training to community members and their village institutions on the use of tools, guidelines and information generated through the PBRs for biodiversity integration into village and district planning processes. The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) through its institutional structures (in particular the State Biodiversity Boards will facilitate replication of the landscape approach at the national level as defined in Output 3.4)

[1] MOEFCC (2020). Criteria and Guidelines for identifying Other Effective Area Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in India (refer Annex E for summary)

[2] Biodiversity Finance Plan (BFP): The Biodiversity Finance Initiative, BIOFIN India (UNDP, 2015)

[3] Baskaran, N., et. al. Current status of Asian Elephant in India. Gajan Volume 35

1b. Project Map and Coordinates

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

Refer Annex A for detailed maps of the two landscapes

2. Stakeholders

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

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Yes

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Private Sector Entities Yes

If none of the above, please explain why:

In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement

During the development of this PIF, initial consultations were undertaken with the relevant national and state level agencies. Consultations were undertaken with key national and state government entities, the state Biodiversity Boards, State administration and local sectoral agencies and few NGOs. Additional consultations were undertaken with a few BMCs. The major consultations were conducted with the following: **State Biodiversity Boards, State Forest Departments and Environment Departments** (December 2019-December 2020) to identify threats and barriers and priorities of the Government for conservation of biodiversity and sustainable natural resource management. This includes the State Biodiversity Boards of Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya, State Forest Department of Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya and the Environment Department of Meghalaya; (ii) **Regular meetings of the State Biodiversity Boards** and Biodiversity Councils have also been organized and led by the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA); (iii) **Consultation with Wildlife Institute of India and Global Tiger Forum** (January 2021). Consultations have also been held with the Wildlife Institute of India and the Global Tiger Forum to identify key threats to biodiversity and natural resource management in the project landscapes, and design interventions to address the same; and (iv) **Multi-stakeholder consultation** (January 2021). A multi-stakeholder consultation was held in January with representatives from National Biodiversity Authority, MOEFCC, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, Tamil Nadu State Biodiversity Board, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), United Nations University - Institute of Advanced Studies, Nagaland Wildlife and Biodiversity Conservation Trust, ICLEI South Asia, Pushpa Gujral Science City, IORA Ecological - to discuss on the PIF development, areas of convergence and further alignment of the PIF to COVID response strategy of the Government of India and GEF.

However, consultations with local communities and IPs in the two target landscapes couldn't be undertaken because of the 2nd wave of Covid-19 in India. A preliminary assessment of project stakeholders that will be consulted during the PPG (including through targeted consultations, focus groups, and workshops) is provided in the Table below. This will be further elaborated during the PPG when stakeholders, their potential interests in the project and potential roles are elaborated. The project will also ensure that representatives of relevant institutions and projects are regularly consulted to enhance effective and informed collaboration during the project development and implementation phase.

The project provides the opportunity for partnerships with a range of stakeholders, including key central and state level agencies with mandate for biodiversity and forest conservation; state administrations in the two proposed demonstration landscapes; communities living in these areas; and key sector agencies that benefit and/or impact on biodiversity. During the PPG phase and implementation, a broad approach to stakeholder engagement will be continued, as strong

partnerships across government and with the private sector and local communities are needed to achieve sustainable biodiversity-related natural resources and economic development. Given the presence of ethnic minorities in the two selected landscapes, the PPG phase will focus on consultations with these groups to secure FPIC to evaluate their support and concerns regarding the project. These have been recognized as gaps during the development of the PIF. Individual stakeholder interests will be mapped as part of the project PPG phase, and potential roles in project implementation agreed as a part of detailed stakeholder consultations.

Table 2: List of Stakeholders

Stakeholders	Project Implementation Role
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)	MoEFCC is the executing nodal agency for the planning, promotion, co-ordination and overseeing the implementation of India's environmental and forestry policies and programmes. It is the coordinating agency for the implementation of all actions mentioned under the NBAP. The Biodiversity Division will oversee the implementation of the project.
National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)	NBA was established in 2003 to implement India's Biological Diversity Act (2002). It is a statutory, autonomous body and it performs facilitative, regulatory and advisory functions for the GoI on issues of conservation, sustainable use of biological resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of biological resources. NBA is at the apex of the institutional mechanism developed for biodiversity conservation, management and regulation in the country. Together with the Biodiversity Division of MoEFCC, the NBA will be one of the key executing agencies of the project.
State Biodiversity Boards	The project will be implemented in the states in partnership with the State Biodiversity Boards, which are the key agencies for biodiversity conservation, management and regulation at the subnational level.
Biodiversity Management Committees (Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya)	<p>The Biodiversity Management Committees are entrusted with the preparation of People's Biodiversity Registers and conservation plans for sustainable management of resources and area under their jurisdiction.</p> <p>The project will work through the Biodiversity Management Committees in Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya and the Biodiversity Council in Puducherry for planning, implementation and execution of activities under the project at the landscape level. This would include resource and traditional knowledge documentation, preparation of People's Biodiversity Registers and Biocultural protocols and facilitating ABS agreements. BMCs and Biodiversity Councils will work closely with the Gram Panchayats (constitutional bodies for local self-governance) and with traditional institutions in Tamil Nadu, Meghalaya and Puducherry for developing and implementing integrated conservation and development plans.</p> <p>The Biodiversity Management Committees are entrusted with the preparation of People's Biodiversity Registers and conservation plans for sustainable management of resources and area under their jurisdiction.</p> <p>The project will work through the Biodiversity Management Committees in Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya for planning, implementation and execution of activities under the project at the landscape level. This would include resource and traditional knowledge documentation, preparation of People's Biodiversity Registers and Biocultural protocols and facilitating ABS agreements. BMCs and Biodiversity Councils will work closely with the Gram Panchayats (constitutional bodies for local self-governance) and with traditional institutions in Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya for developing and implementing integrated conservation and development plans.</p>

Sectoral Ministries/ Departments	At the pilot sites, a number of sectoral Ministries will be important stakeholders e.g., the Ministries of Rural Development (MoRD), Urban Development (MoUD), Panchayati Raj (MoPR), Agriculture (MoA), Water Resources (MoWR), Tourism (MoT), State Forest Departments, State Medicinal Plants Board etc. These Ministries are critical for their contributions to funding for biodiversity conservation in the country and for meeting the NBTs. Relevant Ministries/ concerned departments will be key stakeholders in design and implementation of the action plan in project states and at pilot sites. They will also participate in capacity building and training activities. They will also play in key role in design, development, screening and implementation of finance solutions for biodiversity.
Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)	<p>MoRD plays a pivotal role in the overall development strategy of the country, looking at development and welfare of rural areas. Focus of the Ministry is sustainable and inclusive growth of rural India, eradication of poverty, increased livelihoods and providing social safety net. Convergence support from MGNREGA and NRLM programs and collaboration through the Integrated Watershed Management Programs</p> <p>Consultations, meetings, partnering implementation of projects in the landscape, training workshops, funding support, village integrated development.</p>
Panchayati Raj (MoPR)	The Ministry of Panchayati Raj was set up to give an impetus to strengthening of the Panchayati Raj Institutions. It is mandated to look after the work relating to monitoring of the implementation of Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992, the provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 and Article 243 ZD of Part IX A relating to District Planning Committees read with the Eleventh Schedule which illustratively sets out a list of 29 matters, which might be considered by State Legislatures for devolution to the Panchayats in respect of the planning of economic development and social justice as well as the implementation of “entrusted” schemes of economic and social development in such a manner as to ensure that they function as units of self-government. The MoPR will be one of the key stakeholders in planning, and implementation of local conservation action plans through its integration in Gram Panchayat Development Plans.
Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)	<p>MoA is responsible for the development and implementation of the agriculture related management plans in the country. Along with its research centers under the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) as well as its local offices are key for coordinating with local authorities for improvements in agriculture. ICAR institutes can be associated for research and technical support. National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) has potential for convergence and co-financing linkages in project states.</p> <p>Participatory workshops, training and convergence support, collaboration for pilot programs in vegetables, pastureland improvement as well as communication.</p>
Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR)	MoWR aims for optimal sustainable development, maintenance of quality and efficient use of water resources to match with the growing demands on this precious natural resource of the country. The Ministry of Water Resources is responsible for laying down policy guidelines and programmes for the development and regulation of country's water resources. MoWRs programmes and schemes on water efficient agriculture systems and development of village level water security plans has the convergence potential at local level. Local level representative institutions and committees of MoWR like the watershed committees will be consulted for integrating conservation actions in village level water management and security plans
Ministry of Tourism (MoT)	The Ministry of Tourism is the nodal agency for the formulation of national policies and programmes and for the co-ordination of

T)	activities of various Central Government Agencies, State Governments/UTs and the Private Sector for the development and promotion of tourism in the country. MoT. MoT is a potential stakeholder in implementation activities for ecotourism at the local level with potential job creation opportunities, Innovative financial solutions for conservation like FINTECH can also be demonstrated in tourism sector at local level. Further, local level green products can be also be promoted by organising fairs which can be supported by relevant schemes of MoT which provides for Financial Assistance to State Government / Union Territory Administrations for Organizing Fair and Festivals and Tourism related Events and similarly there is convergence potential for developing green tourism infrastructure development, enhancing tourist awareness and developing Eco guides at local level. MoT and their representatives will be engaged during planning and implementation of integrated conservation plans.
State Animal Husbandry Departments	The State Animal Husbandry Departments are responsible for matters relating to livestock health, preservation, and protection from diseases through provision of health care and strengthening efforts towards prevention, control and containment of prevalent animal diseases of economic importance. Coordinate at the state level for implementation efforts of the One Health approach at the local level. Awareness, training support and capacity building on vulnerable species and threats of zoonotic diseases. Information sharing through real-time data on species that are of threat, regular monitoring and surveillance of livestock health, enabling participation and communication among stakeholders.
Public Health Centres	Primary Health Centres (PHCs) are state-owned rural health care facilities and are the basic unit of the public health system. At the local level, prevention and control of locally endemic diseases, implementing national health programmes, collection and reporting of vital statistics, training of healthcare workers and frontline staff, preparation of health guides. Involvement in implementation, consultations, participatory training and strengthening the provision of medical care and knowledge and prevention of zoonotic diseases.
State Forest Departments	<p>The State Forest and Wildlife departments are responsible for all forest and wildlife protection related activities and the interface between National and State level programs. Key implementing entities at the state level. Coordinate with state level stakeholders and NGOs, hire local NGOs/Rural Support Programs in consultation with MoEFCC, coordinate with local level NGOs and Community based organizations.</p> <p>Representation in key committees. Involvement in implementation, consultations, participatory workshops, training workshops, enabling stakeholder participation and interaction, strengthening enforcement activities and gathering information related to illegal trade</p>
Medicinal Plants Boards	The National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) has been established by Government of India to coordinate with all matters relating to Medicinal Plants and Support Policies and Programs for growth of trade, export, conservation and cultivation. NMPB and the State Medicinal Plants Board will be a key stakeholder in development, conservation and management of Medicinal Plant Conservation Areas in project landscapes, sustainable use and value addition of medicinal plant based products and enterprise development and integrated planning of conservation actions based on medicinal plants conservation and management at local level
NABARD	NABARD promotes sustainable and equitable agriculture and rural development through participative financial and non-financial interventions, innovations, technology and institutional development for securing prosperity. NABARD will be a key player in design and implementation of innovative financial solutions for implementing local level integrated conservation action plans as well as in demonstration of FINTECH in agriculture.

State governments, municipal and district level government bodies (corporations, agencies, etc.)	This includes the states of Meghalaya, and Tamil Nadu. This group also includes the municipal and district level government bodies (such as municipal corporations, rural development agencies, tourism and infrastructure agencies etc.). State, municipal, and district level government bodies will participate in project activities related to modifying implementation of existing government plans, programmes and schemes with the lens of positive outcomes for biodiversity. They will also participate in capacity building and training activities. They will also play in key role in design, development, screening and implementation of finance solutions for biodiversity.
Research and academic institutions and universities	The project will work with Institutes like State Institute of Rural Development, State Forest Training Academy, Botanical Survey of India, Zoological Survey of India and other relevant bodies for environment and natural resources as appropriate to source technical expertise. Partnerships with training institutions will be explored as important sustainability mechanisms for the capacity building outputs of the project.
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, National Television and Radio network, Private Communication Agencies, Media – Print and TV at state and national level	<p>Dissemination of information and awareness about the project at national and regional level through mainstream channels, television, print, festivals, press and direct institutional arrangements, and addressing communication gaps related to stakeholders as well as general public. Key Partner for information dissemination at global, regional and national levels.</p> <p>Collaboration for festivals and international, national workshops and seminars, training and capacity building in communication, press meets, consultations and field visits</p>
State Institute of Rural Development	Mandated to provide training in the rural sector for a wide range of institutions and staff, including in particular training to PRI institution staff at the state level for implementation on integrated GPDPs. SIRD will play an important role in the project in organizing and providing training in various aspects related to integration in the GPDP planning process. This will include training to BMC members on preparation of appropriate PBRs, to GP committee on integration of PBRs into the GPDP process etc.
Women's organizations	In particular, Women Welfare Organizations in West Garo Hills, Akimbri Women's Club, Magupara Kasturba Gram Seva, Okkapara Mahila Samity, Women's Welfare Organizations and Jambal Kastura Gram Seva and others. These institutions will provide training, advisory services and oversight to strengthen the participation in women in decision making, in ability to be involved in planning and sharing benefits
Local Communities	Local communities represented through CBOs like the Biodiversity Management Committees, Joint Forest Management Committees, Gram Panchayat etc. will be engaged in project implementation as primary agents for managing priority biodiversity conservation actions at the local level (for example, development of People's Biodiversity Register, Access and Benefit Sharing, implementation of biodiversity projects requiring urgent attention and taking measures for other effective area based conservation measures, mobilisation of financial resources through convergence and other financial models etc.
Indigenous Communities	<p>Key target groups, particularly in Meghalaya (and to some extent in the Western Ghats of Tamil Nadu) will play a key role in planning and implementation at site level – from pastureland management and traditional knowledge, adoption of new techniques and practices for improved livelihood, prevention of illegal wildlife trade, conservation, value addition on agro produce and tourism.</p> <p>Participatory role in workshops, consultations, recipients for capacity building in different aspects from data collection, mapping, pastureland management, vegetable improvements, eco-tourism, information collection and monitoring, to communication</p>

