



Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity to meet India's commitment to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets by 2030

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11423

Countries

India

Project Name

Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity to meet India's commitment to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets by 2030

Agencies

UNDP

Date received by PM

10/19/2023

Review completed by PM

4/25/2024

Program Manager

Naoko Nakagawa

Focal Area

Biodiversity

Project Type

FSP

GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF) REVIEW SHEET

1. General Project Information / Eligibility

a) Does the project meet the criteria for eligibility for GEF funding?

b) Is the General Project Information table correctly populated?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN May 9, 2024)

March 1a-iv) This correction is not yet made in the portal entry. Please correct at CEO endorsement.

Below needs to be Output 1.4: (page 10 of portal generated PIF, under Project Rationale)

state directives and coordination and governance mechanisms to apply the national policy on OECMs, because identification, notification and decision-making on OECMs rests at the State, Divisional and District levels. This will be addressed by **Output 1.3** that focuses on the development of an MRV system for OECMs and other conservation areas to assess the effectiveness of these conservation units. Implementation of OECMs and other conservation areas would be dependent on the availability of financial resources, which is the focus of Component 2 in identifying and applying financial solutions

(NN May 7, 2024)

i) Addressed.

ii) Addressed.

iii) Addressed.

March 1a-iv) This correction is not made in the portal entry. Please correct.

(NN April 23, 2024)

Thank you for updating ToC. However, there are some inconsistencies. Please address:

i) in the ToC, Component 2 item 1 is phrased as "finance pathways...implemented", which was revised as "finance pathways...tested" in Output 2.1 in the Project Overview table. Please harmonize.

ii) In the ToC, Component 3 item 2 contains "for cluster OECMs... in selected priority landscapes...". In Output 3.2 Project Overview table this is revised as "for cluster OECMs... within priority landscapes...". Please harmonize.

iii) In the ToC, Component 4 item 2 still contains 'replication and scaling up...' which was removed from the Project Overview table but still shown in the ToC. Please remove this from ToC so it is harmonized.

March 1a-i) Addressed.

- BD 3-1 is now also removed from Annex A Indicative Focal Area Elements Table.
- Component 2, the reference to local level processes is revised to national level, as requested.

March 1a-iv) Correction needed. If Output 1.4 is the correct reference to MRV, then, please revise the section in the PIF under "An approach to scale up..." (portal pdf PIF page 10, please see below pasted.), which still refers to Output 1.3 in reference to MRV.

State directives and coordination and governance mechanisms to apply the national policy on OECMs, because the function of identification, notification and decision-making on OECMs rests at the State, Divisional and District levels. This will be complemented by **Output 1.3 that focuses on the development of an MRV** system for OECMs and other conservation areas to assess management effectiveness of these conservation units. Implementation of OECMs and other conservation areas would be contingent on availability of financial resources, which is the focus of Component 2 in identifying and applying financial solutions emanating from the BIOFIN and BFP exercise in India. The BIOFIN exercise 2 and BFP will be aligned with the new NBSAP. The effectiveness of the efforts to promote OECMs and other conservation areas that will be assessed through the information architecture to support reporting and assessments of effectiveness of conservation outcomes (Output 4.3) that will provide the learning and experience to promote scaling up of OECMs and other conservation areas in other parts of the country as part of a national effort to meet the GBF 30x30 target. The project's focus on OECMs and other conservation areas will thus be national driven and part of an integrated approach (to ensure a more holistic national policy, finance, and MRV framework for public PAs. By integrating OECMs and other

4/5/2024

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(NN March 2024)

The ToC revision remains minimal and also contains previously indicated Project Objective, which was revised in other parts of the PIF. Please revise to make the ToC to be project specific, and maintain consistency throughout the PIF.

1a-i)

Addressed:

- BD 3-1 is removed from Section C.

Not yet addressed:

- BD 3-1 is removed from Section C, however, in the Indicative Focal Area Elements table in Annex A, BD 3-1 is still present. Please remove BD-3-1 and rectify the financing breakdown accordingly.

- Component 2 still includes local level processes (page 24 of portal-generated pdf file). Please revise it to national levels.

Component 2: Financing and incentives for establishing and operationalizing OECMs and other community and private sector conservation areas in the country applied

Financing and incentives for establishing OECMs and other community and private sector conservation areas in the country applied

(Total Cost: USD 4,569,941; GEF project grant requested: USD 569,941; Co-financing: USD 4,000,000)

Building on the findings of BIOFIN work in India (refer Annex J), the intent under Component 2 is to identify financial instruments and their implementation mechanisms for promotion of OECMs and community and private sector managed conservation areas that could be applied at the local institutional levels with institutional entities that have a clear mandate on biodiversity and a demonstrable role in biodiversity finance. The Biodiversity Finance Plan identifies a mix of twelve potential replicable and scalable financial solutions (e.g. corporate social responsibility

1a-ii) Addressed.

1a-iii) Addressed: current PA baseline provided; justification provided for its focus on terrestrial ecosystems; and approaches to identification of OECMs within coastal and marine environments included.

1a-iv) The overall response and additional description under "An approach to scale up to meet global targets" addressed the comment. However, there are some inconsistency between review sheet response and the actual PIF revision under "An approach to scale up to meet global targets", under which Output 1.3 is indicated as focusing on MRV, but such activity might actually be Output 1.4 according to the subsequent PIF sections and review sheet response. Please revise to maintain consistency.

