

MID-TERM REVIEW

Project ID:	10236
Project Name:	Catalyzing Optimum Management of Nature Heritage for Sustainability of Ecosystem, Resources and Viability of Endangered Wildlife Species (CONSERVE)
Countr(ies):	Indonesia
Implementing Agency:	UNDP

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I. Overview

A. Description

Project name

Catalyzing Optimum Management of Nature Heritage for Sustainability of Ecosystem, Resources and Viability of Endangered Wildlife Species (CONSERVE)

Country

Indonesia

GEF ID

10236

Implementing Agency

UNDP

Executing Entity

Ministry of Environment and Forestry – DG of Natural Resources Conservation and Ecosystem (KSDAE)

Trust Fund

GET

Project Type

FSP

Objective

Strengthen management of multiple use landscapes to enhance biodiversity conservation, generate sustainable land-use and livelihood practices and address illegal wildlife trade.

B. Key Dates

CEO Endorsement/Approval

6/10/2021

Agency Approval

2/2/2022

Implementation Start

2/2/2022

First Disbursement

8/11/2022

Expected MTR

2/2/2025

MTR Submission

7/16/2025

Actual MTR

5/11/2025

Expected Completion

2/2/2028

II. PROGRESS STATUS AND ISSUES

A. Main MTR Findings

The project design is relevant, benefitted of full country ownership and has high degree of coherence and alignment with the relevant national conservation strategies and action plans, including with the GEF 7 Global

Wildlife Program framework. Lessons learned and experiences from other projects and programmes completed and/or ongoing in Indonesia were taken into account in the design. The results framework and the Theory of Change are solid. The environmental and social risks were comprehensively assessed and plans developed to assist implementation.

Implementation encountered delays in start-up, due to unexpected changes within the government on management of foreign grants, impacting the registration, setting up the accounts and hiring the PMU and RPIUs. Notwithstanding these, the project caught up and accelerated progress in the second year of implementation and it is currently on track to achieve its objective. The MTR reflects on this later in the report in the Lessons learnt on the Effectiveness of Full NIM.

While all the GEF core indicators at the objective level achieved their mid-term targets, more needs to be done to achieve the project's conservation outcomes, by: (i) bringing more land outside protected areas under conservation management, especially in Bengkulu-Lampung area (Recommendation 1); and (ii) improve the effectiveness of community patrols (Recommendation 2).

The key mechanisms for stakeholders participation identified during preparation, have not been established or are in incipient stage and not yet operationalized, such as the multi-stakeholder platform to manage each of the new wildlife corridors, known previously as KEE management forum; and the national Technical Advisory Committee, under the Project Board (Recommendation 3).

There is not enough evidence that the alternative livelihoods proposed and the investments in community empowerment and socio-economic development are aligned and linked to the reduction of the threats to biodiversity (Recommendation 4).

The MTR was unable to assess the impact of the project's investments in capacity development, as the government was not in agreement to use the UNDP Capacity Development scorecard as a metric, given it has its own performance tool, which while important across the government agencies, it assesses different categories of performance than the globally used Capacity Development scorecard, based on the gap analysis conducted by the project (Recommendation 5).

The risk monitoring and management exercised by the IP is not adequate for a High Risk project. While UNDP regularly updates its Risk Log in its own system and pays a special attention to High Risks projects, it is the IP which is the owner of the risk and responsible for risk monitoring and management. The key risk mitigation strategies involve the development of the relevant safeguard documents, which were not yet finalized by mid-term. The delays are due to recruiting appropriate expertise, as the IP's rules prohibit the hiring of international expertise. Even though a compromise solution has been reached and the documents are expected by the end of Q2, the absence of the safeguard instruments for three years of implementation, puts the project at risk and delayed the activities not supposed to be initiated until these instruments are in place (Recommendation 6).

The Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan is comprehensive, but lagging behind in implementation. As the gender action plan is separately presented in the Project Document and in the absence of appropriate expertise in the PMU and RPIU, this seemed to be relegated only to women participation (for which there are many examples) and not to empowerment and an improvement of income from alternative livelihoods designed by the project. Exception is the establishment of the innovative Kakatua Women Rangers Association in Moyo Satonda landscape, however even in this case, the training was not followed by equipping the women with the tools and facilities needed to exercise their new role. As the UNDP CO Indonesia is a recipient of the Gold Gender Seal for its exceptional activities on gender empowerment and this is a GEN 2 project, UNDP CO has the required expertise to provide training to the new members of the PM, once recruited and to the IP in general (Recommendation 7).