NGOs	<p>There are several NGOs in the country working on biodiversity conservation, natural resource management, environmental protection, and environmental awareness and education. These NGOs (e.g. BNHS, BVIEER, FRLHT, Zoo Outreach, CCD, CEE, ATREE, WII, WWF etc., and local level NGOs) will be engaged in design and implementation of the project, including in community mobilization, implementation of biodiversity actions, threat assessments, stakeholder mapping, implementation of finance mechanisms, training and capacity building, communication, education and public awareness etc.</p>
Private Sector	<p>Private sector and in particular private sector platforms like the India Business and Biodiversity Initiative which includes several large companies that are demonstrating their leadership in addressing biodiversity loss will be key stakeholders of the project, including advising on potential financing instruments and mechanisms including mainstreaming biodiversity in business and Corporate Social Responsibility.</p> <p>Tourism, Mining, Cement and Agriculture are the key sectors in the state, with hydropower, floriculture and bamboo being the emerging sectors. The project will work with all key players in these sectors, particularly mining and power companies such as Lafarge Umiam Mining Pvt Ltd, Canis Mines & Minerals Ltd, National Hydroelectric Power Corporation, North-Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited and Meghalaya Energy Corporation Limited.</p> <p>Private sector stakeholders shall also be engaged through national and regional industry chambers such as Confederation of India Industries (CII), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FICCI), Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC), PHD Chamber and North East Chamber of Commerce. India Business and Biodiversity Initiative (IBBI) of the CII which includes several large companies that are demonstrating their leadership in addressing biodiversity loss will also be engaged for engaging private sector stakeholders</p>
Private Sector Banks	<p>Private sector banks in India like RBS, YES Bank and HDFC Bank are investing in biodiversity conservation through CSR in areas including afforestation, sustainable agriculture, alternative livelihoods and water resources management. They are also moving aggressively into sustainable finance through participation in green bonds market, carbon markets and structuring social impact bonds. The project will partner with these incumbent banks to develop and pilot CSR initiatives as well as explore convergence with their sustainable banking portfolio.</p>
Online Travel Companies	<p>Post-COVID tourism demand analyses indicate an increased appetite for sustainable tourism products, with consumers being conscious about illegal trade in wildlife, DEI (dignity, equity, inclusiveness) and demonstrating a renewed appreciation for domestic travel. Online travel companies are already building upon these trends and encouraging buyers to choose sustainable tourism products related to nature and culture. In this regard, the project will work with major online travel companies in India like MakeMy Trip and India hikes to provide market linkages to tourism models being developed and incentivize communities to prioritize biodiversity conservation for sustained economic benefits.</p>
Agritech companies	<p>Extension and financial services are important to sustain smallholder and high-value farming in community enterprises. Due to the lack of scale or accessibility, small farming enterprises find it difficult to sustain or rebuild operations after an exigency. In recent times, Agritech companies like DeHaat have successfully demonstrated end-to-end solutions and services to cater to small farmers, through AI-enabled technologies to improve supply chain and production efficiency in farm sector. They also provide cre</p>

	<p>ait and insurance services at the last mile to protect smallholders from external exigencies. The project will work with DeHaat and other agritech companies for better access to credit and extension services to farmers.</p>
e-retailers	<p>Online retail platforms offer better traceability of products to consumers and can encourage socio-environmentally friendly buying choices. The project landscapes offer niche agri and allied products that can offer higher monetary returns for last-mile producers through better price realization in transaction through e-retailers. The project will partner with major e-retailers like BigBasket, e-wallets like Paytm and other fintech intermediaries to encourage biodiversity positive consumer behaviour. Cash as well as non-cash incentives will be explored to change consumer preferences.</p>
International development partners (JICA, World Bank, KFW etc.)	<p>These international development agencies that supports initiatives towards environment and conservation will be important stakeholders/partners for providing substantive inputs and guidance. The project will complement and build on lessons of work done by these agencies.</p>
UNDP	<p>UNDP, as GEF implementing agency will oversee the successful design and implementation of the project providing oversight, technical coordination and monitoring.</p>

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis).

This project recognizes that women of all ages play a critical role in managing natural resources. Women work in fields and may spend as much as 60 percent of their time in productive gender roles during the growing season. Women collect fuel, medicinal plants, and water and are responsible for storing grain. Women maintain family gardens and storing of vegetables. Women are most often in charge of livestock health care, shed cleaning, feeding and care of pregnant and lactating animals, milk processing and preparation of milk products. In some parts of the country, handicrafts, such as making woolen mats, knitting and embroidery, are also a source of income for women, particularly during the winter months when they are less involved in agriculture. Overall, they have a great deal of indigenous knowledge that should be utilized towards conservation. Men and women have different roles within the family, village and larger socio-political arena. Women are primary caregivers for children and the elderly and have a greater burden for maintaining the health of the family unit. Women's roles in community level governance and decision-making are limited, and varied across the country. There is also an indication that women's perceptions towards wildlife may be different than men, due to their differing social roles, e.g. research findings indicate that women have more negative attitudes towards predators than men, most likely due to their role as family caregivers and the economic impact of livestock depredation upon family income.

A thorough gender assessment will be conducted during the PPG to analyze and respond to this context and to develop a gender mainstreaming plan with a gender responsive project framework and concrete mainstreaming actions for each output by CEO endorsement stage. During the project design/inception, mandatory UNDP gender marking will be applied. This requires that each project in UNDP's ATLAS system be rated for gender relevance. This will for example, include a brief analysis of how the project plans to achieve its environmental objective by addressing the differences in the roles and needs of women and men. Furthermore, gender marking implies the production of the following data: total number of full-time project staff that are women; total number of full-time project staff that are men; total number of Project Board members that are women; total number of Project Board members that are men; the number of jobs created by the project that are held by women and men. In order to ensure gender equality, these criteria will be integrated into the project design and efforts will be made to ensure that women do not suffer adverse effects during the development process. A gender specialist will be engaged during the PPG stage to undertake a gender analysis and prepare a gender action plan to ensure that women are actively involved in planning and decision-making during the project, not inadvertently impacted by the project, and have equitable access to benefits derived from project activities.

The institutional policies and governance structures for achieving gender equality, promoting the role of women in leadership and decision-making, providing equal opportunities for women in employment are well established, but need to be strengthened to ensure gender equality and mainstreaming. The project would directly work with the local village institutions for decentralized governance and planning; and the Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) that are local institutions for biodiversity governance mandated by the BD Act, 2002, in the target landscapes. The GPs/VECs are mandated have 50% reservation for women. The Biodiversity Management Committees at the grassroots level are mandated to have approximately one third representation of women in the BMC.

The project aims to empower women by increasing their participation in planning and decisions making (including tribal communities), and thereby ensuring social inclusion in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. It would further strengthen and enhance their capacities (the members of the Gram Panchayats) for mainstreaming biodiversity values in their planning process and decision-making process. The project will comply with the social and environment safeguards through a principled approach and leverage on social and environmental opportunities and benefits. The role of women is essential/key in management of biological and natural resources. While there is 50% reservation for women, the level of engagement of women in BMCs is

relatively low. In addition, these women representatives often fail to attend the institutionalized trainings and participate in further planning and implementation of development and conservation plans. The project would ensure that the pedagogy of the training programs is innovative and gender responsive.

One of the project landscapes – Meghalaya, follows a matriarchal system. The land that is under the control of the clan is headed by a woman. Matrilineal system of inheritance and succession of the properties from parents to the female child is prevalent in the Garo communities of Meghalaya. However, it has been noted that there is limited participation of women in decision-making process of the clan. The project would be working closely with women welfare organizations in West Garo Hills, Akimbri Women's Club, Magupara Kasturba Gram Seva, Okkapara Mahila Samity, women welfare organizations in East Garo Hills to ensure participation of women in planning and implementation of project activities for achieving the objectives of the project.

The Irula women tribe in Tamil Nadu are largely illiterate, socially marginalized and are highly vulnerable. Despite the reservation of women in decision-making process at the local, the level of engagement is relatively low. The project would work with Keystone Foundation and Adinarayana Forest Wildlife Protection and Social Welfare Trust whose mandate is to empower women in governance structures and ensure equal economic benefits through skill development and livelihood programs.

UNDP has a team working on decentralized governance & integrated planning and social protection at the national and local level. The project will consult and work with the team to mainstream gender in the project design and implementation. The project would also engage a Gender Specialist during the PPG phase to support the MoEFCC, NBA and UNDP in designing and budgeting actions for mainstreaming gender across all components of the project. Further, the Gender Focal Point of UNDP will be responsible for screening the project document and the Annual Workplans w.r.t gender mainstreaming for delivery of effective outcomes.

The following measures will likely be instituted in the project design:

- Dedicated female staff will be selected and trained to engage with, and collect data and information from community women to feed into planning, strategies, and decision-making.
- Training and capacity building modules and resources developed through this project will be made available to men and women and will confer information relevant to developing conservation strategies for men and women
- Where possible, income and revenue generation opportunities will be developed specifically for women
- Gender aspect will be one of the key criteria for selecting and prioritising financial solutions for implementation of action plans in the pilot sites.
- Communication strategies and capacity development tools developed for different stakeholders will also have a gender focus to it.
- Knowledge gained through this project will be conveyed to women in ways that are the most culturally and socially relevant
- Community-based programs will consider the role of women in NRM programs and ways for women to engage and benefit (particularly economically) from these programs will be devised; if necessary, women's groups will be developed specifically to guide these initiatives

· Data collected for project monitoring and evaluation will be disaggregated by gender

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

closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources; Yes

improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or Yes

generating socio-economic benefits or services for women. Yes

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

Yes

4. Private sector engagement

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

Please briefly explain the rationale behind your answer.

Private sector is a key stakeholder in ensuring sustainability of actions for biodiversity conservation and management. Most of the economic sectors are either dependent on and/or have an impact on biological resources; hence mainstreaming biodiversity into business (in operations, regulation and investments) will be key to fulfilling the biodiversity mandate of the country. The project aims to partner with the private sector to ensure enhanced investments by private sector in the area of biodiversity and ecosystem services through design and implementation of innovative financial solutions including Corporate Social Responsibility that will build on BIOFIN's learning and experience in this area.

Private sector will be engaged in development and piloting of innovative/blended finance solutions. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) provides an opportunity for companies to work together with the Government in the critical areas of biodiversity conservation (Output 2.1). India is the first country to legally mandate corporate social responsibility, wherein companies of a certain turnover and profitability must spend two percent of their average net profit for the past three years on CSR. In this regard, the project will build capacities of CSR managers in these organizations to enable them to better understand the nuances of biodiversity conservation projects. Financial sector is the bedrock of modern economy and has its presence in in all spheres of business and social development activities. By greening the financial sector, there is an opportunity to also impact many other sectors indirectly. Fintech-based solutions provide the opportunity for financial companies to i) monitor the impact of their business operations upon biodiversity through more accurate and real-time data on ESG and related indices; and ii) incentivize green business by linking cost of capital to a set of biodiversity performance-based metrics. Fintech enabled platforms also help green business operations by: i) allowing organizations to monitor and ensure their supply chains are sustainable, ii) connecting buyers directly to on-ground sellers and ensure better livelihoods at the last mile, iii) creating channels to lower the threshold for consumer action, like generating resources through crowdfunding of promoting sustainable retail choices. The feasibility of Fintech solution for biodiversity and scope of engaging financial institutions is being studied under BIOFIN Phase II in India. This study will also guide in implementation of fintech solution for implementing conservation action in project landscapes and engaging financial sector in this regard. In addition to the planned scoping study under BIOFIN, a detailed consultation will be done with Financial Institutions (FIs) during the PPG stage to identify potential FIs as project partners.

The project will work with government departments, private sector and development organizations to develop blended finance mechanisms for conservation financing. This would be achieved through the following proposed interventions: (i) mapping and estimating current biodiversity attributable expenditure in current government schemes and programs across all relevant sectors including forest and wildlife, agriculture, rural development, skill development, tourism, tribal affairs, animal husbandry, soil and water conservation, and working with government institutions to increase attributions towards biodiversity conservation; and (ii) collaborate with public and private financial institutions to develop and strengthen market-based instruments for biodiversity conservation including conservation bonds, debt-for-nature swaps, access and benefit sharing (ABS), payment for ecosystem services (PES) and carbon

markets. The project will customize blended finance solutions to the local context of the project landscapes and embed them within state biodiversity boards for sustained action. A community of practice on private finance for biodiversity conservation will be established for mutual learning and exchange between community, government, and private actors.

Partnership arrangements and co-financing commitments will be finalized during the PPG stage, and UNDP's due diligence processes conducted on potential private sector co-financiers. At PPG stage, efforts will be made to include activities that integrate biodiversity conservation practices into the design, planning development and management of sector products and services and into supply chain management, with the recognition that the private sector realizes minimizing their negative impacts and finding ways to help promote conservation and sustainable development which will be in their long-term interests. To do so, the project will initially work with private sector institutions in a limited number of industries (agriculture, tourism, dairy, etc.) to promote and support initiatives that include specific and measurable criteria for biodiversity conservation and local community socio-economic benefit. It will promote private sector-community partnerships to minimize impacts on sensitive ecosystems using new technologies and practices.

Community level small enterprises are important in supporting community livelihoods and business opportunities, including in promotion of ABS agreements. The project will ensure policies that encourage the development of public-private and private-community partnerships, including small business development and ecotourism potentials.