(NN/JS Dec 2023)

a)

We welcome the submission of a project proposal to support India's implementation of Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) Target 3.

However, the project is not fully aligned with the GEF-8 Biodiversity (BD) Focal area strategy and needs significant improvements.

A significant portion of the project description, including the majority of the Theory of Change (ToC) and its diagram, is identical to another GEF-8 PIF (11116 ? Sri Lanka) by the same Agency, whereas the countries and project objectives are different. Please significantly

revise this PIF to ensure that it is tailored to the specific context of India and the objective of the project.

1a-i) The proposed project, through Component 2, is planning to program resources under the BD 3-1 ?Development of domestic resource mobilization/biodiversity finance plans? entry point of the GEF-8 BD Focal Area strategy. This entry point is meant to support national-level processes to develop and adopt national domestic resource mobilization (DRM) plans that set out a coherent and comprehensive national approach to DRM for biodiversity. However, Component 2 is proposing to use GEF funding to carry out these processes at the local level. Given that India has already developed its first Biodiversity Finance Plan and is currently going through a second phase of BIOFIN support, please revise Component 2 so that it is fully dedicated to the implementation of the finance solutions identified in the national biodiversity finance process. Accordingly, please fully align Component 2 with the BD-3-2 entry point (Implementation of domestic resource mobilization/biodiversity finance plans) and most notably, remove Output 2.1 related to BIOFIN process at the local scale, and remove alignment with the BD-3-1 entry point. We further note that the piloting of BIOFIN process at the local scale is already piloted in India through a GEF-7 project.

1a-ii) Please include the presence of biodiversity of global significance as an explicit criterion for the choice of priority landscapes and seascapes to be supported by GEF funding.

1a-iii) The project is almost entirely dedicated to terrestrial ecosystems, while our understanding is that India, like most countries, is further away from GBF Target 3 in the marine realm. Please provide in the revised PIF the baseline PA and OECM coverage of both (i) terrestrial and inland waters, and (ii) marine and coastal areas in India. Please also explain in the revised PIF how the project will support the achievement of GBF Target 3 in the marine realm and consider revising the design and choice of target geographies to that effect, or thoroughly justify the focus on terrestrial ecosystems.

1a-iv) The proposed project claims to support India in its implementation of GBF Target 3 through interventions targeting a specific type of PAs (community and private conservation areas) and OECMs. Given the relative novelty of OECMs, several outputs are understandably entirely focused on OECMs. However, how the interventions focused on OECMs and community and private PAs fit into and will contribute to a coherent overall conservation framework to achieve GBF Target 3 is not clear. Please explain in the revised PIF how Outputs 1.2 (OECM policy and Council), 1.4 (MRV for OECM and private and community PAs), 4.3 (information architecture) and Component 2 (finance for OECM and private and community PAs) contribute to a coherent national framework that build synergies with the policy, finance, and MRV framework for public PAs.

b) Yes.

Agency's Comments

9 May 2024

Thank you for the comment.

March 1a-iv) The correction is made in the portal.

7 May 2024

Thank you for the comments

i) in the ToC, Component 2 item 1 is now phrased as "finance pathways...tested? to harmonize with Output 2.1 in the Project Overview table.

ii) In the ToC, Component 3 item 2 is now revised as "for cluster OECMs... within selected priority landscapes...". to harmonize with Output 3.2 in Project Overview table

iii) In the ToC, Component 4 item 2 is now revised as "Long-term sustainability strategy/plan developed; communication and knowledge shared and exchanged on approaches for OECMs and other community and private conservation initiatives" to harmonize with Output 4.2 of Project Overview table

March 1a-iv). The reference to Output 1.3 highlighted in yellow in the comment has been changed to Output 1.4 so as to make the correct reference to MRV in the sentence highlighted. This will be complemented by Output 1.4 that focuses on the development of an MRV system.

5 April 2024

The ToC has been revised to (i) update project objective as per the Indicative Project Overview Table, (ii) be specific to the India context (and specific to the project) and (iii) ensure consistency throughout the PIF

1a-i) While BD 3-1 has been removed from Section C, it is now addressed in Annex A in the Portal

-Component 2: The reference to local level processes is now revised to reflect ?national level?

1a-IV) Thank you for this comment. The response to the approach to scale up to meet global targets was erroneously mentioned in the previous response to GEFSEC comments as Output 1.3. The focus on MRV refers to Output 1.4 (and not Output 1.3) as reflected in the PIF

7 February 2024

Thank you for the comments.

In terms of the ToC, this has been revised to be project specific.

The project is now aligned with *BD-1-1: Financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of protected area systems*; . *BD 1-4, the project will focus on mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into priority sectors* *BD 3: To increase mobilization of domestic resources for biodiversity, namely BD 3-2* .

1a-i) This is revised to exclusively reflect the implementation of finance solutions identified through the national biodiversity finance process. Output 2.1 (BIOFIN process at local level) in the previous submitted PIF has been removed and the Component 2 will now focus specifically on implementation of BFP solutions for promotion of OECMs and other categories of conservation areas. Hence the entry point is characterized as BD 3-2.

