

# GEF-8 PPG REQUEST FOR GBFF PROJECTS

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## General Project Information

Project Title:

Partnership for Ecological Advancement and Conservation of Endangered Big Cats in India (PEACE +)

Region:

Asia

GEF Project ID:

12196

Country(ies):

India

Type of Project:

GBFF

GEF Agency(ies):

UNDP

GEF Agency Project ID:

10360

Anticipated Executing Entity(s):

Wildlife Division of MoEFCC

International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)

Anticipated Executing Type:

Government

Others

GEF Focal Area (s):

Biodiversity

Submission Date:

12/16/2025

Project Sector (CCM Only)

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Influencing models, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances, Demonstrate innovative approaches, Deploy innovative financial instruments, Stakeholders, Beneficiaries, Local Communities, Private Sector, Financial intermediaries and market facilitators, Capital providers, SMEs, Large corporations, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Non-Grant Pilot, Civil Society, Community Based Organization, Non-Governmental Organization, Type of Engagement, Consultation, Participation, Information Dissemination, Partnership, Communications, Awareness Raising, Education, Public Campaigns, Behavior change, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Capacity Development, Knowledge Exchange, Learning, Adaptive management, Theory of change, Indicators to measure change, Enabling Activities, Innovation, Knowledge Generation, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Gender results areas, Women groups, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Gender-sensitive indicators, Access and control over natural resources, Participation and leadership, Access to benefits and services, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Biodiversity, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Productive Landscapes, Community Based Natural Resource Mngt, Mainstreaming, Tourism, Agriculture and agrobiodiversity, Certification -National Standards, Species, Threatened Species, Wildlife for Sustainable Development, Biomes, Wetlands, Tropical Dry Forests, Grasslands, Financial and Accounting, Conservation Trust Funds, Conservation Finance, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Ecosystem Approach, Sustainable Livelihoods, Income Generating Activities, Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Pasture Management, Sustainable Forest, Climate Change, Climate Change Adaptation, Climate resilience, Ecosystem-based Adaptation, Climate Change Mitigation, Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Nationally Determined Contribution, Sustainable Development Goals

Type of Trust Fund:

GBFF

Project Duration (Months)

60

GEF Project Financing: (a)

2,639,727.00

GEF Project Non-Grant: (b)

0.00

Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c) 250,773.00	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant: (d) 0.00
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d) 2,890,500.00	Total Co-financing: 0.00
PPG Amount: (e) 100,000.00	PPG Agency Fee(s): (f) 9,500.00
PPG total Amount: (e+f) 109,500.00	Total GEF Resources: (a+b+c+d+e+f) 3,000,000.00
Project Tags: Support IPLC, GBF Target 1, GBF Target 3, GBF Target 4, GBF Target 5, GBF Target 9, GBF Target 10, GBF Target 19, GBF Target 20, GBF Target 21, GBF Target 22, GBF Target 23	

## Indicative Project Overview

To secure viable populations of Snow Leopard and Tiger in Ladakh and Uttarakhand via landscape-based conservation, local community stewardship, and innovative financing

## Project Components

### 1.Strengthening landscape-based conservation of Snow Leopard and Tiger in in Ladakh and Uttarakhand

Component Type	Trust Fund
Investment	GBFF
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
779,348.00	

#### Project Outcomes:

1.Increased landscape-scale security of Big Cat meta-populations in the high-range areas of Ladakh and Uttarakhand (GBFF Action Areas 1 & 2), as indicated by:

- 2 operational Big Cat Monitoring Cells at Ladakh and Uttarakhand Forest Departments;

-improved management of 467,000 ha of Hemis National Park and Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary: >= 5 METT points increase (Habitat and protection)

->=5,000 ha of OECM established

>= upto 30% decrease in annual number of big cats – human conflicts in 472,000 ha of Hemis and Nandhaur landscapes

>= 1.14 million t CO<sub>2</sub> of avoided emissions via improved landscape management

-stabilized Snow Leopard population in Hemis NP (current ~90 inds.)

- stabilized Tiger population in Nandhaur WS (current ~37 inds.)

Project Outputs:

1.1. Big Cat Monitoring Cells established and trained at Ladakh and Uttarakhand Forest Departments and conduct regular Snow Leopard and Tiger surveys based on improved SPAI (snow leopard), AITE (tiger) protocols to provide actionable information for species conservation and climate adaptations.

1.2. Management effectiveness of Hemis National Park and Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary improved to secure Snow Leopard and Tiger populations through adaptive grazing control, M-STriPES (smart) patrolling, and prey population restoration

1.3. OECMs established around Hemis National Park and Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary to ensure connectivity of Snow Leopard and Tiger habitats

1.4. An integrated

Human–Big Cat Co-existence & Conflict-Mitigation Programme is launched in Ladakh and Uttarakhand with focus on feral dog and garbage management (Biodigestable ecobins), predator-proof corrals, fox-light + siren deterrent poles, extending livestock insurance, and predator early warning system

## 2. Creating economic incentives for tribal people and local communities to protect Big Cats through long-term support of Blended Finance Facility for Big Cat Landscapes

Component Type	Trust Fund
Investment	GBFF
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
905,049.00	