5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the Project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the Project design (table format acceptable)

The general risks are discussed below and social and environmental safeguard risks are addressed in Section 9

Table 3: General Risks

Risks	Rating	Risk Management Measures
General Risks		
Risk 1: The project has to deal with coordination across local and district levels, with potential risk of divergent priorities across scales that might constraint achievement of intended project objectives	Moderate	The three main agencies that are relevant to achieving the intended outcomes of the project, namely the MOEFCC, through its agencies such as NBA, SMM and BMCs and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MPR) and Ministry of Rural Development that is responsible for local economic development have decentralized institutional structures that are legally mandated to work at the village and district levels. The latter being the administrative level at which the project will plan and validate the integration of biodiversity and the use of its resources. The MOEFCC, MPR and MRD institutions at the village level have structures and mandates to work together to integrate biodiversity into the planning and budgeting systems at that level. However, this integration of biodiversity has not been forthcoming, not because of institutional reasons, but rather due to the lack of appropriate tools and capacity to plan, implement and validate the integration into the village plans. The project will help develop tools to convert biological information to formats that can be used easily to integrate into the village planning, enhance training of BMCs, GP and VEC committees to facilitate such integration, develop methodology to monitor and assess effectiveness of integration and the impacts on biodiversity conservation and community revenue sharing from use of these natural assets.
Risk 2: Competing mandates and poor coordination	Moderate	The establishment of State and landscape level coordina

<p>between and among government agencies may impact on achievement of project outcomes at the landscape level</p>	<p>e</p>	<p>tion mechanisms that will include key sector agencies and stakeholders will ensure that a landscape vision is agreed to by all stakeholders that will be aligned with their respective mandates. Additionally, the project will provide technical support, training, and coordination support to ensure that activities are well integrated and managed for the benefit of the individual landscapes</p>
<p>Risk 3: Limited capacities of biodiversity governance institutions to access funding for conservation</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>The project will engage with government stakeholders to develop their capacities to understand the impact of their actions on, and align them to achieve positive impacts on biodiversity. The government institutions will be empowered to increase and/ or better document their investments impacting biodiversity, as well as enhance implementation of resources to achieve positive impact. Handholding support will be provided to local communities and community institutions like BMCs and GPs to access and implement these resources. NGOs, CSOs and technical institutions will be engaged to provide this support, and their capacities will also be strengthened towards the same.</p> <p>The private sector will be engaged to mobilize grant-based resources like CSR funds as well as market-based instruments like conservation bonds and PES. Technical support groups (identified during the implementation of the BIOFIN project) will be engaged to develop blended finance mechanisms pooling government and market resources.</p>
<p>Risk 4: With the prevalent situation of COVID-19, the focus of the public and private sector may shift towards issues of health, migration, food security and economic growth with less attention on biodiversity conservation.</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>The project will establish the need and importance of conservation and management of biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources, to stop the increasing trend in zoonotic and virulent diseases. A communication strategy will be developed for reaching out to relevant sectors and communities at local level to green sectoral programmes, use of local and traditional varieties for ensuring food, livelihood and health security and to achieve economic sustainability.</p>
<p>Risk 5: Gram Panchayat and VECs may be slow/reluctant to integrate the biodiversity conservation agenda into their village economic development practice</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Village institutions in the two states are mandated to use resources available for supporting BMCs and preparation of PRRs as part of the decentralized village development</p>

<p>and into their village economic development practices.</p>		<p>will be as part of the decentralized village development process. This provides an opportunity to push the integration of biodiversity through the PBRs. This will be further enhanced through the revision of village planning manuals regarding role of BMCs, PBRs and approaches for integration of biodiversity in the village plans. Additionally, the manual (and biodiversity mainstreaming index) will provide guidance of measuring the effectiveness of the integration. The development of training and learning resources will facilitate the State Institute of Rural Development to include these aspects in their regular training programs for the Gram Panchayat and VEC Committee members and the Gram Panchayat Planning Facilitation Teams and Technical Support Group, the latter in Meghalaya.</p>
<p>Risk 6: Vested interests of local level stakeholders might block the integration of biodiversity actions in village plans</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>The risk will be reduced by ensuring that village development rules in relation to transparency, equity and participation are followed at all stages of village planning and implementation by designing measures to ensure transparency at all stages of implementation of local development activities. There is also political will at the highest levels of government to work towards changing the past systems.</p>
<p>Risk 7: Delays in ensuring the preparation of revised village development manuals, guidelines, training modules and capacity building programs</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>This responsibility for ensuring this rests with the State Coordinating Committees. This project will also ensure that Panchayat and Employment Council Institutions are represented in the SCCs to ensure buy-in and progress</p>
<p>Risk 8. Financial sustainability of PAs in the landscapes may not be assured.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>PAs and forest reserves are adequately financed from central and state government budgets and programs. Tiger reserves receive 60% of their annual funding from the central government sponsored Project Tiger Scheme that covers activities such as protection (including anti-poaching measures), habitat management, capacity development, research and monitoring, tourism management, village ecodevelopment in buffer zones and some infrastructure. There are 2 tiger reserves in the Tamil Nadu landscape. The state government finance 40% of costs of tiger reserve budgets that is mainly for staff salaries, maintenance of reserve infrastructure and other assets and some d</p>

	<p>development activities.</p> <p>Additionally, centrally funded scheme for national parks and wildlife sanctuaries (other than tiger reserves) funds activities and the within these reserves the centrally funded “integrated development of wildlife habitats” scheme funds habitat and related management activities in key species habitats (e.g. elephant, tiger, leopard and other species) in areas outside tiger reserves, national parks and sanctuaries</p> <p>In Meghalaya (being a tribal state), 90% of PA financing comes from the centrally funded schemes discussed under (iii) and (iv), including staff salaries</p>
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Climate Risk and Climate Risk Management

The two landscapes under the project, namely Garo Hills in Meghalaya and Sathya Mangalam in Tamil Nadu are located in different climatic zones of the country and as a consequence have different climate risk manifestations.

In the State of Meghalaya, climate sensitivity comes from the fragile-ecosystem of the region, The varied physiological features of the state and the altitudinal differences gives rise to varied types of climate ranging from near tropical to temperate and alpine which is likely to be disturbed considerably under the impact of weather variability^[1]. The vulnerability of the state to water-induced disasters because of its location in the eastern Himalayan periphery, fragile geo-environmental setting and economic under-development is likely to pose considerable threat to the resilience of poorer and vulnerable community. Meghalaya’s economy is closely tied to its natural-resource-base and climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, water, and forestry. Climate change as projected between 2021 to 2050 in the Garo Hills landscape might result in increasing mean annual temperature (1.8-1.9°C), variability of rainfall pattern (-5% increase) and seasonal shift in weather pattern which is likely to result into destructive effect on the agriculture, the mainstay vocation in the state. Moreover, the highly dispersed and the vulnerable population segment of the state is poorly equipped to cope effectively with the adversities of climate change due to low capabilities, weak institutional mechanisms, inability to diversify to other livelihood activities and lack of access to adequate resources to enable the community to recover from climate shocks.

Forests are important natural resource in Meghalaya accounting for 77.02% of its geographical area on which a large extent of the tribal population that dependent on it. It is projected that climate change might enhance forest vulnerability that might result in extensive human induced forest disturbance and fragmentation. Climate change can also have an impact on agricultural yields and water resources availability. Some of the key problems associated with climate change would be the loss of biodiversity and some endemic species that would require better dialogue and diversification of agro-forestry and agri-sylvicultural practices to reduce degradation from slash and burn agriculture, payment for ecosystem services and green cover in buffer zones of mining areas and sustainable mine closure and conservation measures to address rainfall variability.

In the State of Tamil Nadu, the magnitude of future change is surrounded by uncertainty related to different sources, although a further intensification of these trends seems likely, with seasonal maximum/ minimum temperature increases of 1.7°C/ 3.4 °C (mitigation scenario) to 2.2°C/ 3.8°C (high emission scenario) projected by the mean of the regional climate models by the end of the century. Rainfall projections, which are surrounded by higher levels of uncertainty, suggest slight increases in total annual rainfall under the different scenarios, about 4.4% increase by mid-century and 20.5 % by end of the century[2]. Changes are, however, more pronounced for certain seasons and regions, with the monsoon and post-monsoon season becoming wetter and the winter and pre-monsoon season become drier.

Observed and projected changes in climatic conditions expose different socio-economic systems or sectors of economic activity to the risk of disruption. Sectoral vulnerabilities arise from observed and projected undesirable climate change impacts, and include threats to ecosystem services and species habitats (forest and biodiversity sector), decreasing crop and animal yields due to unfavorable heat conditions and precipitation events (agricultural sector), increases in the volatility of water availability (water resources), increases in the occurrence of both vector-borne and respiratory diseases (health sector), reduced energy system reliability due to (hydrological) extreme events and demand changes (energy sector), and exponential health and extreme event damages related to urbanization in an extreme climate (urban sector). Sectoral vulnerabilities can further be aggregated, and spatial information on aggregate climate change vulnerability is a useful input to stocktaking and adaptation prioritization –in fact, increases in indicators of aggregate vulnerability found here suggests the need for enhanced adaptation measures. It is anticipated that temperature increase which are expected to be higher in the Eastern Ghats will increase intensity of forest fires and outbreaks of insects and pathogens. To respond to climate change would require promotion of climate resilient management practices, promote breeding of more resistant indigenous varieties and disease surveillance and forecasting of disease outbreaks to manage agriculture. To manage water resources risks from droughts and flooding require strategies to improve the efficiency of village water storage systems (tanks/reservoirs), increasing water productivity and strengthening infrastructure to manage disasters. To manage impacts on biodiversity and forests would require actions to increase forest cover through agro-forestry and afforestation of degraded lands, enhancing biodiversity conservation action in protected areas, reserved forests and OECMs, enhancing usefulness of People’s Biodiversity Registers to protect and benefit from genetic resources, management of invasive species and building awareness among local communities on value of forests and biodiversity, integrated development of wildlife habitats and eco-restoration.

Table 4: Climate Risk Analysis

Risk	Risk Management Objective	Project Climate Mitigation and Management Strategy
Risk 1: High temperatures	Improving biodiversit	The project will attempt to mitigate this impact by

<p>Risk 1: High temperatures, loss of soil moisture, longer dry periods and more dry days may affect opportunities for 'greening' village plans</p>	<p>improving biodiversity-friendly practices in agriculture, farming and resource management agricultural productivity, viability and quality</p>	<p>The project will attempt to mitigate this impact by the following means - supporting biodiversity-friendly and sustainable resource use practices through training, manuals, best practices for erosion control, soil fertility improvements, mulching and other techniques for soil moisture conservation and fire protection and management</p>
<p>Risk 2: Stream drying and impact on riparian habitat, water availability for agriculture and drinking for community</p>	<p>Through integrated planning where emphasis would be to stabilize riparian areas and protect watershed forests and stream reservations.</p>	<p>The project will mitigate this impact by working through the village councils to enhance capacity and commitments to protecting watersheds and stream catchments, restoration of riparian boundaries, negotiation with communities to ensure water conservation especially during dry season, support for attracting alternate sources of water and surface water storage (ponds/wetlands)</p>
<p>Risk 3: Climate risks could exacerbate risks posed by clearing of forests and unsustainable forest and land use practices could result in increased vulnerability and reduced coping capacity</p>	<p>Improve design of landscape conservation and forest connectivity outcomes to enhance protection and maintenance of forests and natural habitats that can act as an effective means to reduce impacts of climate change</p>	<p>The project will support scientific-based approach and steps for planning and management to ensure that forest management plans ensure that forests, riparian and natural ecosystems are conserved; promotion of conservation practices to improve protection and management of critical ecosystems services in PAs, forest reserves and OECMS to help increase the overall resilience of the natural systems to climate risks compared to business as usual. Support learning and communications to improve awareness of climate and ensuring measures to improve climate resilience.</p>
<p>Risk 4: Climate sensitivity recognizing the profound relationship between climate change, Covid19 and local community vulnerabilities</p>	<p>Enhancing community resilience and capacity to cope with climate impacts</p>	<p>The project recognizes the need to assist the vulnerable local population to cope with climate impacts through integration of climate adaptation in farming practices, ensure forest conservation practice, protect riparian corridors, that could have a positive impact on improving resilience to climate impacts, etc.</p>
<p>Risk 5: Forest degradation c</p>	<p>Enhancing conservat</p>	<p>Degraded forests are far more likely to deteriorate</p>

an enhance climate risks and impacts	ion of intact forests	and cause environmental damage than the multistory, intact forests maintenance of which will be supported by the project. The objective of this project is to conserve and increase area of intact forest, reduce conversion of forests to other use and promote forest conservation that will likely be less vulnerable to the effects of climate than fragmented landscapes and reduce the effects of non-climate stressors, such as pollution, overexploitation of natural resources, and land use change.
Risk 6: Social inequalities can exacerbate impacts of climate change on women and disadvantaged groups	Reduce vulnerabilities of women and disadvantaged groups to climate impacts	During the PPG stage, the project will identify populations mostly at risk and target adaptation measures toward them. This would include targeted actions to enhance women and vulnerable community capacity to adapt to climate impacts. The gender strategy will seek to identify actions that can empower women and marginalized populations - to ensure that they are part of the decision-making process through their participation in local decision-making processes. This would focus on adaptation efforts, training and awareness to women and marginalized groups regarding the risks associated with climate change and measures to reduce such risks, etc.
Risk 7: Monitoring of climate risks will be critical to ensuring that the project interventions are effective	Monitoring of climate risks	This will be addressed at PPG stage to identify appropriate ways in which to monitor and ensure that climate risk management measures are integrated into local planning systems.

Management of implications of COVID-19

Covid-19 implications will be built into the various stages of the project to address implications of the disease. Risks associated with Covid-19 and other zoonotic infestations will be developed in terms of management of risks, enhancing opportunities and implications on ecology. From an ecological perspective, the intention of the project is to recover and well-manage production landscape, where wildlife and forest conditions are improved, wildlife populations are protected, and as the more intact landscape develops over time, so that the possibility of zoonoses is substantially reduced.

In terms of impacts, the Covid19 (unless contained) can pose severe limitations on project design and implementation and also impact effective integration of biodiversity into local level planning systems.