In terms of the baseline, BIOFIN in phase 1 developed a country- specific methodology for assessing the biodiversity expenditures, financial needs assessment as well as the program and institutional review which culminated in the preparation of India?s first BFP in May 2019. In the second phase, further scoping was done to estimate the financing potential of sectors agriculture, Corporate Social Responsibility and Access and Benefit Sharing. Currently these financial solutions are being piloted in the State of Telangana which will need to be scaled up, in the light of KMGBF targets 18 and 19. In the GEF 7 Biodiversity project, which is yet to begin, National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) is pioneering integration of biodiversity considerations in decentralized development plans. Here, the BIOFIN methodology will be piloted at the local level and biodiversity finance plan will be prepared and linked to these biodiversity - friendly local development plans in two biodiversity hotspots in Tamil Nadu

and Meghalaya. However, in the proposed GEF 8 supported OECM project, NBA intends to work with corporates to operationalize the Corporate Social Responsibility and use it as an innovative financial solution to support OECMs for strengthening their management effectiveness and long term sustainability.

It is worth recognizing that BIOFIN methodology is piloted at different levels for resource mobilization using different financial solutions such as mainstreaming, CSR, ABS, FINTECH and TNFD in BIOFIN phase 1 and the GEF 7 project. In GEF 8, GOI is proposing the demonstration and mobilization of resources through the CSR finance solution for the first time for OECMs, which cut across different categories such as biodiversity parks, wetlands, private forests and sanctuaries, industrial green belts, village common lands, urban forest, etc. it is a unique initiative and being done for the first time in India.

1a-ii) This has been included as a criterion. In this regard, the project will use the ten recognized biogeographic zones^[1] within the country (based on the distribution of species, organisms and ecosystems in geographic space and through geological time) as the starting point for prioritizing landscapes/regions for mapping, identification and allocating OECMs and community and privately managed conservation areas, so that these are then conceived and recognized as entities that can contribute to the overall conservation outcomes at a landscape level for each biogeographic zone.

1a-iii) The baseline for PA coverage is provided in tabular form. However, it is currently difficult to separate out inland waters PAs and coastal areas PAs from the Protected Areas estate. In terms of OECMs, while the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change (MOEFCC) has identified Criteria and Guidelines for Identifying OECMs (May 2022) and identified 14 categories of OECMs (Table 2) there is yet no formal national policy, directives and procedures to support recognition of OECMs as integral part of the national biodiversity conservation network. As a consequence, there are no formally declared OECMs in the country (refer UNEP-WCMC World Database on Protected Areas). The project intends through Output 1.1 to formally provide national recognition of OECMs through national policy on OECMs and government political commitment to its 30x30 GBF targets to enable buy-in and support at different national and sub-national levels (state, district and panchayat levels). Overall, this will help to also align OECMs with the country's existing protected area legislation, policy and implementation framework. In addition to national directives related to OECM, the intent is to provide clear guidelines and procedures for identification, mapping, allocation and management of OECMs and assessing their management effectiveness, that will include the review and update of existing criteria for OECMs^[2], to include additional categories and promote a more robust approach for the identification of OECMs within the

coastal and marine environments. Given that India has still not established a single OECM, the intent is to focus largely on the terrestrial ecosystems, but also given India's interest in promotion of OECMs in the marine ecosystems, a single marine site will be selected to be included with the anticipation to achieve around 50,000 ha of marine OECMs. This will be further evaluated at PPG stage.

1a-iv) The new NBSAP that is under preparation will be the main vehicle for national engagements towards GBF Target 3 (in particular through aligning the new NBSAP with the GBF targets). To facilitate this and to ensure stronger involvement of local communities and private sector a national framework that recognizes OECMs as integral part of the country's conservation network is required. This will involve OECM policy development, improved criteria for identification of OECMs, in particular to ensure that they are better representative of inland waters and marine environments and areas that are under-represented in the protected area network, as well as to ensure improved connectivity between biodiversity rich areas and habitats within landscapes and seascapes. To obtain this would require a coherent effort at the national level that would be supported by identification, creation, management and monitoring of OECMs and other conservation areas at the local level, which in turn would contribute to a more holistic national policy, finance, and MRV framework for public PAs, compared to the current baseline. In this regard, the project would focus on the following actions: Output 1.1 to develop national policy, directives, and procedures to support national recognition of OECMs and other community and private conservation areas to ensure a more embracing community and private sector engagement in conservation; Output 1.2 that would be complementary to Output 1.1 to develop State and Sub-State directives and coordination and governance mechanisms to apply the national policy on OECMs, because the function of identification, notification and decision-making on OECMs rests at the State, Divisional and District levels. This will be complemented by Output 1.4 that focuses on the development of an MRV system for OECMs and other conservation areas to assess management effectiveness of these conservation units. Implementation of OECMs and other conservation areas would be contingent on availability of financial resources, which is the focus of Component 2 in identifying and applying financial solutions emanating from the BIOFIN and BFP exercise in India, in particular through Corporate Social Responsibility programs from the private sector. The BIOFIN exercise 2 and BFP will be aligned with the new NBSAP. The effectiveness of the efforts to promote OECMs and other conservation areas that will be assessed through the information architecture to support reporting and assessments of effectiveness of conservation outcomes (Output 4.3) that will provide the learning and experience to promote scaling up of OECMs and other conservation areas in other parts of the country as part of a national effort to meet the GBF 30x30 target (this is elaborated in Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.4 and 4.3 and Component 2). The project's focus on OECMs and other conservation areas will thus be national driven and part of an integrated approach (to ensure a more holistic national policy, finance, and MRV framework for public PAs. By integrating OECMs and other conservation areas into the national policy, finance, and MRV framework for public PAs it will thereby provide an important contribution which will

strengthen the ability to preserve important biodiversity (species and ecosystems etc.) in the long term.