Project Outcomes:

2. Strengthened tribal people and local community's nature-positive economies anchored in Big Cat stewardship in Ladakh and Uttarakhand (GBFF Action Areas 2 and 3), as indicated by:

>= 10 community-led Big Cat tourist enterprises established employing 100 people (50% women)

>= 5 community-led Cat Safe Herder Cooperatives and Fodder Banks established involving 300 households (50% women)

>= 5,000 of direct project beneficiaries (50% women)

>=10-20% reduction in the number of free-grazing animals on pastures in the project areas

≥ 10 community insurance pools operational with bylaws and claims committees

Project Outputs:

2.1. Community-Led Big Cat Responsible Tourism & Natural-Heritage Enterprises are established, trained, and certified under the PUG Eco-rating &/or other certification schemes in the Hemis National Park, Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary, and OECMs

2.2. Big Cat Safe Herder Cooperatives, including Fodder Banks, are established, trained, and certified in the Hemis National Park, Nandhour Wildlife Sanctuary, and OECMs, to produce and market predator-friendly products, securing premium prices that finance community conservation funds and habitat-friendly grazing practices

2.3 Community-managed insurance pools for livestock/crop depredation and eco-tourism disruption are piloted with premium subsidies and clear governance/claims rules (leveraging existing government schemes).

### 3. Strengthening cooperation for sustained big cat conservation by expanding financial resources, building institutional and technical capacities, and advancing coordinated knowledge management

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GBFF
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
703,927.00	

#### Project Outcomes:

3. Strengthened cooperation for sustained big cat conservation across Himalaya high range landscape (GBFF Action Areas 1 and 4), as indicated by:

>=4 countries actively use the KM Hub to advance big cat conservation

>= US\$ 1,000,000 mobilized by IBCA for big cat conservation

>= 3 big cat range countries that apply at least one project best practice for big cat conservation

# officials and other stakeholders from range countries trained on good practices emanating from India. (number to be confirmed at PPG)

#### Project Outputs:

3.1. IBCA Fund established to ensure financial sustainability for big cat conservation in India and other range countries

3.2. Blended Finance Facility for Big Cat Landscapes (non-grant capital mobilization) is established to mobilize private/CSR and domestic bank capital for community enterprises and insurance mechanisms.

3.3 A Knowledge Management Hub is established at IBCA as a knowledge management and conservation cooperation mechanism (including Illegal Wildlife Trade) between India and other range countries. (Note: UNDP, in collaboration with IBCA and the Ministry, confirms its intent to secure and submit \$0 LOEs from the relevant countries by the time of CEO Endorsement. Requests have already been submitted to the respective countries.)

3.4. Best practices from the project are disseminated in Himalaya and other big cat range countries (via exchange meetings, capacity building programmes, international events, and publications)

### M&E

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GBFF

GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
125,702.00	

Project Outcomes:

M&E

- Satisfactory or higher annual project rating by QA Report supported by MTR and TE;

>=60% of local communities (half of them women) are aware about GRM channels and procedures

Project Outputs:

4.1. Participatory and gender responsive M&E and KM system to measure the project effectiveness for Snow Leopard and Tiger conservation, inform adaptive management and safeguards.

## Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
1.Strengthening landscape-based conservation of Snow Leopard and Tiger in in Ladakh and Uttarakhand	779,348.00	
2.Creating economic incentives for tribal people and local communities to protect Big Cats through long-term support of Blended Finance Facility for Big Cat Landscapes	905,049.00	
3. Strengthening cooperation for sustained big cat conservation by expanding financial resources, building institutional and technical capacities, and advancing coordinated knowledge management	703,927.00	
M&E	125,702.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2,514,026.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Project Management Cost (PMC)	125,701.00	
<b>Total Project Cost (\$)</b>	<b>2,639,727.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Please provide justification

N/A

## PROJECT CONCEPT DESCRIPTION

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

### A. Project Rationale

India's high-range landscapes—including the Western and Eastern Himalaya, and the high-altitude habitat corridors of Ladakh and Uttarakhand—harbour globally significant populations of Snow Leopard (*Panthera uncia*) and Bengal Tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*). As apex predators, these big cats function as umbrella species for vast mountain ecosystems that underpin the ecological integrity of major Himalayan river catchments. By regulating herbivore populations and maintaining vegetation dynamics, they indirectly support watershed stability, carbon sequestration, and climate resilience—ecosystem services of growing importance under accelerating climate change impacts in high-altitude environments.

Recent national assessment underscore the global significance of these landscapes. India's 2019–23 Snow Leopard Population Assessment estimated 718 individuals nationwide, approximately half of the transboundary Himalayan population, with about two-thirds occurring in **Ladakh**<sup>[1]</sup>. Similarly, the 2022 All-India Tiger Estimation recorded 3,682 wild tigers with **Uttarakhand** supporting around 560 animals—nearly 45% of the trans-Himalayan tiger population shared with Nepal and Bhutan<sup>[2]</sup>. Together, Ladakh and Uttarakhand thus represent keystone strongholds for big cat conservation across the Himalayan arc.