Risk category	Potential Risk	Mitigations and Management
Risk 1: Delay in project design, start up and implementation	Continued or renewed efforts in COVID-19 containment are likely over the course of project development and possibly into implementation.	If COVID-19 pandemic continues or is not effectively contained, project start-up and implementation could be delayed. The availability of co-financing could be affected by shifts in government fiscal priorities and exchange rates. Methods for bio secure implementation will be needed, such as increased use of remote communication, use of PPE, etc.
Risk 2: consultations will be limited or constrained due to COVID-19 situation	Only some minimal consultation on the project design was undertaken during PIF development, due to COVID-19 related restrictions. If the Covid-19 situation continues there might be difficulty to undertake community level consultations at PPG stage	Local level consultation will only be undertaken if it complies to national and local government guidelines and UNDP-CO guidelines. For example, it is likely that the consultations will have to take place in small groups (10-20 people) and following national/state protocols relating to social distancing and use of PPE and outdoor settings. In all cases, continued attention will be given to ensuring the voices of IP, women, youth, and any underrepresented community members. Development of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan for implementation will also address such restrictions and mitigations.
Risk 3: Changes to baseline	The COVID19 outbreak could accelerate resource exploitation due to economic disruptions	At PPG stage and initial assessment will be undertaken of the social and economic impacts of ongoing Covid-19 on vulnerable populations as part of the ESMF preparation, mapping of hotspots and developing potential investment plans for responding to and ensuring in

		ral investment plans for responding to and ensuring in come recovery for affected vulnerable populations.
Risk 4: Stakeholder engagement process will impact co-financing commitment from government and partners.	Government is too occupied with COVID issues that might have impacts on co-financing	The availability of co-financing could be affected by changes in government, state and private fiscal priorities and exchange rates. Government, at this juncture seems to be very supportive of the project and likely that funding would not be seriously affected as the national and state schemes for local development seem not to be overly affected by the Covid-19 situation
Risk 5: Risk of future zoonotic diseases	Potential for adverse impacts that might contribute to future pandemics, for example, there will be no focus on increasing the human-wildlife interface or any actions that cause degradation.	The project includes a specific output on “One Health” that is focused on transitioning towards green and resilient approaches at the local level to enable early detection and responses

The Covid-19 situation has also created opportunities that could benefit biodiversity conservation and create new potential for ‘green recovery’/livelihoods. The objective of the project which is to create landscape intactness and connectivity through local efforts can improve protection of forests, OECMs and habitats that will help in the recovery of wildlife populations. The strengthening of monitoring, surveillance and enforcement with participation of local communities, including livelihood and biodiversity resource generated revenues (through ABS and other mechanisms) can help deter illegal activities in project landscapes. Mainstreaming biodiversity in local village development planning, including enhancing opportunities for biodiversity friendly enterprises, agro-forestry, benefit sharing from genetic resources and other activities can decrease the risk of human-wildlife conflict and enhance appreciation for biodiversity. Using innovative funding sources to promote green business practices through green value chains that would involve working with local communities can help mainstream climate mitigation and biodiversity conservation into local level planning.

[1] Meghalaya State Climate Change Action Plan, 2020

[2] Draft Tamil Nadu State Action Plan on Climate Change, 2020

6. Coordination

Outline the institutional structure of the project including monitoring and evaluation coordination at the project level. Describe possible coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

Roles and responsibilities of the project's governance mechanism: The project will be implemented following UNDP's National Implementation Modality.

The **Executing Agency** for this project is the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. The project will be anchored with the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), a statutory autonomous body under the MoEFCC. NBA performs facilitative, regulatory and advisory functions for the GoI on issues of conservation, sustainable use of biological resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of biological resources. **At the state level**, the project would be coordinated through the State-level Coordinating Committee, including representation from the **State Biodiversity Boards (Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya)** and other key agencies for biodiversity conservation, management and regulation at the subnational level and rural and economic development institutions. The State-level Coordination Committees (SCCs) would be constituted under the chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary (Forests) and include Additional Chief Secretaries/Principal Secretaries representing PRI/Rural Development, Agriculture, Tribal Development, Animal Husbandry, Irrigation and Public Health, Power and Finance, and others as relevant and include representative from the State Biodiversity Board, Research Institutions, non-government agencies and CSOs. The responsibility of the SCCs will be to take policy decisions related to program implementation, ensure national and state government funding support, promote private finance, human resource development and scaling up and replication.

At the landscape level, the project will work through Landscape level coordination committees (LLCCs) to facilitate the convergence and agreement of common strategies and plans for the landscape, coordinate and collaborate across agencies and institutions that operate at that level. The Landscape Level Coordination Committee (LLCC) to be constituted under the chairmanship of Resident Commissioner. This Committee will support implementation and oversee progress and budgets at the landscape level, provide guidance and ensure consistency, synergy and convergence of approaches with Gram Panchayats (in Tamil Nadu) and Village employment Councils (in Meghalaya) as well as BMCs and with other ongoing development projects and processes in the landscape, and support annual work-plan development and implementation. The Committee would also facilitate block, district and sector agency participation in the landscape level planning operations at village level to ensure convergence of manpower and financial resources. A similar coordination arrangement has been set up under the GEF 6 SECURE project in the Himalayan States and is functioning effectively.

At the district level, the project will work through the respective governing bodies, namely District Development Councils (headed by the District Magistrate) in coordination with the PA, Forest Reserves and OECMs management entities, each of which have their own governance structures. At the village level, the project will work through the Gram Panchayats and the VECs and their apex bodies that operate at the district level. These are the mandated governance structures for the different parcels of land within the landscapes

Biodiversity Management Committees in Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya will play a part of providing information on biodiversity and traditional knowledge and supporting its mainstreaming into the village and district planning processes. The BMC consists of a Chairperson, and six persons nominated by local bodies, including 1/3rd women and 18% Schedule Castes/Scheduled Tribes.

Project-to-project coordination will be undertaken through regular contact of the PMUs of respective projects, coordination with common executing agency/supporting partners (e.g. UNDP will help facilitate coordination between this project and the GEF-6 SECURE project and BIOFIN, which could include opportunities for joint training/alignment of approaches etc.) and knowledge management activities that will help share best practices and learning.

Particular attention will be paid to coordinate with the following projects and initiatives. Other potential collaboration will be possible with projects listed in the baseline section that will be further defined at PPG stage:

Table 5: Partnership Arrangements

Initiative	Coordination potential
BIOFIN	The project will build on outputs of BIOFIN towards assessment of finance gap and identification of potential finance solutions to bridge the resource gap for biodiversity for implementation of actions in the two states in the short, medium and long term. Methodologies developed under BIOFIN will help in costing the action plans to be developed for each pilot states, assessing biodiversity related attributable expenditure of relevant programmes and schemes (of public and private sector) for conservation and management, identifying key finance actors, entry points and opportunities to leverage resources for conservation and management of biodiversity.
GEF-Gol UNDP SECURE Himalaya project and GEF GOI project on India High Range Mountain Landscape	Both projects being currently implemented by UNDP India focuses on landscape management of critical habitats and implementation of biodiversity actions through convergence and mainstreaming across sectors. Lessons from project implementation, challenges faced, adaptive measures taken, and success stories will feed into project design and development. In particular, the institutional coordination mechanisms that are being successfully implemented under this project will provide guidance and learning for replication and scaling up the landscape concept under the GEF 7 project.
UNDP-GEF India mainstreaming projects (e.g. Godavari; Malvan)	Lessons from the portfolio of mainstreaming projects will be incorporated into project design and implementation.
GEF GoI-UNDP Global ABS project	Lessons on training and capacity building of research institutions on ABS will be used in development of training and capacity building programmes on ABS for different stakeholders. Masters trainers developed under this programme may also be helpful in undertaking training programmes for relevant stakeholders on ABS.
UNEP-GEF MoEFCC ABS Project	The project administered by MoEFCC, GoI and National Biodiversity Authority focused on ABS would also help bring lessons learnt with various stakeholders.

<p>UNDP/WWF GEF Project: Strengthening conservation and resilience of globally significant wild cat landscapes through a focus on small cat and leopard conservation</p>	<p>The project will adopt a landscape conservation approach in line with the National Wildlife Action Plan 2017-31, that broadens and brings together the conservation programs of individual species, connects stakeholders and empowers communities, and operates across PAs, identified tiger corridors and in buffer zones surrounding and connecting these areas.</p> <p>The project is administered by MoEFCC and NBA that would help coordination through sharing of best practices, common training and lessons sharing workshops and exchange visits</p>
<p>UNEP GEF7: Transforming agricultural systems and strengthening economies in high biodiversity areas</p>	<p>The project adopts a sustainable landscape and public finance approach and working through the Gram Panchayats as a key player. This project also includes multi-stakeholder coordination and plans to work with Gram Panchayat in SLM and biodiversity conservation in micro-production landscapes and extrapolated to the landscape level. It has also particular relevance as the proposed project entails strengthening producer organizations, financial instruments, public-private partnerships and sustainable production systems.</p>
<p>UNDP GEF 7: Seventh Operational Phase of Small Grants Program</p>	<p>This program plans interventions in one of the landscape sites in Meghalaya providing opportunities for learning and sharing lessons. The project will bring important learning in terms of community small grants to conserve biodiversity, sustainable use of biological resources, stimulating agro-ecological practices by small farmers, biodiversity-based organic green product developments, creation of stakeholder platforms, landscape governance arrangements, private-civil society partnerships, etc. At PPG stage, the learning from this small grants project will be assessed to identify potential opportunities, in particular for sustainable use of biodiversity, green enterprises, etc. for inclusion in the GEF 7 project</p>
<p>UNEP GEF 7: Mainstreaming Natural Capital Values into Planning and Implementation for Blue Economy</p>	<p>Although there is no geographic overlap, the project supports biodiversity mainstreaming providing opportunities for coordination. The project focuses on development of a national framework for natural capital accounting focusing on transport infrastructure and tourism to identify measures to avoid or mitigate unnecessary loss and impacts on natural capital as well as integration on natural capital objectives in planning and development of district blue economies related to these two sectors.</p>

7. Consistency with National Priorities

Is the Project consistent with the National Strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?

Yes

If yes, which ones and how: NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc

Alignment with - National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBSAP): The project will directly address various National Biodiversity targets related to conservation and management of ecologically representative areas, sustainable management of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, mobilization of resources, environmental education and awareness, management of invasive alien species, access and benefit sharing, development of biodiversity action plans at all levels of governance. In particular, the project is aligned to the following targets based on the NBSAP covering period 2011-2020:

- Target 2: Values of biodiversity conservation are integrated in national and state planning processes, development programs and poverty alleviation strategies;
- Target 3: Strategies for reducing rate of degradation, fragmentation and loss of natural habitats;
- Target 4: Invasive alien species and pathways are identified and strategies to manage them developed;
- Target 5: Measures for adoption of sustainable management of agriculture, forestry and fisheries;
- Target 6: Ecologically representative areas under terrestrial and inland waters are conserved effectively and equitably based on PA designation and management and other area-based conservation measures and integrated into the wider landscape;
- Target 7: Genetic diversity of cultivated plants and other wild relatives is maintained and strategies developed for safeguarding their genetic diversity;
- Target 8: Ecosystem services are safeguarded taking into account the needs of women and local communities;
- Target 9: Access to genetic resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization;
- Target 11: Initiatives using community traditional knowledge relating to biodiversity strengthened with a view to protecting this knowledge;
- Target 12: Opportunities to increase the availability of financial, human and technical resources to facilitate the effective implementation of strategic plan for biodiversity.

Most importantly, the project is closely aligned with the Biological Diversity Act of 2002, that provides for conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of biological resources and traditional knowledge. At the **apex of the three tiered** administrative approach to effectively implement the provisions of the Act, is the Central Government (represented by the National Biodiversity Authority) that is responsible for developing national strategies, plans, programs for the conservation, promotion and sustainable use of biological diversity including measures for identification and monitoring of areas rich in biological resources, promotion of in-situ, and ex-situ, conservation of biological

resources, incentives for research, training and public education to increase awareness with respect to biodiversity. At the **second tier** level are the State Biodiversity Boards that are responsible for advising the State Governments on matters relating to the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of biological resources. At the **third tier** are the Biological Management Committees (BMCs) that are set up at every local body within its area for the purpose of promoting conservation, sustainable use, benefit sharing and documentation of biological diversity, including preservation of habitats, conservation of land races, folk varieties and cultivars, domesticated stocks and breeds of animals and micro-organisms and chronicling of knowledge relating to biological diversity.

To facilitate and support the BMCs, the State Governments are encouraged to set up Local Biodiversity Funds, where the BMCs are functional to be used for conservation and promotion of biodiversity in the areas falling within the jurisdiction of the concerned BMC and for the benefit of the community for use in biodiversity compatible activities. There are around 275,000 such BMCs within the country and a significant number of these committees have already developed their own biodiversity registers. However, these BMCs lack capacity, technical support and financing to implement their respective conservation and sustainable natural use programs. The project is consistent with this Act in that it will promote the development of BMC's capacities through training, and technical and extension to formalize their biological diversity registers and implement programs that can support conservation, sustainable natural resource use and genetic resource benefit sharing.

The proposed project would also contribute to multiple **Sustainable Development Goals** including key contributions to Goal 5 on achieving gender equality and empower all women and goals. Support in particular on the following target 5.5 to ensure that women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life. Goal 15 on terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity – the support will focus in particular on targets 15.1 conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems, including PA networks; 15.2 sustainable forest management; 15.3 reducing desertification, restoring degraded land; 15.5 reduced degradation of natural habitats; 15.7 end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products; 15.9 integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes; and 15.a mobilize and significantly increase financial resource from all source to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity an ecosystems.

The proposed project will contribute to the following Aichi Targets: Target 11: By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes; and Target 14: By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.

8. Knowledge Management

Outline the knowledge management approach for the Project, including, if any, plans for the Project to learn from other relevant Projects and initiatives, to assess and document in a user-friendly form, and share these experiences and expertise with relevant stakeholders.