[1] Rodgers, W.A. and Panwar, H.S. Planning a Wildlife Protected Area Network for India. Wildlife Institute of India (1988) and include the Trans Himalayan zone, Himalayan zone, Desert zone, Semiarid zone, Western Ghat zone, Deccan Plateau zone, Gangetic Plain zone, North East zone, Coastal zone and Islands.

[2] Criteria and guidelines for identifying Other Effective Area Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in India (may 2022)

2. Project Summary

Does the project summary concisely describe the problem to be addressed, the project objective and the strategies to deliver the GEBs or adaptation benefits and other key expected results?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN May 7, 2024)

Addressed.

(NN April 23, 2024)

March 2-ii) is not responded. Please respond and correct as appropriate.

(NN March 2024)

2-i) Addressed.

2-ii) Rewilding is revised to restoration as requested. However, in the response sheet, the indication is made to indicator i.(b). Is this meant to be Component 3 indicator ii.(b)?

2-iii) Addressed.

(NN/JS Dec 2023)

2-i) The summary does not convey how the project objective will be achieved. Please include. Please consider reducing the description of the context and problem to be addressed to make space for the 'how'.

2-ii) On the sentence 'rewilding of forests and other habitats with the intent of enhancing connectivity of 5,000 hectares', please: either define in the revised PIF what rewilding means in the context of this project or consider using the term 'restoration'.

2-iii) Please correct to clarify that it is restoration that would occur over 5,000 hectares in order to enhance connectivity at a much larger, landscape scale. The sentence currently means that the intent is to restore connectivity at a 5,000 ha scale.

Agency's Comments

7 May 2024

Thank you for the comment.

March 2-ii) On the issue of whether the reference under outcome 3 in the Indicative Project Overview relates to point i) or ii) it is confirmed that it relates to point ii) i.e. (ii) Management planning strategies developed and approved for clusters of OECMs and PAs and under implementation Including, (a) conservation of biodiversity; (b) restoration of 5,000 hectares of degraded forest lands; (c) sustainable harvest protocols for at least 5 forest plant species; and (d) monitoring protocols for at least 5 species, habitats and ecosystems.

7 February 2024

Thank you for these comments.

2-i) The summary is revised to provide discussion on key actions to achieve the desired project objective

2-ii) This has been revised to 'restoration'.

2-iii) Agreed, the sentence has been revised to clearly state that restoration will take place to cover 5,000 hectares

3 Indicative Project Overview

3.1 a) Is the project objective presented as a concise statement and clear?

b) Are the components, outcomes and outputs sound, appropriate and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objective and the core indicators per the stated Theory of Change?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN May 7, 2024)

March 3.1 b-i) Addressed.

Dec 2023 (iv) Addressed.

Dec 2023 (ix) Addressed.

(NN April 23, 2024)

March 3.1 a) Addressed.

March 3.1 b-i) The revised PIF does not quite have the indicated correction made according to the review sheet response. Please check and correct or explain. The revised PIF just removed the reference, rather than correcting the reference.

Dec 2023 (i) Addressed.

Dec 2023 (iv) Not yet addressed. Please use the wording "increased management effectiveness" clearly within Component 3.

Dec 2023 (v) Addressed.

Dec 2023 (vi) Addressed.

Dec 2023 (ix) For consistency, please address March 3-1 b-i) above.

Dec 2023 (x) Addressed.

(NN March 2024)

3.1 a) The Project Objective under Indicative Project Overview is updated. However, the previous phrasing of the objective is still present in the ToC. Please revise.

3.1 b)

March 2024 review item

i) Output 3.1 in the revised PIF makes reference to Output (1.3 and) 2.2, which is unchanged since the first version of the PIF. However, since Component 2 Outputs were revised and have removed the previous Output 2.1 (out of Outputs 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3), now the reference under Output 3.1 under the revised PIF should be the revised Output 2.1 (which is previously 2.2)? Please check, update and maintain consistency.

Dec 2023 review items

i) The grammatically incorrect formulation of Component 3 and Outcome 3 is not yet revised. Please revise to make it more concise and grammatically correct.

ii) Addressed: Component 1 language is revised.

iii) Addressed: Component 2 language is revised.

iv) It is unclear where the emphasis on management effectiveness is included in Component 3 as per review sheet response. Please clarify where exactly it is revised.

v) Outcome 1 is rephased as an outcome in the project component table and Outcome 1 narrative, however, this revision is not reflected in the ToC. Please revise and maintain consistency.

vi) Outcome 3 removed elements of scale-up, while Outcome 4 remains the same as original and still contains scale-up and replication elements. Scaling up and replication should be another standalone outcome. If it is not feasible, suggest removing the elements of scale-up and replication, or otherwise please define more precisely the scope of scale-up and replication realistically achievable within the proposed project's scope.

vii) Addressed: Output 2.2 (previously 2.3) has been rephrased as an output.

viii) Addressed.

ix) Please address inconsistency noted above and throughout the PIF.

x) The Outcome 2 in the narratives (page 25 of portal-generated pdf PIF) "Increased public and private sector financing to implement local actions for management of OECMs and other community and privately managed." appears to be missing 'conservation areas' after 'other community and privately managed'. Please correct.