The IP has high level of ownership and provides good technical support. The PMU and RPIU staff is professional, hard-working and has solid expertise. The turnaround of National Project Managers, since the beginning of the project (two left so far and the IP is in the process of appointing the third), coupled with the non-recruitment in the PMU of two key specialist positions approved in the Project Document (the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist; and the Safeguards specialist) added more pressure and workload on the existing staff and led to some weaknesses, which, if not addressed might impede the successful delivery of the project objective. (Recommendation 8). The quality of oversight provided by UNDP (CO and Regional Center) has been excellent, ensuring the project is being carried out in accordance with agreed standards and provisions, despite significant challenges imposed by a full NIM. The Project Board has a good gender balance, the members are clear about their roles and responsibilities and actively participate in the meetings. The workplans should be more results-based and the adaptive management measures should be better documented and reported to the PB (Recommendation 9).

The reporting is detailed and thorough, but the lack of a full-time M&E specialist in the PMU, has taken its toll, as the project was not prepared with the MTR status for the results framework indicators, focused more on activities and not on results and missed planning for reaching end-ofproject targets (Recommendation 10).

The financial management system is solid, complex, but duplicative, resulting in long delays affecting the disbursements at the RPIU levels, which receive the funding for each quarter only in the last month of the quarter and struggle to complete activities, with unintended consequences on the quality of outputs. A new financial system is under development, to automate and streamline process and harmonize the budget categories used by IP and UNDP (Recommendation 11).

B. Stakeholder Engagement

The MTR team was impressed with the high-level of ownership and support to the project of the IP and the provincial and local level stakeholders. The project leveraged appropriate partnerships with stakeholders and has a strong stakeholder engagement plan, developed during the preparation stage. While the project made progress on communication and awareness, more attention should be given in the next three years to ensure contributions to reduction of the threats to biodiversity at the landscape level, and not only focusing on the three key threatened species.

C. Gender Equality

The project was assigned to UNDP Gender Marker 2 and benefits from the expertise of UNDP CO – Indonesia which has a GOLD Gender Seal. The gender action plan developed during the PPG (Annex 12 of the Project Document) is good and includes a separate set of dedicated indicators and targets. However, not all of these indicators are reflected in the project results-based framework, which is concerning, as they are consistently missed from the project planning and reporting. Out of 16 indicators, only three (1 – direct beneficiaries; 14 – income level; and 15 – level of awareness) are disaggregated by gender. There is a dedicated outcome on gender mainstreaming (Outcome 4), but the associated outputs and activities are mainly about the awareness level, and not gender equality and economic empowerment.

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The project has a strong Gender Action Plan and Custodian Community Framework, both developed during the project preparation. The targets listed under the Gender Action Plan have been reached for the Project Board, PMU, PIU Aceh and Consultants and are lagging behind in the PIUs of Bengkulu and Moyo. The second PIR reported that 6,336 individuals including 1,463 women have been involved so far and participated in various project activities. This data has been verified with BKSDA Aceh, particularly regarding the effectiveness of power fencing in Teunom and Panga sub-districts (Aceh Jaya District) and Glumpang Tiga sub-district (Pidie District). When validating the data at mid-term level, the MTR team has received the figures of 1250 direct beneficiaries (928 men and 322 women, including 110 women from the custodian communities), which although shows that the mid-term target has been reached and slightly exceeded, it is significantly lower than the figure reported in June 2024. Upon further discussions, it transpired that these MTR figures reflect the exact number of people who benefitted of training activities, capacity building, technical grant assistance, and those who have received goods/services directly during project interventions, while the higher figures reflected the total number of people benefitting directly from the project interventions, such as power fencing and tiger-proof enclosures, as they reduced human-wildlife conflict in the villages and hence avoided loss crops, livestock and income. Going forward, to avoid these “number” discrepancies, there is a need for a better understanding at the PMU and regional PIUs on direct versus indirect beneficiaries and a closer collection and monitoring of this data during all project interventions. The MTR believes that by recruiting the M&E specialist in the PMU and the community engagement specialists in the regional PIUs, as it was included in the approved Project Document and budget, should help accelerate the work on gender and community empowerment and development of alternative livelihoods, essential for ensuring the reduction of the key threats to biodiversity in the three project areas. All efforts need to be made in the second half of the project to the engagement and empowerment of women and custodian communities.

D. Knowledge Management

Internal communication has been regular and effective. The PMU and UNDP Country and Regional Offices are in regular contact. The PMU provides frequent updates to the NPD Communication between the PMU and the three PIUs at the landscape level is regular. The NPM, the PMU staff and the key experts associated with the project from the IP provide the three landscape sites with guidance remotely and through site visits.