The project will follow UNDP's approach to learning and knowledge sharing as encapsulated in its M&E Strategy/ Approach. Results from the project will be disseminated within and beyond the project intervention zone through existing information sharing and communication networks and forums. The project will identify and participate, as relevant and appropriate, in scientific, policy-based and/ or any other networks, which may be of benefit to project implementation and document lessons learned. The project will identify, analyze, and share lessons learned that might be beneficial in the design and implementation of similar future projects. Finally, there will be a two-way flow of information between this project and other projects of a similar focus. In terms of being informed by lessons and experience of past projects, the dialogue with ongoing baseline initiatives has already begun in the preparation of this PIF (see baseline section for the list of baseline initiatives with which coordination is already underway).

As part of an effort to promote replication and scaling up, the project will support the following activities: (i) documentation and dissemination of case studies, best practices and experiences emanating from the project to be used for targeted decision-making bodies at the local and state levels; (ii) development of policy guidance notes to address gaps and constraints of existing policies that favour mainstreaming; (iii) technical reports, publications and other knowledge management products in English and local languages; (iv) documentation of traditional knowledge related to biodiversity conservation and natural resources management; (v) national and sub-national workshops to facilitate dissemination of field lessons; (vi) institutionalization of best practices through promotion of sectoral and local level planning instruments in order to secure replication through strengthening capacity of SIRD to develop curriculum and training modules within the current training programs to enhance capacity of Gram Panchayat and VEC members in application of tools and procedures for improving mainstreaming of biodiversity and sustainable practices in the village and district planning process; (vii) replication/up-scaling strategy developed based on lessons and experiences from the project. The replication strategy will provide guidance on key factors that define the successes (institutional, financial and political decision-making), planning and consultative practices (including participatory methodology), sequencing of activities that are linked to capacity assessment and skills development, tools for adaptive management and monitoring, technical and extension support, etc. This will be further defined under the project and support provided to enable uptake through training, technical support, identification of financial mechanisms, etc.; and (viii) a National Biodiversity Authority Implementer's manual and lessons learned guide that provides a step-by-step approach for mainstreaming of biodiversity management interventions in Gram Panchayat and VEC Development Plans, other sector plans, etc. Learning and experiences from pilot sites will be disseminated at local, subnational and national level including in high level events and side events of CoP of the CBD, SBSTAA, and with public and private stakeholders. The project will also provide support for site visits and exchanges between the two landscapes, share information and mainstreaming results and conduct annual lessons sharing workshops. As a means of replication, at least initially in the two states, the project will support site visits, share lessons on SBB and MPI institution websites, provide training and limited technical support to other interested districts and institutions.

9. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

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

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification*

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
High or Substantial			

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

Provide preliminary information on the types and levels of risk classifications/ratings of any identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and describe measures to address these risks during the project design.

The initial risk assessment by UNDP pre-SESP (Social and Environment Screening Procedures) has identified 13 social and environmental risks and the overall risk for the project is classified as "Substantial". The identified risks will be revised based on further assessment and information during the project formulation. To meet the SES requirements, at the PPG stage, the following will be prepared under UNDP policy: (i) Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) with Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) procedure; (ii) comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) (iii) Gender Analysis and Action Plan; (iv) an Indigenous Peoples Framework (IPPF); and (v) a project level Grievance Redressal Mechanism (GRM).

The safeguards risk categorization is based on current available information at the proposal development stage and the project location. A more detailed safeguard screening and updated categorization will be undertaken during project development once activities have been explicitly defined and specific locations determined. The safeguards categorization memo will be issued based on the screening, detailing any required management plans. Any safeguards management plans or measures to address the identified risks will be developed during the project development phase.

Table 6: Social and Environmental Risks

Social and Environmental Risks		
Risk 1: Local communities, including indigenous communities and vulnerable groups, may not have the capacity to give informed consent (FPIC) for the development o	Substantial	A Safeguard/IP specialist will be recruited at PPG stage to develop an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) with FPIC procedures. The IP

f conservation-related biodiversity management activities and may not be willing to participate during project design and implementation phases

PF will outline procedures to ensure compliance with the SES during project implementation, including the development of site-specific Indigenous Peoples Plans.

- FPIC process will be defined in the IPPF and initiated during the PPG stage, with the aim of securing initial consent from the relevant groups/communities. In line with the SES, the IPPF will require that where FPIC is necessary, the relevant activities will not proceed until/unless FPIC is secured.

- UNDP CO has committed to the PISC while vetting the proposal that the FPIC process will be fully initiated during the PPG stage.

- The project development stage will conduct initial relevant socio-economic baseline assessments, including customary land practice and land tenure assessment and proper stakeholder engagement with relevant institutions and representatives to identify the related concerns and issues and readjust/modify related activities.

- A comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be developed at PPG stage and will complement the IPPF.

- An ESMF will be developed during the PPG phase to ensure mitigation measures and plans to avoid, reduce, or mitigate potential impacts during project implementation. ESMF will specify relevant assessment tools and measures to articulate the risks and management measures.

- A GRM will be developed during the PPG phase that would provide a mechanism to address IP and local community concerns and help resolve conflicts.

Risk 2: Conflicts between public conservation institutions and local communities could change current practices in relation to use of forest and wetland resources, including

Substantial

- To be covered by the IPPF described above, as well as the ESMF and comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan

<p>in relation to use of forest and wetland resources, including by unintentional restricting access to local communities. This may adversely affect the human rights of the Indigenous Peoples and minority groups in the project landscapes.</p>		<p>Engagement Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Communities will be engaged in all stages of project design at state landscape sites, including through FPIC consultations (where required). · The ESMF will be prepared at PPG stage and will identify measures to be instituted in case there is potential economic displacement, following consultation with affected groups, including the need for developing a Livelihoods Action Plan to manage any loss of resource access. · A project grievance redress mechanism will be developed at PPG stage to provide a mechanism to address specific concerns during project implementation.
<p>Risk 3: Indigenous and vulnerable groups (including women, persons with disabilities, etc.) may be excluded from participation in project related investment decision-making in terms of economic and livelihood practices including likely risk of increasing violence against women.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The project will be designed to define a participatory process (that is currently in place for community planning), which would ensure that all households in village (including indigenous and vulnerable people) would be part of the BMC committees and be trained and have capacity for implementation of livelihood activities and benefit directly from project activities. · A comprehensive stakeholder engagement plan, IPPF, Gender Action Plan, and ESMF will be prepared during the PPG, and a FPIC process will be initiated with affected stakeholders. · A project grievance redress mechanism will be developed at PPG stage to provide a mechanism to address specific concerns during project implementation. · In terms of violence against women, the project will seek to minimize this through identifying at PPG stage (i) necessary provision of mechanisms to work towards addressing and promoting female leadership roles amongst the communities such as in the BMC in conjunction with community leaders: (ii)

		<p>promotion of collective women empowerment such as through formation of women self-help groups; linkage with NGO and other counseling facilities; GRM mechanisms etc.</p>
<p>Risk 4: The Project may involve the harvesting of NTFP from natural forests and wetland resources for proposed livelihoods and small-scale community enterprises, as well as ABS agreements that could inadvertently adversely affect critical habitats.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · As these activities will not be fully defined during the PPG (and therefore cannot be fully screened for risks prior to the start of implementation), the ESMF that will be developed in PPG stage will identify need for specific assessments as part of preparation of ESIA/ESMP (at project implementation) to understand, inter alia, what natural resources are likely to be used for ABS agreements, livelihood, small-scale enterprise development, ascertain the status and availability of these resources and if these can be sustainably harvested for use, and specific concerns regarding use of these resources. · Specific procedures (for fully screening, assessing and managing activities related to harvesting of NTFPs and other resources during implementation) will be prepared during the PPG, as part of the ESMF. These procedures will include actions required of the Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) at the community level that is mandated to help conserve biodiversity and sustainable resource and will play an important role in management of such impacts.
<p>Risk 5: Application of OECM approaches could advertently have social impacts (community rights) on vulnerable groups and IPs.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · These activities will not be fully defined during the PPG (and therefore cannot be fully screened for risks prior to the start of implementation). Further assessments of this risk (and all others) will be undertaken during the PPG, in the course of designing the project that will lead to the development of an ESMF to cover this and all other risks. Relevant social experts will be involved as part of the project design team. Any loss of resource access would be compensated through preparation of a livelihood action plan, per the forthcoming ESMF and IPPF.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Potential risks associated with economic rights, including resource utilization concerns shall be further assessed and managed during implementation in line with UNDP's SES. · During the PPG phase Stakeholder Engagement will be conducted with all potentially-affected communities, and a stakeholder engagement plan will be prepared (SEP).
<p>Risk 6: The project could affect land tenure arrangements, particularly in the North-east (Meghalaya) or customary rights to land (in terms of forest ownership), territories and/or resources of marginalized groups</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · During the PPG stage, an initial assessment will be made to assess the potential consequence of proposed project activities, including in particular improved PA management and application of OECM approaches to ascertain the decision-making process for defining project investments. To manage the upstream (policy-level) aspect of this risk, the project will be designed to include SESA; to manage the downstream (on-the-ground) aspect, the necessary procedures will be included in the ESMF. · The ESMF will also include a grievance redress mechanism to ensure that there are suitable means and safeguards designed into the project to address any tenure related issues that may arise.
<p>Risk 7: Project planning and management activities might not fully incorporate or reflect views of women and girls and ensure equitable opportunities for their involvement and benefit as well in decision-making on resource use and management.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · A Gender Specialist will be assigned during the PPG stage to undertake a gender analysis of the project outputs and develop a Gender Action Plan to identify measures to ensure that the Project contributes to gender equality and creates equitable opportunities for women and men at all levels of engagement while trying to ensure the project strategy is gender responsive. · Additionally, during the PPG specific livelihood options would be identified for women in the project's design. The gender action plan will include specific indicators to measure women's participation in decision-making at the community level (for e.g. in BMCs).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan will also include identification of women's engagement in project related activities.
<p>Risk 8: The Project envisions supporting livelihoods that may fail to comply with national and international labor standards. Outputs related to supporting small and medium enterprises, restoration (4,000 ha), etc. could raise labor standard issues.</p>	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These activities will not be fully defined during the PPG (and therefore cannot be fully screened for risks prior to the start of implementation). During the PPG phase an ESMF will be prepared to cover this and all other risks.
<p>Risk 9: The project sites could potentially intersect with important cultural sites of cultural, historical, religious, artistic and traditional values (e.g. sacred groves). It is unlikely that the project activities will have structural adverse impacts on these sites but may pose negative impact on the traditional knowledge and practices that are part of the communities for centuries and that are deep-rooted in their cultural practices.</p>	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPG will conduct an initial cultural heritage impacts screening and assess the potential impacts on cultural sites/heritage and on the use of traditional heritage including need for FPIC. The implementation of the IPF that will be prepared during PPG with FPIC procedures will form the basis for dealing with the interests of the IPs and other special interest groups. Any project related economic development initiatives proposed by communities and IPs will rest on the maintenance of the integrity of their cultural practices. The use of a screening checklist during project implementation based on the SESP and IPF to screen all investments from an environmental, social and cultural perspective to ensure that due considerations are given on all potential impacts. Gender/ participatory expertise will be obtained during the project to guide and monitor these activities, establish procedures for identification and managing such risks. The effective use of grievance redressal mechanism to address these specific concerns.
<p>Risk 10: Alien Invasive Species (IAS) inadvertently introduced in the project landscapes/demonstration sites.</p>	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESIA/ESMP developed during the project implementation will include the measures to mitigate the risk of IAS, including identifying potential pathways for IAS introduction. As part of the effort to manage IAS, this might include some training to key

		<p>manage IAS, this might include some training to key stakeholders and communities to identify safeguard measures and means to eliminate and/or manage IAS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · In terms of forest activities, the project will follow the guidelines issued by Forest and Agricultural agencies on safeguard practices to be introduced, focusing on practices that are recognized as facilitating exclusion of IAS and/or its prevention.
<p>Risk 11: Use of pesticides, herbicides or insecticides could potentially pose risk to community health due to lack of adequate guidelines on usage and storage of these chemicals.</p>	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · This will be addressed in the ESIA/ESMP during project implementation. · Potential use of pesticides, herbicides and insecticides during the project activities, mostly under the agriculture and livelihood practices will be screened during the project design and ESMF. · The ESIA/ESMP will also provide the list of prohibited pesticides, herbicides and insecticides.
<p>Risk 12: Poaching and killing of wildlife may continue, including potential for Illegal Wildlife Trade within/outside project landscapes thereby, resulting in human rights abuses due to stringent law enforcement by forest/park staff.</p>	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To be covered by the ESMF and comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan. During the preparation of the ESMF, the extent to which poaching and wildlife killing will be assessed to ascertain the degree of risk. · If found significant, at ESMP stage, the hotspots will be identified and remedial measures defined. · Remedial measures might include (i) enhancing community engagement in protection measures; (ii) improving community protection; (iii) defining alternate livelihoods for people engaged in poaching. The Village Development Planning process which is the main instrument for delivery of environment and conservation outcomes at the village level being considered under the project, will include specific discussion of such issues and seek agreement amongst communities to comply with these remedial measures.
<p>Risk 13: Co-financed activity implementation (through investment from the central and state governments, including private sector) might not be in consistent with SES.</p>	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The project will coordinate closely with the respective stakeholders from the central and state governments to ensure that any activities under co-

<p>This also includes inadequate due diligence for private sector partnerships.</p>		<p>financed investment will be undertaken in line with the work undertaken in the GEF project and safeguard measures instituted under the GEF project, in particular since most of these government programs will be implemented through the Village Developing Planning progress in which the main objective of the project is to ensure that these developments are conducted in an environment sustainable manner. This will be further defined at the PPG stage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Completion of due diligence of private sector partners including UNDP Private Sector Risk Assessment Tool at the PPG stage.
<p>Overall Risk at PIF Stage</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title

Submitted

PIMS 6593 SESP_BD PIF India 23 March 2021

Part III: Approval/Endorsement By GEF Operational Focal Point(S) And GEF Agency(ies)

A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S): (Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter with this template).