(NN/JS/HF Dec 2023)

3.1 a)

Please rephrase the Project Objective to better reflect the objective of the proposed project in a more concise and clearer presentation.

3.1 b)

i) Please rephrase the Component titles to be more concise and clearer. Currently all the Component titles are too long and confusingly formulated. Please correct grammatically incorrect formulations (e.g., 'ecologically representativeness' in Component 1 and 3).

ii) Please refine the Component 1 language so that it is logically justified, e.g., 'ecological representativeness of PA and OECM networks' can indeed be improved, however, ecological representativeness cannot be 'strengthened in landscapes' (as in Component 1).

iii) Please refine the Component 2 language. It should be doing more than just 'supporting the promotion' of OECMs.

iv) Please include language and emphasis on 'increased management effectiveness' within Component 3.

v) Please refine Outcome 1 'Policy' directives, governance and institutional arrangements to support conservation through [?]?'. It is not formulated as an outcome and is not clear.

vi) Please redefine Outcome 3 and 4. Both Outcomes contain elements of scale-up and replication, which should be a separate outcome.

vii) Please refine Output 2.3 'Institutional and technical capacities of key stakeholders strengthened?', which is not formulated properly as an output but reads like an outcome.

viii) Please reformulate Output 3.4 to convey what the project will do in concrete terms to improve collaboration.

ix) Please refine and clarify the logical framework so that they are consistent with outcomes and outputs.

Agency's Comments

7 May 2024

Thank you for the comments.

3.1 b-1) As suggested we have revised the Component titles to make them concise from the December resubmission. In terms of Component 1, this is now focused on the enabling conditions to strengthen the conservation network, that will use specific criteria for identifying and promoting OECMs. Ecological representatives are not specifically included in the Component title as it could use other criteria that are not mentioned, and is likely to increase in the length of the title of Component 1. In terms of Component 3, we have revised as per your suggestion to include 'management effectiveness as this is what is intended rather than increasing the area of the conservation estate?

3.1 b-iv). The wording increased management effectiveness has been added to the title of Component 3

The above should also address the Dec 2023 (ix) comment.

5 April 2024

3.1 a) The project objective has been revised in the updated ToC

3.1 b) (i) Reference corrected to Outputs 1.3 and 2.1

3.1.b) (i) Component 3 and Outcome 3 titles have been revised to ensure these are grammatically correct.

3.1.b) iv Component 3 title revised to 'Increased coverage of conservation areas to meet India's obligations to KM-GBF Target 30x30'. This now clearly reflects the coverage of conservation area and the indicator measure the management effectiveness of OECMs by developing customized and practical management effectiveness tool.

3.1.b) (v) Outcome 1 is rephrased and incorporated in the ToC

3.1.b) (vi) Outcome 4 and Output 4.2 has been revised to specifically detail that the project will help develop a scaling up strategy building on the learning and lessons emanating from the project that will help India scale-up, during the post-project period, the promotion of OECMs and other conservation areas through non-GEF funding, including in particular national and state-level funding. This is now reflected in the revised narrative under Output 4.2 and not as a separate Outcome

3.1.b) (ix) Inconsistency addressed throughout document

3.1.b) (x) conservation areas added

7 February 2024

Thank you for the comment.

3.1.a) The project objective has been revised

3.i b)

i) The Components titles have been rephrased and grammatically incorrect statements have been corrected

ii) revised accordingly

iii) revised accordingly

iv) emphasis on 'increased management effectiveness' now included

v) Reformulated as an outcome

vi) Outcomes 3 and 4 have been revised to remove overlap

vii) Output 2.3 (now 2.2) reformulated as an output

viii) Output 3.4 has been updated to reflect specific actions will be supported to improve collaboration in nature-based community enterprise ventures. These will be further assessed and elaborated at PPG stage.

ix) Updated to ensure consistency with changes undertaken from (i) through (viii) above

3.2 Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation included within the project components and appropriately funded?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN April 23, 2024)

iii) Addressed.

(NN March 2024)

a) Revision remained minimal, however, acceptable at PIF stage. Please further strengthen during PPG phase and at CEO endorsement request.

ii) Some additional gender aspects are integrated and are acceptable at PIF stage. As per the agency response, please develop a gender analysis and mainstreaming action plans, relevant gender pertinent indicators and budget at the time of CEO endorsement.

iii) Under Output 2.1, the revision includes a paragraph, "Based on past experiences with BIOFIN in India, gender participation has been promoted through policy...", which is phrased as if it is background information while not articulating how the project output will relate to such. Please articulate in the revision.

(NN/VACL Dec 2023)

a) Please strengthen the knowledge sharing and M&E components descriptions by CEO endorsement request.

ii) Please briefly indicate how gender dimension will be funded in the revised PIF, and articulate it by CEO endorsement request.

iii) Agency is requested to reflect gender equality considerations in relevant outputs of Outcome 2 in the revised PIF.