Critically, these two states anchor the only remaining functional corridors linking India's big cat populations with Nepal, Bhutan, the Tibetan Plateau in China, and Pakistan. Any population decline or habitat fragmentation in Ladakh or Uttarakhand would disrupt transboundary meta-populations and undermine long-term genetic viability. For the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF), investments in these landscapes therefore offer exceptionally high leverage, directly advancing GBF Targets 1 (spatial planning), 3 (connectivity) and 4 (species recovery), while contributing to broader climate and ecosystem resilience objectives.

Tribal People and Local Communities (TPLCs) are integral to these landscapes. *In Ladakh*, nomadic Changpa pastoralists herd pashmina goats, yak and sheep across seasonal grazing routes that overlap prime snow leopard habitat. Their livelihoods—anchored in pashmina fiber, dairy products, and emerging nature-based tourism—depend on healthy rangelands and coexistence with wildlife. In Uttarakhand, Van Panchayat institutions and Bhotiya communities manage extensive community forests that function as tiger and leopard dispersal corridors linking Corbett, Nandhaur, and Nepal's Shuklaphanta landscape. Forest products, fodder systems, wool-based crafts, and homestay tourism are all contingent on intact habitats and viable big cat populations.

However, this delicate human–nature balance is increasingly threatened. In Ladakh, overgrazing, feral dog proliferation linked to waste mismanagement, and climate-driven range compression are intensifying competition between wildlife and livestock, escalating human–wildlife conflict. In Uttarakhand, infrastructure expansion, corridor fragmentation, prey depletion, and persistent poaching pressures threaten the state's role as a genetic bridge for transboundary tiger populations. Without targeted, integrated intervention, these pressures risk eroding both biodiversity and the nature-dependent livelihoods of TPLCs.

By safeguarding Ladakh and Uttarakhand, the proposed GBFF investment protects ecological keystones essential to the functioning of the greater Himalaya, while aligning conservation outcomes with sustainable, community-led development pathways.

### Key threats for Big Cats, their habitats, and local communities

**Ladakh.** High-altitude rangelands supporting nearly 500 snow leopards are increasingly overstocked with pashmina goats, causing forage depletion, soil compaction, and declining bharal and ibex populations in critical valleys, intensifying wildlife–livestock competition<sup>[3]</sup>. Rapidly growing feral-dog populations—fuelled by tourist waste and army kitchens—harass prey, spread canine distemper, and account for up to 30 percent of documented livestock losses around Hemis National

Park<sup>[4]</sup>. Climate warming is further driving snow leopards, prey species, and pastoralists upslope into shrinking, less productive refugia, increasing spatial overlap with herder camps and escalating human–wildlife conflicts<sup>[5]</sup>.

**Uttarakhand.** In the Terai–Shivalik foothills, road and rail expansion, riverbed mining, and agricultural encroachment are fragmenting key tiger corridors, particularly the Nandhaur–Shuklaphanta and Rajaji–Corbett linkages that sustain transboundary connectivity with Nepal<sup>[6]</sup>. Habitat degradation and altered forest structure are reducing prey availability, while persistent poaching pressure—including recent seizures in Khatima—confirms ongoing cross-border illegal wildlife trade<sup>[7]</sup>.

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[1] [https://www.sci.news/biology/snow-leopards-india-13890.html?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com#google\\_vignette](https://www.sci.news/biology/snow-leopards-india-13890.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com#google_vignette)

[2] [Press Information Bureau](#); [Mongabay](#); [World Wildlife Fund](#)

[3] [BioOne](#)

[4] [Indiaspend](#)

[5] [World Wildlife Fund](#)

[6] [The New Indian Express](#)

[7] [The Indian Express](#)

## B. Project Description

### The GBFF project Objective and Strategies

The suggested project Objective is *to secure viable populations of Snow Leopard and Tiger in Ladakh and Uttarakhand via landscape-based conservation, local community stewardship, and innovative financing*. The Objectives are going to be achieved through implementation of four project strategies (Components):

- **Component 1:** Strengthening landscape-based conservation of Snow Leopard and Tiger in in Ladakh and Uttarakhand;
- **Component 2:** Creating economic incentives for tribal people and local communities to protect Big Cats;
- **Component 3:** Strengthening cooperation for sustained big cat conservation; and
- **Monitoring & Evaluation** component.

**Component 1** establishes a landscape-scale protection framework for Snow Leopard and Tiger conservation in Ladakh and Uttarakhand, strengthening ecological connectivity across the trans-Himalayan landscape. It will: (i) operationalize Big Cat Monitoring Cells to implement standardized SPAI and AITE protocols; (ii) improve management effectiveness of Hemis National Park and Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary through adaptive grazing regulation, M-STrIPES smart patrolling, and prey restoration; (iii) designate and manage climate resilient OECMs linking core protected areas with transboundary corridors; and (iv) implement an integrated human–big cat coexistence programme, including predator-proof corrals, feral dog and waste management, deterrent systems, expanded livestock insurance, and early-warning mechanisms to reduce conflict across the wider landscape.