The project's KM approach (Annex 13 of the Project Document), is being actively implemented. The communication strategy has been completed and will be upgraded based on the findings of the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices assessment conducted in all three landscapes. The project has engaged with the GWP coordination meetings and attended the annual meeting, where lessons learned were shared. The project has selected several highlight reports which can be published in posters form equipped with QR Codes, displayed in offices and socialized in environmental exhibitions/campaigns for easy-accessed public purposed.

The project established a web presence and is active on social media and has been actively uploading news and information through various media channels.

-Project website: <http://conserveindonesia.org/>

-Social media sites Instagram (@id.conserve): <https://www.instagram.com/id.conserve>

-CONSERVE Profile: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wXe3EGywgj2ajON3rlbrLwZ9LflKveKF/view>

Several best practices and innovations have been developed by CONSERVE Project, which need to be disseminated widely in Indonesia to improve the conservation outcomes and regionally and internationally via the GWP platform:

(i) Preparatory management of Moyo Satonda as a new National Park. Despite not yet having an independent management unit, and currently under the supervision of BKSDA NTB, significant progress has been made in preparing the park for effective management. Key documents prepared: long-term and medium-term management plans; legal zoning; ecotourism master plan still under preparation.

(ii) The formation of Kakatua Ranger Woman Association The formation of Kakatua Ranger Woman Association strengthened conservation efforts in the area, by empowering women to play a crucial role in conservation. Concerns remain though in the effectiveness of these patrols, given the lack of equipment and protocols.

(iii) A high-standard survey of the yellow-crested cockatoo population on Moyo Island. The survey utilized a rigorous methodology, where survey teams were deployed to all observation points simultaneously, ensuring accurate data collection and avoiding double counting. While this method may be challenging to apply in larger areas due to resource constraints, the project’s support made it possible on Moyo. The simultaneous recording of bird movements and encounter times allowed for precise predictions and minimized the risk of data errors.

(iv) SMART RBM Patrols implementation. The patrols have adopted a standardized method that is now widely recognized for its effectiveness. The project staff and BKSDA personnel have been thoroughly trained by experts under the guidance of the Directorate of Conservation Area Management. This method ensures that the patrols are conducted systematically, allowing for better monitoring and protection of wildlife.

(v) Replication of Tiger-Proof Enclosures (TPE) in Bengkulu. Initially implemented in Gajah Makmur village and Lubuk Talang village, these enclosures have proven to be highly effective in preventing tiger attacks on livestock. The successful replication of this initiative demonstrates its potential for broader application in areas facing similar challenges.

While the project has been active on communicating on social media, attending national and international meeting, conducting public awareness campaigns, during MTR consultations, stakeholder expressed concern that the project results, achievements and plans are not sufficiently known at the national and landscape level. A more targeted communication strategy is needed to reach out more remote areas and ensure that there is better awareness of the key threats facing biodiversity and not only the three key species targeted by the project. The illegal and unsustainable songbird trade is rampant in Indonesia and in the project sites (the “Asian Songbird Crisis”), due to the long-standing tradition of songbird keeping. One of the hotels used during the MTR mission, for example, had cages at the entrance with the endemic Sumatran laughingthrush – which is facing severe decline. Research has shown that many endemic Indonesian birds have been depleted from forests through decades of trapping in Sumatra and Java.

III. 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)
	81845	84245	

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)

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)
	81845	84245	

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)
Jantho NR	20931			15,436.00	15,436.00		33.00	76.00	
Jantho NRP	555635888			30,076.00	30,076.00		36.00	77.00	
Moyo NRP	101798			6,000.00	0.00		35.00	0.00	
Moyo Satonda National Park (replacing status of Moyo NRP and Moyo HP)	1931			22,600.00	31,000.00		27.00	59.00	
Seblat RP	555571193			7,733.00	7,733.00		36.00	74.00	

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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	740000	283981.14	

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)
	740,000.00	282,563.18	

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)
		1,417.96	

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

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

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

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

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

Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

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

Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female		1,350	1,463	
Male		3,150	4,873	
Total	0	4,500	6,336	0

IV: Co Financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Anticipated at CEO(\$)	Materialized at MTR(\$)
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment and Forests - Directorate General of Nature Resources, Conservation and Ecosystem (DG-KSDAE) and its National Directorates (KK, KKH and	Grant	Recurrent expenditures	46,000,000.00	7,615,780.00