Agency's Comments

5 April 2024

Comments are well noted.

iii) This is now reflected under output 2.1, that the project will apply results from BIOFIN gender mainstreaming guidance.

7 February 2024

a) Agreed, the KM and M&E components have been revised and will be further updated at PPG stage.

ii). Gender aspects are better integrated now in Components, Outcomes and Outputs. A gender analysis and mainstreaming action plan will be developed at PPG stage, with identified actions, indicators and budget provided for enhancing women's participation in project decision-making bodies, project design and implementation and benefit sharing./. Specific training and technical support will be provided to enhance women's capacity to participate in project design, implementation and monitoring and specific investments will be identified for women.

iii) Outcome 2 and its relevant outputs have been revised to provide a gender focus as well as provide a new annex on how integration of gender dimensions has been recognized in the BIOFIN financial solutions

3.3 a) Are the components adequately funded?

b) Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?

c) Is the PMC equal to or below 5% of the total GEF grant for FSPs or 10% for MSPs? If the requested PMC is above the caps, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN/JS Dec 2023)

a) Yes.

b) Yes.

c) Yes.

Agency's Comments

4 Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

4.1 SITUATION ANALYSIS

a) is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key contextual drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective?

b) Are the key barriers and enablers identified?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN March 2024)

a-i) Addressed.

a-ii) PA coverage in India provided, with a note that it is currently difficult to separate out inland waters and coastal areas PAs and OECMs. Acceptable at PIF stage. Please do work on separating out inland waters and coastal area PAs and OECMs during PPG and eventual project implementation.

a-iii) Addressed.

a-iv) Addressed: confirmation with verbal clarification with Wildlife Institute of India provided.

b-i) Addressed.

b-ii) Addressed.

(NN/JS Dec 2023)

a)

a-i) Please elaborate the description, "recognizing the immense pressure on existing PAs", whereas the PIF does not describe clearly what kind of pressure it is and why.

a-ii) Please clarify the baseline in India with respect to PA and OECM coverage of both (1) terrestrial and inland waters, and (2) marine and coastal areas.

a-iii) Please clarify the baseline related to BIOFIN and development of Biodiversity Finance Plan (BFP) in India. India already published its first BFP in 2019 and we understand a second tranche of work is on-going. Please explain and ensure the revised PIF demonstrates more precisely how its finance work would build on this baseline.

a-iv) Please explain and justify the relevance of Rodgers, W.A. and Panwar, H. (1988), used as a reference of the ten recognized biogeographic zones in India, quoted in this PIF, whether it is still relevant in the current context in 2023/2024.

b)

b-i) In the Project Rationale section, Barrier 2 and 5 are overlapping, containing duplicate sentences (e.g., 'business can close the biodiversity funding gap in India....?'). Please consolidate and streamline.

b-ii) In the Project Description, four barriers are described. These four barriers do not match with the previously stated five barriers under Project Rationale. Please streamline and ensure consistency.

Agency's Comments

5 April 2024

Comments are well noted and will be addressed during the PPG.

7 February 2024

Thank you for the comments.

a)

a-i) The reference to types of pressures is now provided

a-ii) This is now provided in new Table 1

a-iii) In terms of the baseline regarding BIOFIN, the BFP developed in 2019 currently offers 12 finance solutions. However, with the new opportunities that the GOI has identified, including financing for protected areas and OECMs, there is very little Corporate funds flowing towards biodiversity conservation but with some capacity

development and sensitization, there is a potential to direct more funds towards conservation.

Presently, India as a Party to the CBD is updating its NBSAP and is also in the process of making national biodiversity targets aligned with the KMGBF. During the national and regional consultations, Target 3 is emerging as a central piece of NBSAP. GOI is of the view that Target 3 is achievable considering that they are able to mobilize resources through innovative financing mechanism such as Corporate Social Responsibility. Also, in order to fulfill this commitment to Target 3, India has joined the high ambition coalition (30X30) in the year 2021. In the proposed GEF 8 project, NBA intends to build on the work done under BIOFIN assessments in India in the first two phases. In GEF 8, OECM project, NBA intends to develop policy and directives and review and revise the guidelines developed by MOEFCC related to OECMs in India, help identify and map, recognize and operationalize OECMs to meet Target 3. In order to do this, NBA would work with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs to amend their schedule of activities to include biodiversity conservation as one of the main thrust areas; and work with corporates to support strengthening OECMs.

a-iv) The Wildlife Institute of India (WII) has clarified that the Rodgers, W.A. and Panwar, H. (1988) classification of biogeographic zones in India is still relevant in the current context. There has been more recent effort to update or revise this classification.

b)

b-i) Thank you for recognizing the overlap between barrier 2 and 5. Barrier 2 now focuses on the lack of private sector investment and financing for conservation actions, while barrier 5 focuses on lack of capacity and awareness on conservation needs.

b-ii) Thank you for noting this. This has been rectified to 5 barriers and consistency ensured across the ?barrier? section and ToC

4.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT

a) Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?

b) Does it ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers?

c) Is there a description of how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments (GEF and non-GEF), lessons and experiences in the country/region?

d) are the relevant stakeholders and their roles adequately described?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN April 23, 2024)

b-i) Addressed.

b-ii) Addressed: reference to "investment risk" has been deleted and rephrased as uncertain future financial situation.

b-iii) Addressed.

b-iii) Addressed. Indication of OECM corrected in Narrative 2.