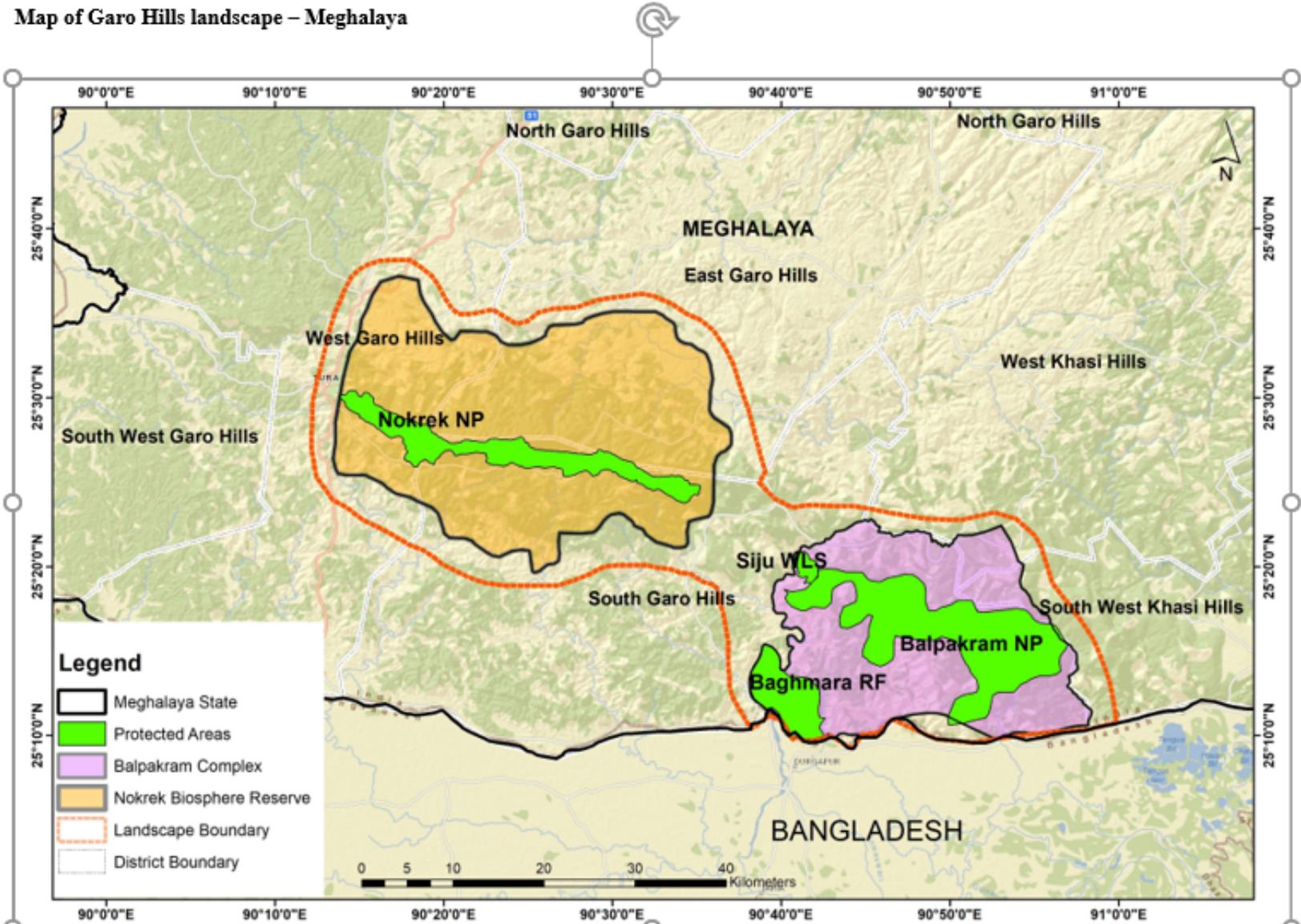
Name	Position	Ministry	Date
Richa Sharma	Joint Secretary and GEF-OFP	MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE	9/4/2020

ANNEX A: Project Map and Geographic Coordinates

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project intervention takes place

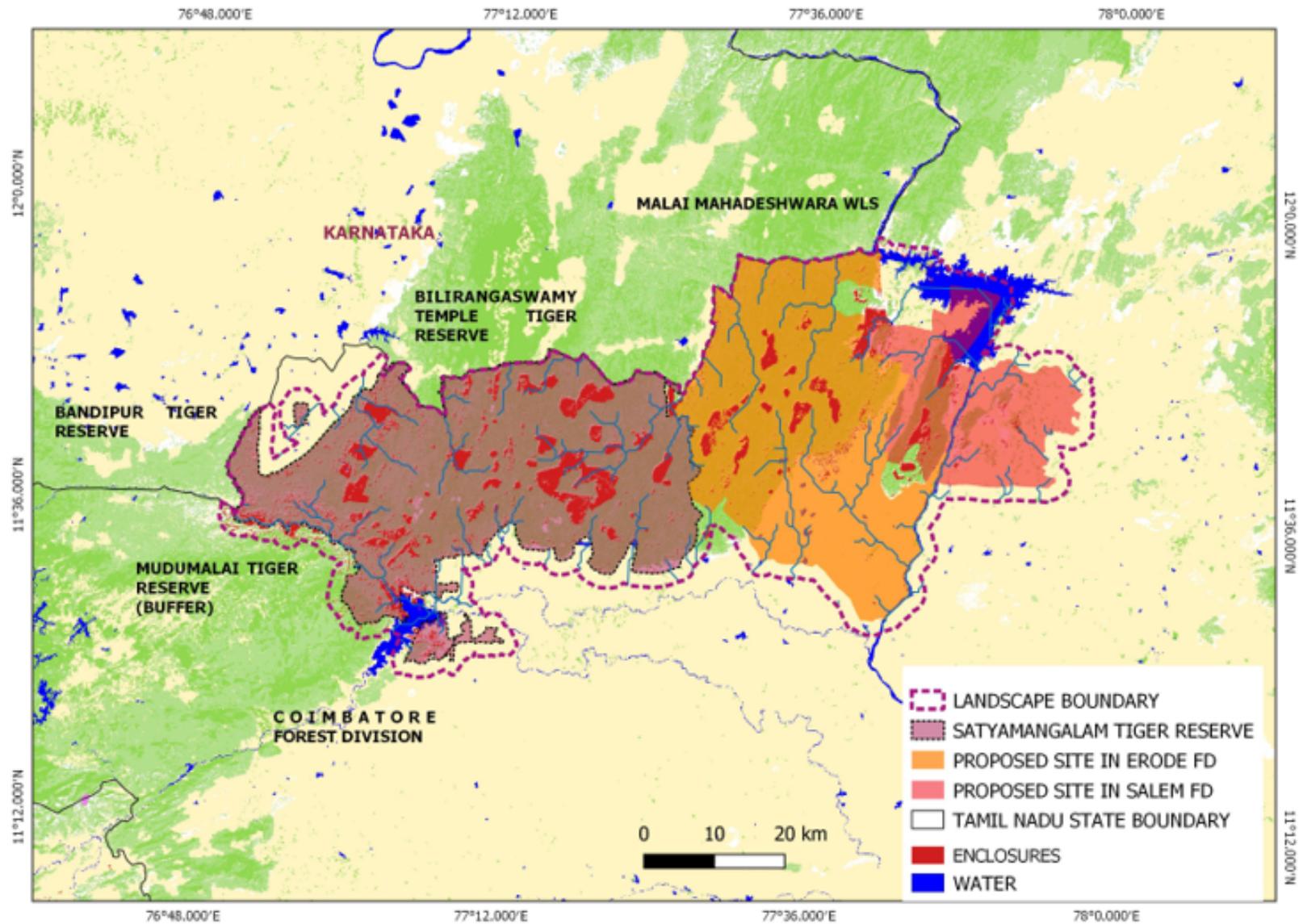
PROGRAM/PROJECT MAP AND GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATES

Map of Garo Hills landscape – Meghalaya



Map disclaimer: The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations or UNDP concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries)

Map of Sathya Mangalam landscape – Tamil Nadu



Map disclaimer: The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations or UNDP concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries)

Annex B: GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet

Annex C: Project Taxonomy Worksheet

Annex D

Proposed Strategy of Convergence at Village and District level

The proposed strategy of the project is to plan and validate the integration of biodiversity and sustainable natural resources at the ground level through the village planning process (Gram Panchayat and Village Employment Council Development Planning process). This necessitates close coordination between the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC) and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MPR) and Ministry of Rural Development (MRD).

The MOEFCC is mandated to (i) Conservation and survey of flora, fauna, forests and wildlife; (ii) Afforestation and regeneration of degraded areas; (iii) Protection of the environment and (iv) Ensuring the welfare of animals. These objectives are well supported by a set of legislative and regulatory measures, aimed at the preservation, conservation and protection of the environment. The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) is a statutory body under MOEFCC established under the Biological Diversity Act of 2002 and mandated to implement the provisions of the Act through the decentralized system on matters relating to conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components and equitable sharing of benefits arising from utilization of biological resources. As part of the decentralized structure, the second tier includes the State Biodiversity Boards (which have multi-institutional representation) advises the state governments on matters relating to central mandates assigned to NBA. At the third layer of the decentralized arrangements are the Biodiversity Management Committees (which are statutory committees of the village committees) are responsible for promoting conservation, sustainable use and documentation of biological diversity, preservation of habitats and recoding of knowledge relating to biological diversity. The major responsibility of the Biodiversity Management Committee is to prepare People's Biodiversity Register (PBR). at the local body level. The PBR is a dynamic documentation of the floral and faunal resources along with traditional knowledge and serves as a very useful means for biodiversity resource management at the local body level.

To complement the decentralized environmental management systems as defined above under MOEFCC, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MPR) and Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) is mandated to promote participatory local self-governance through the Panchayati Raj and Employment Council institutions that providing the options for ensuring the convergence of biodiversity related matters with the village (and subsequently district) planning process, the GPs and VECs being the smallest autonomous institution at the local level. Through the GPs and VECs, the intent is to strengthen grass root level democracy through the elected self-government local bodies in the rural areas of India. To empower the GPs to act as self-determination institutions, power has been devolved through the 73rd amendment to the Constitution of India on 29 subjects (e.g. agriculture, land improvement, minor irrigation and watershed management, animal husbandry, fisheries, social forestry, small scale local industry, poverty alleviation, education, health and sanitation, etc.) to enable the village committees to plan and implement schemes for economic development and social justice. This covers the powers to impose taxes and provision of funds. The GPs are mandated to prepare the Gram Panchayat Development Plans based on a participatory process and ensuring the full convergence with funding

schemes related to Central Government, Line departments related to the 29 subjects. The guidelines for VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PLANS now support the integration (and budget expenditure) of biodiversity and its sustainable use into the village planning process. Similarly, the VECs and their hierarchical institutions at block and district levels (that have similar powers as the PRIs) undertake economic and natural resources planning functions at these different levels.

As the three ministries (MPI, MRD and MOEFCC) have well defined mandated related to their responsibilities and its decentralization to the village level, this provides a good platform to ensure the convergence of biodiversity and its sustainable use with local level economic development. To facilitate this mainstreaming process, the Biodiversity Management Committees set up under the auspices of the NBA are also a direct institutional structure (statutory body) under the individual GPs and VECs. This institutional arrangement provides the genesis of the GEF project and its proposed approach.

In this regard the BMCs are central local institutional structures that are critical to the mainstreaming process at the local level. While the BMCs are mandated to collect information on biodiversity, its uses and value addition, they have not been so far very effective in facilitating integration into the VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PLANS process. The aim of the proposed GEF project is to enhance the role of the BMCs in this regard. The proposed strategy to achieve this is the following:

- Converting the biological resources information collected by the BMCs in their Peoples Biodiversity Registers (PBRs) to electronic format (ePBRs) so that this information is available in a form that can be easily used in the VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PLANS planning process (current all information available to GPs and VECs are in spatial form except the biodiversity layer)
- Enhance the quality of the PBRs so that information that is collected can be used for planning purpose. To do so, the project will review and revise the manual/template for information collection to ensure its relevance, robustness and usability for decision-making. The overall intent is to ensure that the PBRs provides sufficient information on the biological resource and how it can be used, either as a means for generating revenues or use sustainability for community benefit.
- Enhance and formalize the current arrangements for provision of technical support to BMCs. This is currently provided through Technical Support Groups that are composed of NGOs, University/College staff and students and interested individuals. The project will ensure capacity building and provision of updated templates/manuals and tools to enhance the effectiveness of the TSGs
- Capacity building for BMC members to enable them to use the updated information collection templates and collect information in a format and structure that is useful for decision making, as well as improve their capacity in negotiation skills and tools to be able to influence the village and district planning process (further elaborated in Output 1.1)
- Training specifically focused on GP and VECs to improve their understanding of conservation aspects related to development, how to integrate PBR information into conservation actions, developing measurable indicators for conservation, etc. This training will be imparted through the State Institutions for Rural Development (SIRD) that are mandated to provide training to GPs and VECs. The project will work with SIRDs to enhance their capacity to provide such training, support development of curriculum and training modules specifically tailored to more effective use of the PBRs

Using the BMC generated PBRs as tools that can be used for resource mobilization. As mandated by the Biological Diversity Act, share of the profits from bio-prospecting is legally mandated to be channeled to local communities that provide an avenue of resources for community biodiversity initiatives.

The intent through this local level integration is to “green” the entire landscape and concurrently build the capacity of people to manage/conservate resources and benefit from it, so as to provide an incentive for conservation action. While, the legal mandates exists for greening the local level planning systems, this has so far not effectively happened. The aim of the project is to attempt to test and demonstrate the mainstreaming of biodiversity and its sustainable use in the local level planning process in a limited number of GPs and VECs in the two landscapes. There are a number of challenges, including capacity constraints, lack of effective collaboration between MOEFCC, MRD and MPR, lack of effective tools to facilitate biodiversity information collection and mainstreaming, limited knowledge and use of financial solutions at the village level to support biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use, etc. that will be addressed through the project.

As part of the effort to find new and innovative financial solutions to apply at the local level, the project will undertake a financial gap assessment at the district levels (building on experiences from the BIOFIN work in India). The findings from such an assessment can be projected to the landscape to identify financial gaps and screen for innovative funding solutions to bridge this gap, looking to untie sources of central and state schemes, private sector and cooperate funding, CSRs, etc.