**Component 2** aligns conservation outcomes with nature-positive, climate-resilient livelihoods for Tribal People and Local Communities (TPLCs) in protected areas and OECMs strengthened under Component 1. It will: (i) incubate, train, and certify community-led Big Cat responsible tourism and natural-heritage enterprises—including guiding services,

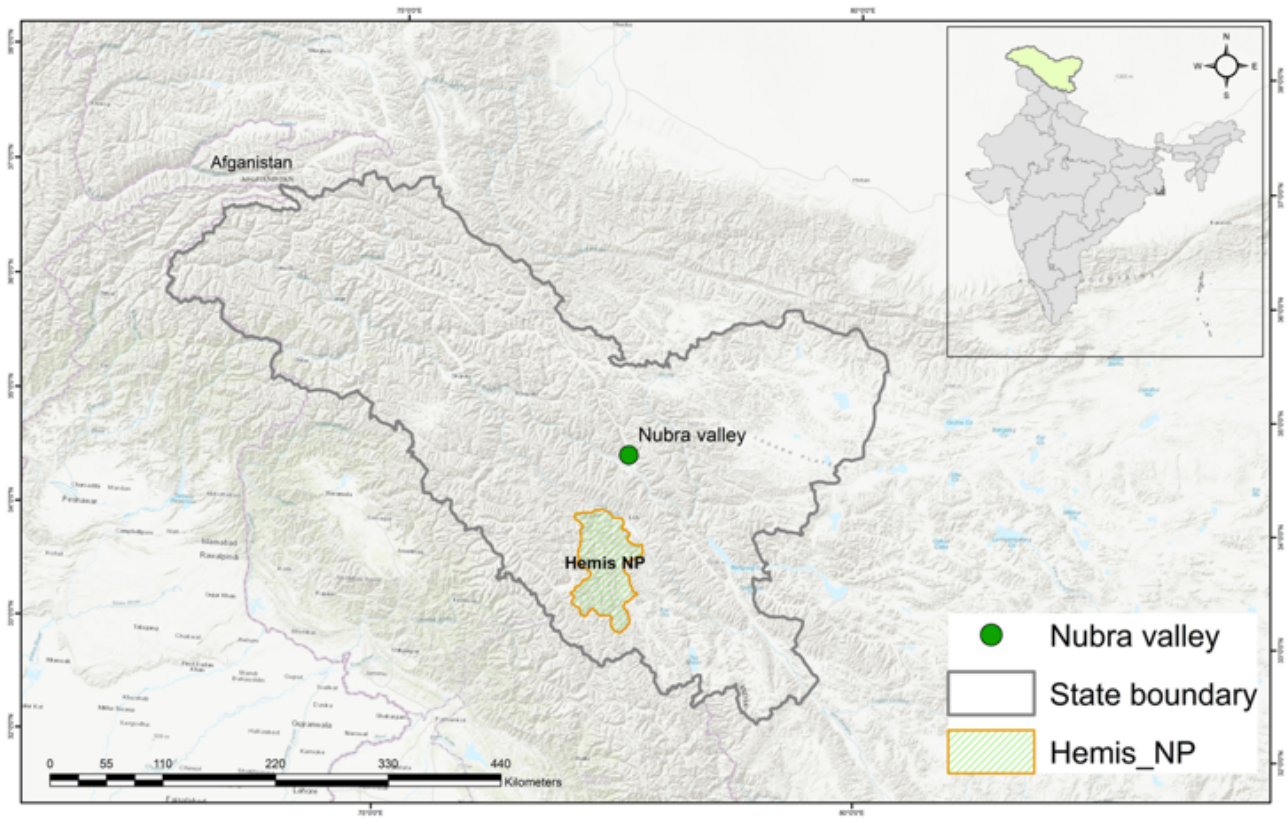
homestays, handicrafts, and wildlife viewing—around Hemis NP, Nandhaur WS, and adjoining OECMs; and (ii) establish and certify Big Cat-Safe Herder Cooperatives, supported by fodder banks and sustainable husbandry training, to produce and market predator-friendly wool, dairy, meat, and related products. A share of enterprise revenues will be reinvested into community conservation funds and habitat-friendly grazing practices that benefit big cats and their prey.

**Component 3** strengthens regional cooperation to safeguard high-range big cats in Ladakh, Uttarakhand, and adjacent Himalayan landscapes. It will: (i) establish an IBCA Fund with an investment strategy and fundraising outreach; (ii) organize a Blended Finance Facility for Big Cat Landscapes to mobilize private, CSR, and domestic bank capital for community enterprises and insurance mechanisms. GBFF resources will not be used to deploy non-grant instruments (e.g., loans, guarantees, insurance, bonds); any such pilots will be capitalized and implemented by qualified financial institutions using non-GBFF funding; (iii) establish an IBCA-hosted Knowledge Management Hub to share IWT data, standardize SPAI/AITE monitoring protocols, and disseminate best practices across range countries; and (iv) promote learning through exchange visits, regional workshops, capacity-building programmes, conferences, and publications to scale best practices across the Himalayan range. For this, UNDP in collaboration with IBCA and the Ministry, confirms its intent to secure and submit \$0 LoEs from the relevant countries by the time of CEO Endorsement. Requests have already been submitted to the respective countries.