(NN March 2023)

b-i) Thank you for attempting to improve this section. It is on track, however, it still requires improvement. Please revise to improve the descriptions that heavily use long, complex and confusing sentences in this section overall. In particular, the first paragraph starting with "Although, there has been some recent practice in promotion of integrated and coordinated approaches to the planning and management of landscapes and seascapes, in particular through the projects, it is not recognized as an implicit priority at national or state levels that might constrain the desire to establish new biological valuable categories of conservation areas..." is overly complex. Please make clear and concise descriptions.

b-ii) It is unclear what "an investment risk" is under External Driver 2. Please make it clear what specifically this investment is about.

b-iii) The paragraph starting with "The baseline scenario in the absence of a GEF intervention would be the slow enunciation of policies and governance with weak capacity and finances for enhancing the conservation network..." appears to have factual errors repeating words, i.e., "A set of future narratives are therefore framed around lower or higher lower or higher growth in the economy ..." Please correct.

b-iii) Narrative 2 contains OPECMs, which might be meant to be OECMs. Please correct.

c) Addressed. HAC is included in Table 4.

(NN/JS Dec 2023)

a) Yes.

b) Thank you for attempting to develop narratives for plausible futures. However, the link between the 4 external drivers of change and the 3 scenarios is unclear and it is not obvious how the scenarios developed can inform the project design to promote its robustness. As suggested by STAP, simple narratives are meant to describe a small set of plausible futures of major drivers outside the project's control and assess their implications for project design. They are neither meant to describe the increment provided by the project (i.e. scenarios with or without project) nor to describe differences in project impact (scenario 2 vs 3). Please refer to the dedicated STAP brief and the more detailed primer

(<https://stapgef.org/resources/advisory-documents/simple-future-narratives-brief-and-primer>) and revise.

c) Please include High Ambition Coalition in the list of Table 3: Complementarity with existing Projects and Programs.

d) Yes.

Agency's Comments

5 April 2024

Thank you for the comments

b-i) As suggested, the descriptions, as well as others, have been revised to keep it concise and provide more clarity.

b-ii) ?investment risk? under driver 2 refers to the uncertain future economic situation in the country. However the last sentence in the ?External Driver 2? paragraph has been revised and the reference to ?investment risk? has been deleted.

b-iii) This is now corrected to refer to ?future narratives being framed around the growth in the economy and government commitment to strengthened policy and governance? that lead into the discussion on ?narratives?

b-iii) this is now corrected to OECM in narrative 2

7 February 2024

a) NA

b) This is revised to reflect better clarity of the narratives for plausible futures.

c) High Ambition Coalition reference added to Table 4

d) NA

5 B. Project Description

5.1 THEORY OF CHANGE

a) Is there a concise theory of change that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements will contribute to the objective, the expected causal pathways, and the key assumptions underlying these?

b) Are the key outputs of each component defined (where possible)?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN May 7, 2024)

b-ii) Addressed.

b-v) Addressed.

(NN April 23, 2024)

a-i) Addressed.

b-ii) Not addressed. Please refer to point 3.1 (b-i) above.

b-iii) Addressed, thank you for additional clarity in wording.

b-v) Thank you for the edit. To be very clear that the generic livelihood development intervention is not supported by GEF funding, please take out "(e) improving livelihoods of local communities including specific investments for women and IPs" where indicative project activities are listed from (a) to (e). Please also correct the order of numbering as these items go from (a) to (e) then again (c).

Output 3.3: Implementation of key priorities for cluster OECMs and community managed conservation areas in selected priority landscapes/seascapes

On the basis of the cluster management planning defined in Output 3.2, key activities to be undertaken (either collectively between the individual land owners or individually) will be defined (including the specific activity and spatial distribution of activities). While, the specific activities to be undertaken by the cluster management units, broadly these might fall in these broad range of activities: (a) recovery/restoration of species and habitats; (b) improving protection and conservation of species and habitats; (c) establishing and implementing sustainable harvest protocols; (d) implementing monitoring protocols; (e) improving livelihoods of local communities, including special measures for women and IPs; (f) developing survey and monitoring protocols; and other measures arising from the cluster management planning process. Special efforts will be made to

b-vi) Addressed.

(NN March 2024)

a-i) Figure 1 ToC, Outcome 4 box is missing contents. Please adjust to make it visible/legible.

a-ii) Addressed.

b-i) Addressed. Please assess during PPG phase if new policies and directives are needed, as per review sheet response.

b-ii) Please refer to comment 3.1 b (i) above (repeated here for ease of reference): i) Output 3.1 in the revised PIF makes reference to Output (1.3 and) 2.2, which is unchanged since the first version of the PIF. However, since Component 2 Outputs were revised and have removed the previous Output 2.1 (out of Outputs 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3), now the reference under Output 3.1 under the revised PIF should be the revised Output 2.1 (which is previously 2.2)? Please check, update and maintain consistency.

b-iii) Addressed/explained. While not indicated in the review sheet response, "the two target areas" under Project description is also revised as "the eleven target areas", whereas areas here refer to locations.

b-iv) Addressed.

b-v) The Output 3.3 description still contains "(e) improving livelihoods of local communities including specific investments for women and IPs". As in the review sheet comment in the first round, such general livelihood interventions are not supported by the project. Please remove or clearly separate this out from Output 3.3, and clearly demarcate between project funded activities and co-financing supported activities.

b-vi) Thank you for revising Output 3.4. However, the activities described, better fit the Component 2, since it explores domestic resource mobilization. Please revise to integrate this output under Component 2.