Annex E

Criteria and Guidelines for Identifying Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in India

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of India

September 2020

Mandatory General Criteria:

The following four mandatory criteria has been adopted by the Government of India from IUCN guidelines (IUCN-WCPA Task Force on OECMs, 2019) to be applied for identification of twelve potential OECM categories in India.

Criteria A: Area is not recognized as Protected Area in any of the six categories of IUCN

Criteria B: Area is governed and managed. This entails three elements:

- i) *Geographically defined space: The area has been clearly demarcated on the ground and geographically defined in the landscape with proper boundaries and coordinates*
- ii) *Some level of governance: Area is under the authority of a specified entity or agreed upon combination of entities (Government, private, indigenous/local communities or under shared governance, which may be supported through rules to ensure long-term sustenance of biodiversity)*
- iii) *Management of the area: Area managed by some authority in a way that it achieves long-term biodiversity conservation outcomes*

Criteria C: Long term sustained in-situ conservation of biodiversity

Criteria D: Associated ecosystem functions and services

Identified Categories of OECMs in India

Based on the criteria listed above, twelve categories of OECMs are proposed for India, namely:

1. *Private Forests:* Area under the control of private individuals/organizations/companies and governed through relevant State Acts and/or guidelines
2. *Unclassed Forests:* Any forest land “recorded” in land records as “forest”, but not notified in government gazette as “reserved” or “protected” forests and is currently under government or community custodianship and has some management mechanism
3. *Deemed Forests:* Large tracts that appear as “forest” but have not been notified so by the government or in historical records
4. *Common Lands:* Natural and/or modified ecosystems containing significant biodiversity values, ecological services and cultural values, owned and controlled by Revenue Department, but in addition voluntarily conserved by local communities through customary laws or other effective means
5. *Sacred Groves:* Primeval forest that rural/traditional communities protect as abodes of deities, with religious and sociocultural ties
6. *Wetlands, lakes and reservoirs:* Areas of marsh, fen, peat land, water, natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, fresh, brackish or salt, etc.
7. *Important Bird Areas and Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas:* Conservation areas for protection of birds.
8. *Biodiversity Parks:* Unique landscapes that harbor a vast variety of native plant, animals and render ecological services

9. *Green Belts*: Areas where plants are maintained to function as pollution sinks and provide habitat for birds and animals
10. *Urban Trees and Forests*: Network or systems comprising all woodlands, groups of trees etc. that provide environmental and sociocultural benefits
11. *Private Sanctuaries*: Protected areas where the land rights are owned by an individual or a corporation/organization and where the habitat and resident species are offered some kind of protection
12. *Agricultural Heritage Systems*: Unique land use systems or landscapes which are rich in globally significant biological diversity evolving from co-adaptation of communities that provide environmental services, food and livelihood security

The guidelines suggest that the above-mentioned categories of OECMs can be supported through stakeholder consultations, engagement of State Forest Departments and State Biodiversity Boards for support to implement OECM practices, etc.

Annex F

Procedures for Preparation of Village Development Plans

Introduction to Gram Panchayat and Gram Panchayat Development Plans

Article 243G of the Constitution of India mandates the Village councils or Gram Panchayats (GPs) to prepare and implement Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) for economic development and social justice by converging/ integrating all such programs of the Panchayat, State and Centre within their geographical area. Further, as local governments, GPs are responsible for the delivery of basic services to local citizens and address vulnerabilities of poor and marginalized sections of the population. This is to be achieved through implementation of well thought out plans through efficient and responsible utilization of resources available at the disposal of the GPs and by expanding the resources to meet their priorities. Over the last two and half decades, several initiatives have been taken by the State and the Central Government to encourage participatory planning process at the grassroots level. However, various challenges such as inadequate resources, people's participation, facilitation and capacity have hindered or slowed down the pace of formulation of holistic, comprehensive and visionary plans and their strategic execution by States.

are expected to ideally match people's needs, basic services and their aspirations, prioritized in accordance with the available resources. It is to be prepared through a participatory, inclusive and transparent process. The plan should be long-term (perspective plan) in nature (ideally five years plan), which is implementable on annual basis, based on priorities arrived at Gram Sabha. After implementation of annual plan, the perspective plan will be reviewed taking the performance/ feedback/impact of the annual plan implementation into account and making changes and reprioritizing the activities/projects for the coming financial year. Local governments are at the core of democratic development and it is the everyday work carried out by villages that create the change that is fundamental for equitable, inclusive and sustainable global development.

The four core areas - equality, participation, transparency and accountability are cornerstones of positive democratic development. The strengthening the decentralization processes, preparation and execution of Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP), strengthening the local self-Governments (Panchayat Raj), civil societies and citizenship narratives to achieve excellence at grass root level governance are core development priorities as laid through the GP approach.

Purpose of the GPDP

The purpose of preparing the GPDPs is to ensure that resource-planning is undertaken at the village level. It is a part of an attempt by the government to make the planning process more decentralized. GPs in all states are empowered to raise their own taxes and discharge functions related to a list of 29 subjects such as agriculture, land improvement and housing, under the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act. Thus, for instance, the GPs of every state, except Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir and Odisha, now levy and collect property tax. GPs are expected to use the finances raised through taxation for GPDP implementation. However, they have not been able to raise sufficient finances till now. A recent news [report](#) mentioned that the own revenues of GPs were 5 percent of their total revenues while the rest of their revenues came from devolutions by the state and central governments.

The intent of the GPDPs on decentralized planning for local economic development seeks to fulfill the following:

- Capturing local needs
- Tapping local potential
- Operationalizing methodology for convergence at the ground level based on needs
- Responding to differential needs of different groups
- Enabling mobilization of all sectors and their participation in governance development
- Integration of people's knowledge and wisdom
- Accessing resources and services
- Absorption and targeting of funds from different sources
- Facilitating local resource mobilization
- Ensuring direct accountability of the local government to its citizens
- Promoting democracy and local ownership

GPDPs are prepared in a participatory process involving all stakeholders to match people's needs and priorities with available resources. The GPDP provides a vision of what the people would like their village to look like, sets out clear goals to achieve this vision and gives an ACTION PLAN to reach these goals. The planning at GP level enables the following actions:

1. Activates the GPs to prepare development plans and thus establish their identity as local government
2. Mobilize and motivate people to participate in decision making thereby bringing governance closer to the people
3. Provide a platform for discussing local issues and analysis of priorities

4. Assess needs of the people
5. Prioritize issues and problems that exist in the village
6. Bring all available resources (schemes) through effective convergence
7. Provide for convergence and integration of different schemes/department/Sectors
8. Optimize the utilization of resources in the larger interest of the people in the village

Key steps in preparation of GPDPs

Preparation of GPDPs is a time bound process and is prepared in a participatory, inclusive and transparent manner. The plan is usually long-term (perspective plan) in nature, which is implemented on an annual basis, based on priorities arrived at the village meetings. After implementation of the annual plan, the perspective plan is reviewed taking into consideration performance/feedback/impact of the annual plan implementation into account and making changes and reprioritization of activities for the following financial year. In this respect the perspective plan is dynamic in nature. The following are the key steps in preparation of the GPDPs:

- i. Formation of a Gram Panchayat Planning facilitation Team (GPPFT) for every GP to facilitate the planning process
- ii. Community mobilization
- iii. Collection of data
- iv. Situation analysis, needs assessment and gap identification
- v. Visioning exercise for goal setting
- vi. Resource identification
- vii. Plan development and prioritization
- viii. Approval of the GPDP
- ix. Implementation, monitoring and impact analysis

Planning facilitation Teams: The GPPFT includes representatives of all sectoral/line departments at GP level, with responsibility to harness knowledge and skills and expertise for a sustainable and holistic development of the GP area. The GPPFT role is to facilitate all the steps in the planning exercise and ensure coordination of all line departments, which in the past has worked in silos.

Thematic Committees: There are functional committees within the individual GPs for various thematic areas, such as Human development working group, women and child development working group, Livelihoods development working group (responsible for agriculture, small and medium enterprises, natural resources management such as soil and water conservation, green cover and biodiversity related issues), Social justice working group and infrastructure working group.

Ecological and Environment Development: As part of the responsibility for ecological and environment development, the GP is mandated to ensure activities undertaken in the GPDP are environment friendly and biodiversity enhancing. This includes specific action to maintain various productive ecosystems (water bodies, grasslands, forests, etc.) as well as consider the impacts of climate change. Additionally, the GPDP is expected to capture contribution of natural resources, including ecosystems and biodiversity to both economic and social security of local communities. The formal mainstreaming of economic benefits of conservation and management action is expected to enhance the ability of the GPs to achieve sustainable development that is economically and socially viable.

Spatial Planning: The overall intent of the GPDP planning is to use spatial planning tools for planning development in the rural areas. Since all development projects have direct impact on the use of the land, it is considered necessary that these activities be coordinated and integrated within a desirable spatial frame. The guidelines for GPDP provide the process of spatial planning. Missing from the spatial frame are the information contained in the PBRs which as a constraint to better integration of biodiversity information into the GPDP planning system.

Resource Planning: The Identification of resources for planning is an important aspect. Identification of such resources are a key element of the planning process that seeks to assess (i) social resources (institutional strength, social harmony etc.); (ii) Natural resources (land, forest, water and other available natural resources); (iii) human resources (people living in the GPA area, GPPFT, women SHGs, etc.) and (iv) financial resources (funds available from the Central and State governments, community resources, other sourced revenues, etc.).

An important step in the GPDP process is taking stock of the available financial resources, taking into consideration the diversity of resources that is available at the command of the GP, that could include the following sources:

- Mobilization of own resource revenues through taxes, user charges and contributions, etc.
- Innovative means of financing through community contributions, NGOs, corporate sectors, etc.

- Financial resources available from line departments for GPs under each scheme
- Direct fund flow to GP and possible sources of convergence from flagship schemes of the Central and State Governments

The overall norm is that 10-20% of the resources should be locally mobilized. Options for resource mobilization can come from Own sourced revenue, grants, MGNREGs, State schemes, Voluntary contributions, CSR funds and funds available from the banking sector.

Plan preparation: Following the steps outlined above, including priority setting, resource mobilization a draft GPDP plan is prepared. As a rule the GP must first prepare a five-year perspective plan and subsequent based on prioritization, separate plans are prepared annually from the perspective plan. The plan is approved by the District Planning Committee following endorsement at the Gram Sabha (General Assembly of the village).

Plan Implementation: Several government departments implement development programs at GP level. While in the past these programs were implemented in isolation, current GPDP guidelines require that all centrally sponsored schemes (MGNREGA, NRLM, SBM, ICDS, etc.) require that these activities are integrated into the GPDPs. Similarly all the plans of line departments are expected to emanate from the GPDP, although implementation of such activities can be carried out by the line departments. Such a holistic and integrated planning process is expected to help absorb more funds from different sectors thereby facilitating improved service delivery and accelerate achieving desired results.

Once the plan is approved, the GP ensures that the plans are implemented in a timely manner. Monitoring provides feedback so that necessary adjustments can be made in the work plan and budgets.

For further details refer “Guidelines for Preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plan 2018” Ministry of Panchayat Raj

<https://www.panchayat.gov.in/documents/20126/0/GPDP.pdf/4aab2585-3fd4-0990-c2ae-fb53ec638ba5?t=1554891827998>

Key Steps in Village Employment Council Institutions

The VECs also have a similar process for planning and development at village and district levels. Each VEC is vested with powers similar to the GPs, but are constituted under the rules of the Ministry of Rural Development. The VECs undertake the planning at the village level in terms of development and natural resources management. The VECs are assisted by Community Coordinators and both the VECs and BMCs receive oversight and guidance from a Technical Support Group (TSG) at the district level. The TSG also includes representatives of the Autonomous District Councils (thus providing an organic link between

the state supported and traditional institutions). The TSGs provide an effective means to incorporate biodiversity conservation and natural resources management actions in the village, block and district planning processes and hence are important institutions to deliver expectations in relation to the project. The traditional village committee members are represented in the VECs and DEC, hence providing an effective linkage between these institutions.

The VECs constituted at the village level and its members consist of every male and female heads of each household. Three elected members from each VEC including the traditional headman and female member constitute the Council. The role of the VECs is to plan and prioritize the needs of its members, assess and manage natural resources and its sustainability, identify prepare and implement village-based schemes of the government and other rural development schemes, monitor and evaluate the implementation of these plans, interact with government institutions for technical support and resources, facilitate self-help groups, potential micro-enterprises and prepare annual reports. The Block Employment Council or BEC (equivalent to Block panchayat) is responsible like the Block Panchayats to consolidating a shelf of projects to be taken up under the Rural Development Department schemes, supervise and monitor the activities. The BECs help with consolidating activities across one or more VECs, but the works are implemented by each VEC. The DEC is invested with the responsibilities similar to the Zila Parishads and is the principal authority for planning and implementation of development schemes.

The District Planning Committees develop district level development plans taking into consideration the VEC plans, evaluate and monitor the implementation of the VEC plans, etc.

Annex G

Framework for Participatory Landscape Conservation Planning

Introduction

A landscape approach to conservation is intended to ensure that the ecological integrity of a particular area is ensured. In a landscape approach to conservation it is necessary to try to *manage the biological, social and economic factors that impinge on the ecological integrity* of that area. This requires strategies that succeed in a mosaic of different land uses that not only conserve biodiversity and allows people living in these landscapes to undertake livelihood and development activities. These conservation strategies must therefore integrate land and resource uses in a myriad of diverse components within the landscape such as protected areas, forest production areas, agricultural zones, grazing lands, indigenous management areas and human habitations and other land uses. The framework described below is based on the learning and evolution of thinking regarding landscape conservation approaches in India that was built on the work done by WII and others[1].