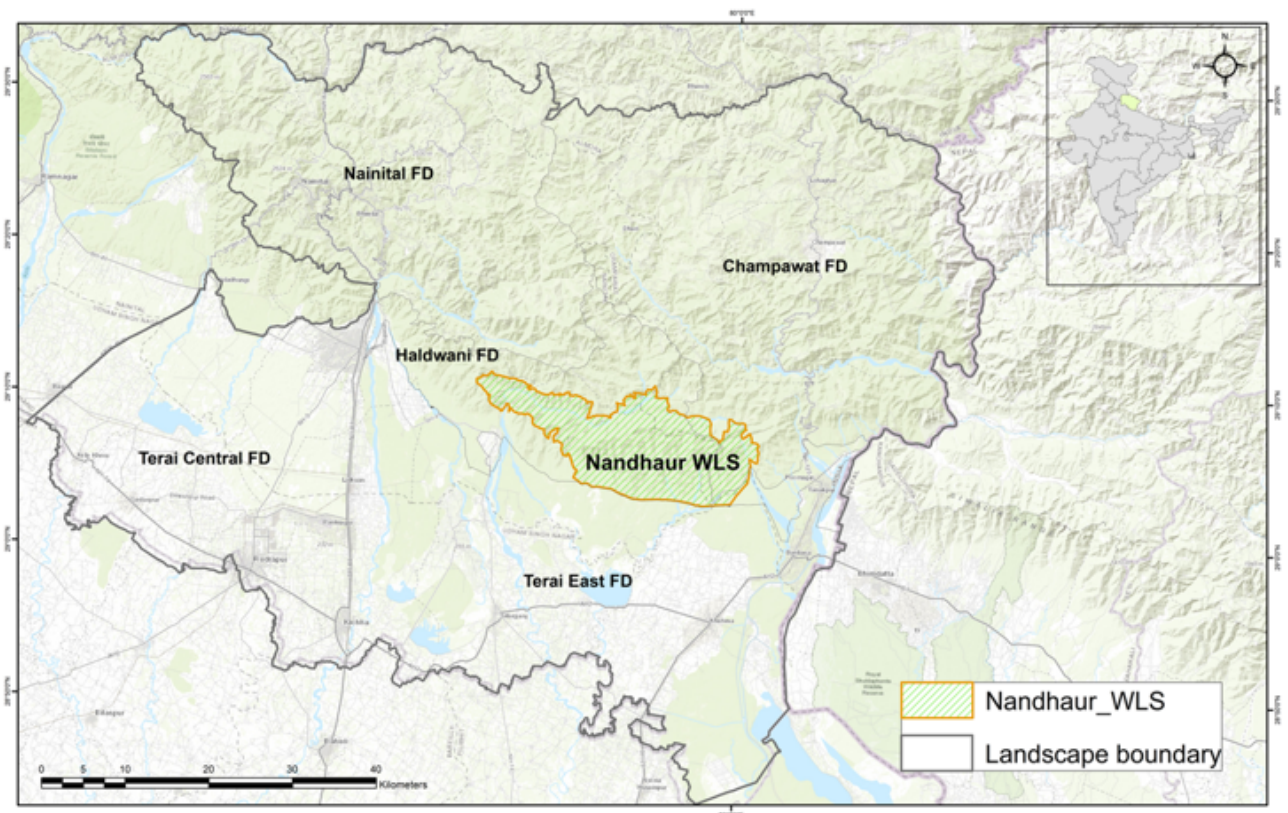
**M&E component** establishes a participatory, gender-responsive system to track progress, support adaptive management, and embed learning throughout implementation. Key activities include regular project monitoring; inclusive reflection cycles—quarterly reviews, lessons-learned sessions, a Mid-Term Review, and a Terminal Evaluation—with representation of local communities and women; systematic gender mainstreaming across project activities; and operation of safeguards and a multilingual grievance-redress mechanism supported by outreach and awareness.

The project's integrated, landscape-scale approach builds on the complementary strengths of its partners. **IBCA**, as the convening platform for big cat range states, provides the transnational mandate, data standards and fundraising reach required to operationalize regional cooperation under Components 1–3. The **Wildlife Division of MoEFCC** brings statutory authority, and protected area management experience critical for strengthening Hemis National Park, Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary and adjoining OECMs. The **Wildlife Institute of India** will lead training and technical capacity building, while national and local civil society organizations will support community enterprise development and engagement with herder cooperatives and responsible tourism networks. Together, this integrated package addresses the ecological, economic, and governance drivers of Snow Leopard and Tiger decline in a model scalable across the Trans-Himalayan landscape.

**Project Areas: Hemis National Park**, India's largest protected area (440,000 ha) together with the adjoining **Nubra Valley** in Ladakh, form the core of the Western Trans-Himalayan snow leopard range. The park supports an estimated 90 snow leopards, but its high-altitude ecosystems extend into unprotected, community-used valleys where rising livestock numbers, feral dogs, and poaching threaten prey recovery and intensify human-wildlife conflicts (Fig. 1). In Uttarakhand, **Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary** (27,000 ha) and the **wider Nandhaur landscape** (Uttarakhand) constitute the last intact foothill corridor linking the Terai Arc with Nepal's Shuklaphanta and Bardia tiger landscapes. The area supports 35-37 breeding tigers but faces weak protection, heavy grazing and rapid land-use conversion (Fig. 2). Together these sites (470,000 – 500,000 ha) anchor transboundary snow leopard and tiger metapopulations, restore international connectivity, and pilot scalable, community-led coexistence models.