	BPEE) and its 3 Provincial Natural Resources Conservation Agencies (BKSDAs)				
GEF Agency	UNDP	Grant	Recurrent expenditures	1,300,000.00	
Other	Sumbawa University of Technology	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,000,000.00	3,312,940.00
Other	Fauna and Flora International	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	700,526.00	543,943.00
Donor Agency	Multi-Partner Trust Fund (The Lion's Share)	Grant	Investment mobilized	2,000,000.00	
Other	Lion's Share	Grant	Investment mobilized		2,413,481.00
Total Co-financing				51,000,526.00	2,413,481.00

Comments

There are discrepancies between the cumulative total of cofinancing confirmed at CEO endorsement (USD 49,200,000) vs the one included in the signed Project Document (USD 51,000,526), mainly due to an increase of the contributions from the Government of Indonesia from USD 28.2 million to USD 46 million; a reduction in the NGO contributions from USD 2 million to USD 700,526; a new contributor in the UN MPTFO Lion Share of USD 2 million; and an increase from USD 1 million to 1.3 million from UNDP. By project mid-term (February 2025), materialized cofinancing was reported at USD 13,886,144, which is 27.2% of the amount confirmed at ProDoc (see Table 18). The cofinancing has been used strategically to advance the project objective. Going forward, the Project Team needs to organize regular meeting with all co-financing partners in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans and the ensure the cofinancing contributions are disbursed as per commitments made at CEO Endorsement.

V: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
	High or Substantial	High or Substantial	
	High or Substantial		

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

The risk rating for the project remains high and no additional risk has been identified since the project design. According to the UNDP-GEF guidance for M&E, the MTR has to assess the management measures against the version of UNDP's safeguards policy that was in effect at the time of the project's approval, which is the one with three categories of project rating: Low, Medium, High. The MTR team has been told that with the approval of the revised SESP guidance (Low, Medium, Substantial, High), the project risk's category will most probably be "Substantial". Regardless of the decision on its classification going forward, the project needed to prepare in its first year of implementation safeguard instruments, including the site-specific Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) to further assess potential risks and impacts due to project activities; and an Environmental and Social Management Plan(s) covering all the risks.

As the project has a 'High' risk rating it was decided in consultation with the Nature Hub's Safeguards Team to undertake first a scoping of the SESP and risk management measures. CONSERVE joined forces with another GEF – 7 financed UNDP project at early stage of implementation, facing the same issues. Following the scoping assessment, the procurement was initiated for an international safeguard expert to develop the full set of documents. The process has experienced significant delays, as the Implementing Partner cannot hire international consultants and the safeguards expertise in Indonesia is very limited. After the first unsuccessful recruitment, the IP has decided to hire three national consultants – a Chief Drafter, a Gender Specialist and an Environmental Impact Assessment specialist to develop these documents, with a significant support from the UNDP Regional Technical Advisor on Safeguards, based in Bangkok. The documents are at the third draft and have to integrate the last round of comments from the regional technical advisor on providing more detailed site-specific information. Following their approval, they have to be socialized and made public in all the project sites.

The Project Document states that "All project activities contributing to these risks will not commence until the assessments have been completed and the management plan(s) have been approved and put in place." Additionally, to avoid any potential for any likely impacts, the project needs to ensure social and environmental screening of all proposed investments to determine if there are any impacts. If the impacts are considered significant or cannot be managed by simple and practical mitigation measures that can be implemented within the capacity of the communities, these activities will be avoided. As the project already started implementing/supporting local community activities in the three landscapes, particular attention needs to be paid to the environmental and social screening procedures and no small grants should be given to any project which is of higher or of moderate risk. When impacts are easily manageable, the Project Management Unit (PMU) should include responsibilities for ensuring oversight for these measures and monitoring of implementation. Annually supervision missions need to assess the extent to which the risks have been identified and managed.

The GRM was set-up and socialized in 2023 across all landscapes. Additionally, PIU disseminates this information at the village level and among community groups participating in or interacting with the CONSERVE project. The GRM contact number is currently active at the PMU, but no reports have been received to date.

The MTR expresses the following concerns: (i) the safeguard documents are not yet finalized half the way through the implementation; (ii) low awareness of the importance of safeguards at the government level both national and regional levels; (iii) the project has not yet recruited the critical important full time positions approved in the Project Document: one safeguard specialist at PMU); and three community engagement specialists at the Regional PIUs; and (iv) some activities contributing to these risks have commenced despite the clear provision to wait until the assessments have been completed.

VI. ANNEX

Uploaded Document

Document Category
M and E Document

Title
MTR Indonesia (GEF 10236 / UNDP 6380)