[1] Sayer, Jeffrey, et al. "Ten principles for a landscape approach to reconciling agriculture, conservation, and other competing land uses." *Proceedings of the national academy of sciences* 110.21 (2013)

Intent of Landscaping Conservation Planning

Because the landscapes are spatially heterogeneous areas that are extensive in area, there is an inherent need to define the kinds of heterogeneity that most directly influence the parts of the landscape that are under threat. The goal of the landscape planning exercise is to focus on geographic or ecological distinctions within the landscape such as climate, topography or vegetation types so as to guide informed decision-making on the best conservation approaches. This approach must emphasize patterns of biodiversity over the landscape with the focus on conserving the most species rich places, such as specific habitats, vegetation types and ecological units, as well as enhance ecosystem services and the economic viability of local communities as a means towards biodiversity and ecosystem conservation. It must also ensure representation of species, communities and ecological aspects in the landscape. The landscape framework is intended to provide a step-by-step guide for designing and implementing a conservation landscape.

Formalizing the Priority Landscape

The two landscapes are portions of much more extensive ecoregions that stretches across Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala in the south and Meghalaya and neighboring states in the North-East of India. In delimiting or defining the landscapes, a number of factors were considered. This include the following: (i) landscapes supporting rich and unique assemblages of flora and fauna, and natural vegetation types, and representing rich socio-cultural value; (ii) landscapes containing a mosaic of protection, production and community use areas; (iii) landscapes with potential for conservation of species of global and national and national significance and livelihood improvement; and other socio-economic and political factors. While, it would not be possible to conserve and manage all of the biological and ecological processes within the defined landscapes, project planning would require the identification of specific areas or zones within the priority landscape which are critical for conservation of species, ecological process, community sustainable use and livelihood improvement. A spatial planning or zoning approach within the priority landscape will be undertaken to ensure that critical conservation objectives are met, while at the same time addressing socio-economic needs of the local population.

The next sections of this document provides a step by step guide to the defining a zoning plan that would meet the ecological and socio-economic requirements of the priority landscapes, that also takes into consideration the socio-economic needs of the local people living in and around the area.

Method for Spatial Prioritization of the Landscapes

This outlines the process in characterizing the landscape for identifying priority target or focal areas where conservation, sustainable resource use and livelihood interventions will be required. The mapping exercise is intended to help identify critical areas for biodiversity conservation within the landscape, key dispersal corridors, locations of high pressure and vulnerability, options for rationalizing and refining land use, areas for sustainable forest resource use and restoration and locations of community livelihood and income activities:

1. **Defining and zoning the biological landscape:** The two priority landscape areas have already been selected for conservation through a first stage filtering process. At implementation stage, it would be necessary to define the biological elements within the landscape that are important for the conservation of landscape species (e.g. elephant and tiger) or landscape land cover types (bio-geographic representation). Geographic Information Systems coupled with a decision support system will be used to make decisions in prioritization of the biological elements within the landscape. The priority biological elements could include both intact (protected areas and forest reserves) and potentially restorable habitat and land cover areas (especially in the buffer areas to the PAs or connectivity corridors) and human dominated areas in the peripheries or located within the PAs. The final output of this step would be a map depicting the spatial and temporal distribution of the biological elements and priority status of the habitats required for the survival of the landscape species or the minimum set of landscape cover types and their spatial distribution necessary to conserve the maximum amount of biological diversity within the landscape and maintain the integrity of the landscape itself.
2. **Defining the human resource use or socio-economic landscape:** As a simultaneous exercise, socio-economic data on current and planned land and resource uses would be collected to facilitate an analysis of the stakeholder groups associated with them. It would define the location, type and intensity of resource use, production (crop, agriculture, grazing, etc.), livelihood and resource dependencies and development activities that occur within the landscape. This would provide an overall landscape baseline that would summarize the socially, geographically and occupational (livelihood) disaggregated overview of the state of resource use and dependence in the landscape.
3. **Intersecting the biological landscape with the human resource use and socio-economic landscape:** Maps created with the biological and socio-economic attributes should be over-laid to recognize areas within the landscape where human use or development activities intersect with the prioritized habitats and land cover types. This allows for the identification of the relationship between conservation and development oriented land use and livelihood activities and for analyzing options for integration of conservation with other land uses as well as trade-offs between them.
4. **Identification of the Target Areas for Intervention with the Landscape:** The intent of this step will be to prioritize the areas within the landscape to where the threats from human resource use and development activities significantly compete with the biological and ecological needs of key species or for maintenance of key habitat types. This would enable the identification of focal areas within the landscape where conservation action is necessary to reduce the intensity and impact of human resource use and development impacts that would otherwise significantly compromise the sustainability of species, ecosystems and land cover types within the landscape, and ultimately the ecological integrity of the landscape as a whole. Stakeholder consultation would be a critical step in defining the trade-offs. The zoning exercise would entail defining (i) priority areas for conservation (PAs, Forest Reserves, HCVMs, OECMs, etc.) where threats are small or manageable and where the conservation potential is the greatest; (ii) zones where there is a conflict between development and conservation interests, and where further assessment and analysis is required; and (iii) low priority areas for conservation with intensive or semi-intensive human use. The outcome of this step would be characterization of the landscape by zones of varying conservation and resource use potential.
5. **Identification of threats in each of the target areas in landscape:** Once the focal areas or zones for conservation intervention have been selected, an analysis should be undertaken to evaluate how each human use in the given focal area threatens the landscape species population requirements or of the conservation of the priority land cover types within the landscape

The final outcomes of the mapping exercise would likely be: (a) a map or series of maps showing landscape zones or focal landscape areas characterized by degrees of conservation potential, compatible development potential and presence of competing or conflicting interests based on threats and opportunities; and (b) recommendations regarding land uses and livelihood activities suitable for different areas of the landscape based on threats and opportunities

analysis. In addition, there would be an outcome relating to recognition of institutional and coordination needs, capacity building and training required to enable convergence in planning and implementation of activities at the landscape level.

Planning and Implementation for Landscape Conservation

The series of next steps in the landscape planning process would entail developing a shared vision and identification of strategies for mitigating threats to the biological elements within the landscape, improving opportunities for conservation, and supporting conservation friendly interventions to improve livelihoods and incomes of local communities living within the landscape.

6. **Negotiation of a shared vision for the landscape.** The intent of this step is to obtain broad agreement with the stakeholders (including local communities) for conservation or compatible development action within the landscape. The outcome of the negotiation process will be to ensure that critical biological requirements developed through the biological assessment process (step 2) are maintained. This will be achieved through a negotiation process that would require engagement of all stakeholders or development sector representatives that operate within the landscape. The negotiated landscape vision statement will provide:
 - A decision support (multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder coordination and governance) framework for landscape level planning for meeting biodiversity conservation objectives;
 - A platform for integration of multiple landscape level objectives for biodiversity conservation;
 - An understanding of the trade-offs between conservation, resource use and socio-economic development objectives; and
 - Definition of roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders within the landscape.
7. **Identification of strategies for Implementation:** The desired output of this step is a conservation landscape design or landscape perspective plan that has multi-stakeholder support regarding appropriate management options for different priority areas of the landscape (PA management, forest working plans, OECMs, village-level planning, etc.). The outcome of this step would be (i) a flexible landscape conservation design, with maps, and indicating agreements with each of the stakeholders regarding land use and conservation practice for the different zones or parts of the landscape; and (ii) identification of clear and measurable actions/activities to mitigate or manage threats within each zone.
8. **Implementation of strategies and actions in the landscape:** Depending on the classification of the different zones within the landscape, management prescriptions would be formulated for each zone. The management prescriptions for each zone would depend on the primary objectives for which each individual zone has to be managed. Production forests would be managed to provide timber, NTFPs and other products to meet domestic needs; protected

areas would be managed for conservation and tourism benefits, agricultural lands would be managed for providing products and livelihoods for local communities, etc. Specific implementation actions might include the:

- (i) Revision and development of management plans for protected areas and high biological areas (HCVFs, OECMs, community-based conservation areas) with the purpose of incorporating better ecological and sustainability considerations for these areas, improving connectivity with better corridor management, and broadening the focus of conservation from species to cover ecosystems and ecosystem functions as well.

- (ii) Revision of forest working plans to better integrate species and ecosystem considerations (and enhancing connectivity) in forest reserves;

- (iii) Defining management options for conservation zones, including OECMs and other biologically important areas outside of the boundaries of the protected areas; and

- (iv) Gram Panchayat and/or Village Development planning to incorporate biodiversity considerations into management of livelihood and resource management opportunities for local communities living within the landscape, etc.

Some of the potential actions might include:

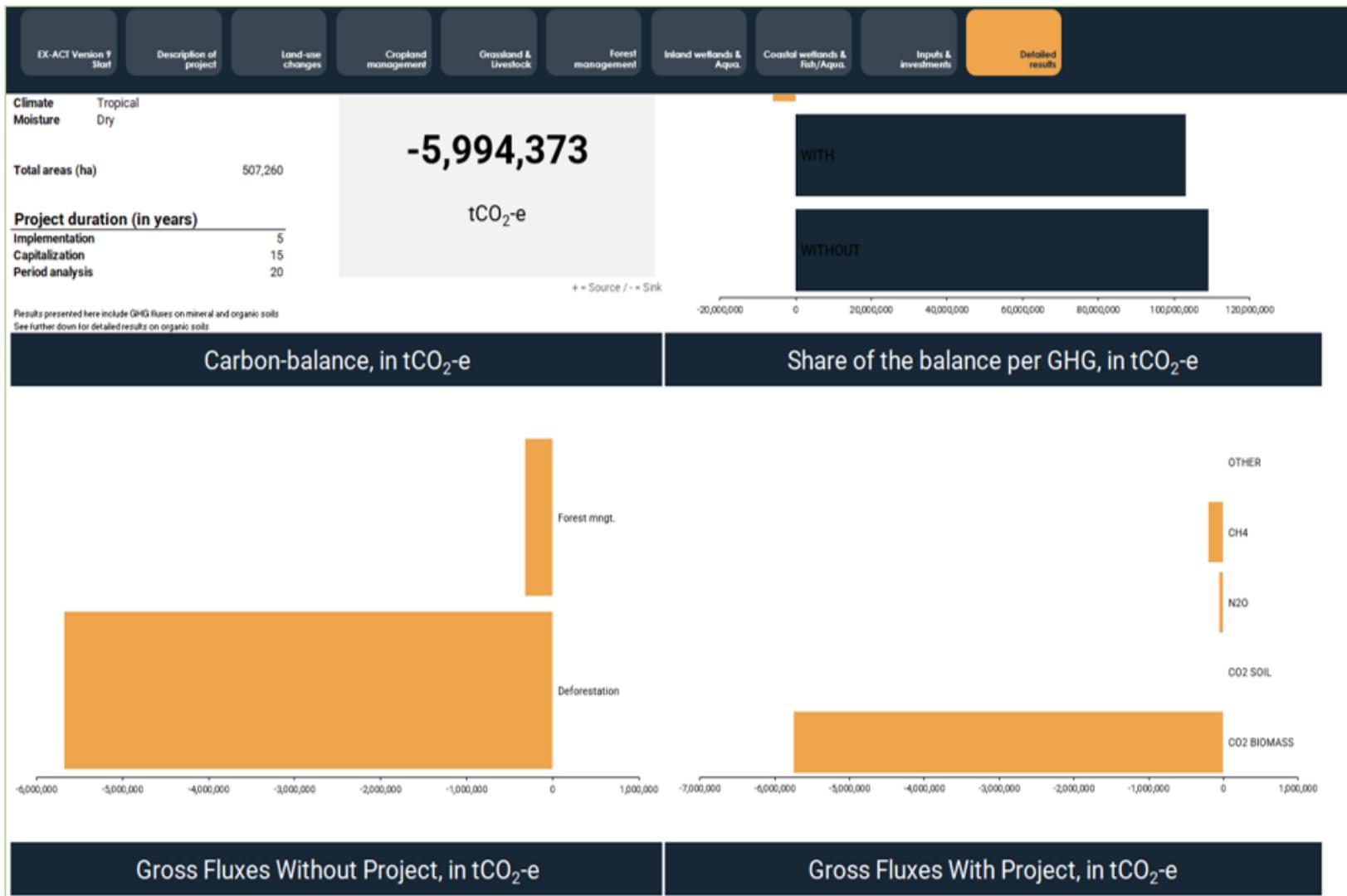
- (a) Strengthened protected area (including HCVFs, OECMs and community-managed conservation areas) management;
- (b) Strengthened and effective conservation outcomes in state owned forests, community managed lands in non-protected areas
- (c) Changes in designated land uses (recognition of biologically rich areas or linking corridors, etc.);
- (d) Agricultural and land use practices that are compatible with conservation and livelihood practices that are not detrimental to conservation;
- (e) Viable community resource use and income generation practices; and
- (f) Improved protection, enforcement and governance of natural resources; etc.

Implementation of such strategies and activities is complex and would require capacity building of staff in all relevant agencies that operate in the landscape, policy advocacy, community participation, improved management, as well as financial resources and coordination.

9. **Monitoring of impacts or performance:** In order to assess (a) if the strategies that are being implemented in the landscape are working; (b) if the threats and pressures on the biological resources within the landscape are decreasing, and (c) if it is improving the landscape's biodiversity and integrity. This would require the establishment of a monitoring program at a very early stage in project implementation.

Annex H

GHG calculations



Key Assumptions in tCO₂e_q Estimates

- Estimates are made for a 20-Year (5 years of implementation plus 15 years of capitalization) period.
- The project will deliver GHG benefits by implementing project activities at two landscapes in two Indian States, namely, Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya
- GHG Mitigation benefits are expected from (a) The interventions within PA areas are predominantly related to improved management to reduce forest cover loss (deforestation), and not so much related to land degradation neutrality. Thus, we have moved most of areas from “Management” module to “LUC” module on the Ex-ACT Tool spreadsheet; Only 4,000 ha of degraded forest land will be targeted for land restoration-related interventions (hence, “Management” module of the Ex-ACT Tool).
- Deforestation reduction target has been reduced from 50% to 35%, which is India’s emission reduction target by 2030.
- No negative impacts from natural or anthropogenic disasters are discounted in the estimates.
- The anticipated start year for the GHG emissions benefit accounting is Year 2023
- All estimates are subject to the assumptions made during the development of EX-ANTE Carbon-balance Tool (version 9.1.0) and will be updated during the PPG stage.