**Figure 1.** Hemis National Park and surrounding landscapes of Nubra Valley



**Figure 2.** Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary (27,000 ha) and Kumaon Terai Forest Complex

### Project Theory of Change

The project's Theory of Change posits that if frontline conservation agencies are equipped with real-time big cat population data and enhanced PA management tools; if critical habitat corridors are legally secured and effectively managed; if Tribal People and Local Communities (TPLCs) receive sustained market incentives for predator-friendly, nature positive livelihoods; and if partners coordinate big cat conservation, policy and finance in India, then snow leopard and tiger populations in Ladakh - Uttarakhand and adjacent Himalaya landscape will rebound and remain viable. This change pathway is operationalized through four interlinked results chains:

- Landscape security:** Establishment of Big Cat Monitoring Cells, deployment of smarter patrolling system, and adaptive grazing management will strengthen evidenced-based decision-making, restore prey populations, and improve conservation effectiveness in Hemis NP and Nandhaur WS, covering 467,000 ha, with an expected increase of at least five METT points. In parallel, the designation of 5,000 ha of climate-resilient Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) will connect core protected areas to transboundary snow leopard and tiger corridors, creating a contiguous, resilient habitat network.
- Coexistence:** Integrated human–big cat coexistence measures—including conflict mitigation tools, feral dog management, and insurance mechanisms—will reduce livestock losses, human–wildlife incidents, and retaliatory killing, while lowering disturbance to big cats and prey species. Together, the landscape security and coexistence chains deliver Outcome 1: increased landscape-scale security of big cat meta-populations in Ladakh and Uttarakhand, contributing to GBFF Action Areas 1 and 2.
- Big Cat-positive TPLC economies:** At least 10 certified community-led tourism enterprises and five Big Cat-Safe Herder Cooperatives will generate a minimum of 100 jobs and directly benefit at least 5,000 people (50 percent women). Premium revenues from predator-friendly products and services will be reinvested into community conservation funds, aligning livelihood incentives with big cat survival. This chain delivers Outcome 2: strengthened nature-positive local economies anchored in big cat stewardship, contributing to GBFF Action Areas 2 and 3.
- Conservation Knowledge and Finance:** A regional big cat conservation data hub and best-practice sharing platform (used by at least 4 countries), together with the **IBCA Fund** (minimum US\$1 million) and a **Blended Finance Facility for Big Cat Landscapes**, will mobilize long-term financing and strengthen cross-border

collaboration for transboundary snow leopard and tiger conservation, contributing to **Outcome 3: Strengthened cooperation for sustained big cat conservation across the Himalayan high-range landscape** (GBFF Action Areas 1 and 4).

- **Interaction of these four results chains, supported by a robust M&E framework** is expected to reduce human-big cat conflicts across at least 477,000 ha, lower free-grazing pressure, curb poaching and illegal grazing, restore prey populations, and stabilize snow leopard and tiger populations in target landscapes and beyond.

**Project Stakeholders:** Key stakeholders include government, defence and security agencies, civil society, local communities, and market actors. The Wildlife Division of MoEFCC serves as the Implementing Partner, ensuring national policy alignment and coordination, while IBCA acts as the Responsible Party, leading transboundary conservation, finance, and knowledge exchange. Operational delivery is led by the Ladakh and Uttarakhand Forest Departments and PA administrations (Hemis NP and Nandhaur WS), with district authorities managing monitoring cells, patrolling, pasture management, and OECMs. Tribal and local communities—through herder cooperatives and village tourism groups—are primary stakeholders and co-managers of enterprises and benefit-sharing mechanisms, supported by responsible private-sector partners. Transboundary engagement will involve relevant national conservation agencies and regional stakeholders.

**Contribution to GBFF Action Areas:** The project advances four GBFF Action Areas. Action Area 1 is addressed by strengthening management of two flagship protected areas, restoring prey bases, and establishing 5,000 ha of OECMs to enhance spatial planning and connectivity (Outcome 1). Action Area 2 supports TPLC-led responsible tourism and Big Cat-friendly herder cooperatives that embed stewardship and equitable governance (Outcome 2). Action Area 3 is advanced by a Knowledge Management Hub and best conservation practice exchange, while align wildlife, tourism and livestock policies across borders & sectors (Outcome 3). Action Area 4 is directly operationalized through the IBCA Fund and a Blended Finance Facility that mobilize private, CSR, and philanthropic capital via premium markets and insurance mechanisms, demonstrating scalable, non-grant biodiversity finance for long-term conservation (Outcome 3).

**Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs):** The project is positioned to produce significant GEBs including:

- Improved management effectiveness of PAs on 467,000 ha (Hemis NP and Nandhaur WS) (CI 1.2);
- Improved management of landscapes (non-PA) that benefits to Big Cat conservation: 5,000 ha established under OECMS in Nubra Valley and Nandhaur landscape (CI 4.1);
- Mitigated greenhouse-gas emissions in the project area via improved management, decreased deforestation, and decreased livestock number: at least 1.14 million t CO<sub>2e</sub> (CI 6.1);
- Direct project beneficiaries (TPLC): at least 5,000 people (50% are women) (CI 11);
- Increased Snow Leopard and Tiger populations in the project areas.

**Alignment with India's NBSAP.** The project operationalizes key targets of India's updated NBSAP (2024–2030). It advances NBT 3 by improving management of 467,000 ha in Hemis National Park and Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary and establishing 5,000 ha of OECMs to enhance connectivity of core big cat habitats. It supports NBT 4 through science-based monitoring, prey restoration, and conflict mitigation for Snow Leopard and Tiger recovery. NBT 18 is delivered via community-led responsible tourism, predator-friendly herder cooperatives, and the IBCA Fund, while NBT 19 is supported through mobilization of public and private biodiversity finance.

**Policy coherence and intersectoral coordination.** The project strengthens policy coherence by aligning key national frameworks—Mission LiFE, the Wildlife (Protection) Act, Eco-tourism Policy, National Livestock Mission, and India's NBSAP—into a unified landscape-level implementation framework. It establishes coordination mechanisms, including Big Cat Monitoring Cells led by state Forest Departments and an IBCA-hosted data hub and fund, linking wildlife, tourism, livestock, and finance sectors. By recognizing OECMs and promoting responsible tourism and predator-friendly herder cooperatives, it brings communities, NGOs, and private actors under shared conservation and benefit-sharing frameworks.

**Finance mobilization potential.** The project will support the establishment of an **IBCA Conservation Fund** and a **Blended Finance Facility for Big Cat Landscapes** to mobilize resources for conservation interventions, technology-enabled monitoring, and multi-stakeholder capacity building. It will also help IBCA develop strategies to attract additional public and private

financing and ensure effective deployment to strengthen long-term conservation outcomes for big cats, prey, and associated ecosystems.

**Support to TPLC.** Tribal and local community representatives will co-manage the project through the Project Board and PA-OECM committees, with equal voice in patrol priorities, grazing rules, and benefit sharing (Outcome 1). Small grants, business incubation, and ring-fenced revenues from tourism and herder cooperatives will finance TPLC-led village conservation funds, embedding livelihoods and governance across planning and adaptive management (Outcome 2).

## Core Indicators

### Indicator 1 Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
467000	0	0	0

#### Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
467000	0	0	0

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)
Hemis National Park	4558	National Park	467,000.00			

#### Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial Protected Areas Under improved Management effectiveness

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

Name of the Protected Area	WDP A ID	IUCN Category	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)

### 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)
0	0	0	0

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

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

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

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

### Type/Name of Third Party Certification

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

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

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

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

#### Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

Name of the OECMs	WDPA-ID	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
OECMs around Hemis National Park and Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary		5,000.00			

#### Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

#### Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
<b>Expected metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (direct)</b>	1140000	0	0	0
<b>Expected metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (indirect)</b>	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)
<b>Expected metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (direct)</b>	1,140,000			
<b>Expected metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (indirect)</b>				
<b>Anticipated start year of accounting</b>	2027			
<b>Duration of accounting</b>	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)
<b>Expected metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (direct)</b>				
<b>Expected metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (indirect)</b>				
<b>Anticipated start year of accounting</b>				
<b>Duration of accounting</b>				

**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)
<b>Target Energy Saved (MJ)</b>				

**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)

**Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments**

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

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

GEF CI 1. GEF Core Indicator 1, “Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management (hectare),” is estimated at 467,000 ha for this project. This figure corresponds to the total legally designated area of Hemis National Park and Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary, which together constitute the project’s two focal protected areas. Throughout the GBFF project, both sites will be brought under measurably improved management effectiveness for Snow Leopard and Tiger conservation, including: operationalization of Big Cat Monitoring Cells using SPAI (snow leopard) and AITE (tiger) protocols; strengthened patrolling and law-enforcement through M-STriPES smart patrolling; adaptive grazing management and reduction of free-grazing livestock in critical habitats; and targeted restoration of prey populations. These measures are expected to deliver at least a five-point increase in the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) scores for Hemis NP and Nandhaur WS, thereby qualifying the entire 467,000 ha of these protected areas as “under improved management” in line with GEF guidance.

GEF CI 4: GEF Core Indicator 4, “Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectare),” is estimated at 5,000 ha for this project. This value represents the extent of new Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) that will be formally established and placed under enhanced management in the Nubra Valley (Ladakh) and the wider Nandhaur landscape (Uttarakhand) outside the boundaries of Hemis National Park and Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary. Within these 5,000 ha, the project will secure long-term conservation and connectivity functions for Snow Leopard and Tiger habitats through: (i) legal and/or administrative recognition of OECMs; (ii) co-management arrangements with tribal people and local communities; and (iii) adoption of improved land-use practices such as regulated grazing, protection and restoration of prey habitats, and spatial planning that avoids habitat fragmentation. These non-PA landscapes will thus operate as climate-resilient ecological corridors that “stitch” Hemis NP and Nandhaur WS into a contiguous conservation network, directly contributing to India’s NBSAP targets on well-connected protected and conserved areas and delivering the project’s Global Environmental Benefit on “improved management of landscapes (non-PA) that benefit Big Cat conservation: 5,000 ha established under OECMs in Nubra Valley and Nandhaur landscape (CI 4.1).”

GEF CI 6: GEF Core Indicator 6, “Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated (metric ton of CO<sub>2</sub>e),” is estimated at 1,140,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>e for this project. This value is derived using FAO’s EX-ACT ex-ante carbon-balance tool, which compares a “without-project” baseline scenario to a “with-project” scenario over a 20-year accounting period and applies IPCC 2006 Tier 1 default emission factors for land-use and livestock systems. In the baseline, continued overstocking of high-altitude rangelands in Ladakh, growth in free-grazing herds, and ongoing forest degradation and land-use conversion in the Nandhaur landscape would maintain or increase

CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O emissions. Under the project scenario, improved management of 467,000 ha of Hemis National Park and Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary and 5,000 ha of new OECMs stabilizes forest cover and avoids further degradation, while adaptive grazing controls, Big Cat-Safe Herder Cooperatives and fodder banks deliver a 10–20% reduction in free-grazing livestock numbers in key pastures. EX-ACT modules for Forest, Grassland/Rangeland and Livestock/Manure are used to quantify (i) avoided emissions from prevented forest loss and degradation, (ii) increased carbon sequestration in recovering vegetation and soils, and (iii) reduced enteric and manure-related CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O emissions due to lower stocking rates and improved husbandry. Aggregating these differences between the with- and without-project scenarios across the full project area over the 20-year period yields a conservative net mitigation potential of at least 1.14 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e (CI 6.1) for the PEACE+ project.

GEF CI 11: GEF Core Indicator 11, “People benefiting from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex (count),” is estimated at a total of 5,000 direct individual beneficiaries, of whom 2,500 are male and 2,500 are female. This figure covers women and men from communities in and around Hemis National Park and the Nandhaur landscape, as well as key institutional stakeholders, who will receive concrete socio-economic or capacity-building benefits from the project. Direct benefits include: (i) reduced human–wildlife conflict and more predictable income flows for herder and farmer households through Big Cat-Safe Herder Cooperatives, insurance and compensation schemes; (ii) improved and diversified livelihoods from nature-positive ecotourism, homestays, guides and local supply chains; and (iii) enhanced technical skills and voice in decision-making for community leaders, youth, women’s groups, and frontline staff through targeted training on big cat conservation, climate-resilient land management, and financial literacy.

## ANNEX A: PROJECT FINANCING TABLES

### GEF Financing Table

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

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	GEF Project Grant(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total GEF Financing (\$)
UNDP	GBFF	India	Biodiversity	GBFF Action Area 1	1,303,200.00	123,804.00	1,427,004.00
UNDP	GBFF	India	Biodiversity	GBFF Action Area 2	604,000.00	57,380.00	661,380.00
UNDP	GBFF	India	Biodiversity	GBFF Action Area 3	400,700.00	38,067.00	438,767.00
UNDP	GBFF	India	Biodiversity	GBFF Action Area 4	331,827.00	31,522.00	363,349.00
<b>Total GEF Resources (\$)</b>					<b>2,639,727.00</b>	<b>250,773.00</b>	<b>2,890,500.00</b>

### Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Is Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount (\$)

100000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

9500

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	PPG (\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total PPG Funding(\$)
UNDP	GBFF	India	Biodiversity	GBFF Action Area 1	Grant	49,369.00	4,690.00	54,059.00
UNDP	GBFF	India	Biodiversity	GBFF Action Area 2	Grant	22,881.00	2,174.00	25,055.00
UNDP	GBFF	India	Biodiversity	GBFF Action Area 3	Grant	15,180.00	1,442.00	16,622.00
UNDP	GBFF	India	Biodiversity	GBFF Action Area 4	Grant	12,570.00	1,194.00	13,764.00
<b>Total PPG Amount (\$)</b>						<b>100,000.00</b>	<b>9,500.00</b>	<b>109,500.00</b>

Please provide justification

### Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

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

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

### Indicative Action Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Co-financing(\$)
GBFF Action Area 1	GBFF	1,303,200.00	

GBFF Action Area 2	GBFF	604,000.00	
GBFF Action Area 3	GBFF	400,700.00	
GBFF Action Area 4	GBFF	331,827.00	
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>2,639,727.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

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

Amount

905,049.00

**Indicative Co-financing**

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

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

**ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS**

**GEF Agency(ies) Certification**

GEF Agency Type	Name	Date	Project Contact Person	Phone	Email
GEF Agency Coordinator	Nancy Bennet	12/16/2025	Nancy Bennet		nancy.bennet@undp.org
Project Coordinator	Tashi Dorji	12/16/2025	Tashi Dorji		tashi.dorji@undp.org

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

Name	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
Tanvi Garg	Joint Secretary and GEF OFP India	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)	2/26/2026