(NN/JS Dec 2023)

a)

a-i) The Figure 1 Theory of Change layout is difficult to read, missing some texts not fitting in the box. For better representation, please upload a standalone, higher resolution version of Figure 1, for better legibility.

a-ii) In Figure 1, the GBF Target 3 indicates "20x20". Please correct if this is meant to be "30x30". Please also refer to the first review comment box.

b)

b-i) Output 1.1 & 1.2: please clarify if these outputs are to create/establish new policy, directives and procedures. If so, please reflect that explicitly in the Output title and description.

b-ii) Please ensure that the first components table and project description show consistent components titles, outcome and outputs.

b-iii) The project refers to different number of target landscapes in different places. Please explain or revise to ensure consistency:

biodiversity and ecological services forecast across the regions and the inability to enhance the management and expand the conservation estate will remain high. Based on the above, different baseline/external drivers are being presented below with and without GEF intervention, though generalizations pose challenges due to gaps in comparable baseline data across the two target areas and will have to be elaborated further during the PPG stage. In the effort to assess the project's robustness, the project team has developed simple narratives that explore potential changes in key drivers beyond the project's scope. These scenarios are not centred on varying

Based on the eleven landscapes/seascapes already identified, further assessments will be undertaken at PPG stage to identify 4-5 priority landscapes/seascapes from among the eleven for piloting under the project. Within the priority landscapes/seascapes, the identification of OECMs and expansion of other categories of community and privately managed conservation areas will be

This will be calculated when the final 4-5 priority target sites are selected at PPG stage, as GHG emissions will depend on the nature of habitats, level of degradation and other factors in each landscape site Core Indicator 11: This is include a total of 50,000 people (25,000 men and 25,000 women) who will directly benefit from improved protection and conservation actions and ecosystem services delivery, sustainable harvest of forest, wetland, marine and other natural products;

b-iv) Output 4.1 (National communication strategy [?] to meet the GBF Targets) is too vague. General communication and awareness raising is not eligible. Please refine to be more specific and align with eligible activity.

b-v) Output 3.3: The list of activities to be supported include ?I improving livelihoods of local communities?. Livelihood interventions that are not explicitly linked to biodiversity benefits through a solid ToC are not eligible for BD funding. Please remove or revise.

b-vi) The difference between 2.2 and 3.4 is not clear. 3.4 (identify appropriate private and public sector financing to support communities and local stakeholder-based nature-positive small enterprise and livelihood improvements) seems to be entirely encompassed in 2.2. Please explain and/or revise.

Agency's Comments

7 May 2024

b-ii) This has been responded to in the previous comments to align the comp in the TOC.

b-v) The sentence improving livelihoods of local communities, including specific investments for women and IPs has been deleted from the PIF and the order of numbering has been revised.

5 April 2024

a-i) The content of Outcome 4 is included.

b-1) this is well noted.

b-ii) This is now reflected in revised Output 3.1

b-iii) The intent is to identify 4-5 priority landscapes/seascapes from the eleven listed in the PIF. The reference to target sites has been changed throughout the document to refer to priority landscapes/seascapes

b-v) Output 3.3 has been revised to specifically indicate what activities will be funded through GEF grant and activities to be financed by co-financing.

b-vi) As suggested Output 3.4 has been moved into Component 2

7 February 2024

Thank you for the comments.

a)

a-i) This is now updated and reloaded.

a-ii) This is a mistake and is revised accordingly to 30x30.

b) This is revised accordingly based on changes in the Components, Outcomes and outputs.

b-i) the intent is to assess at PPG stage if new policies and directives are needed at national and state levels to recognize OECMs or these can be integrated through revisions of existing PA (wildlife) or forest policies

b-ii) The first table and components, outcomes and outputs are now reconciled.

b-iii) This is correct. The intent is to select 4-5 target landscapes/seascapes out of the eleven listed in the PIF for investments and demonstration of OECMs and other categories of conservation areas

b-iv) Additional information has been provided under Output 4.1 on the more specific activities that will be promoted.

b-v) This has been revised to indicate that livelihood activities be financed through government, state or other sources of financing.

b-vi) Output 2.2 (now output 2.1) is specifically focused on the testing of selected financial models in the target landscapes/seascapes, including testing the capacity of local government and CSOs to be able to identify, access and mobilize financial resources and mechanisms for ensuring accountability and transparency. On the other hand, Output 3.4 is specifically focused on mobilizing funding for supporting community partnerships with private sector and investment to promote Nature-positive small scale community enterprises. Output 3.4 has been revised to specifically clarify this.

5.2 INCREMENTAL/ADDITIONAL COST REASONING

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

Secretariat's Comments
(NN April 23, 2024)

Addressed.

(NN March 2024)

Incremental cost reasoning provided in Table 9.

Please check and correct the potential error, "Monitoring and reporting systems track status of wetland biology and ecosystem health" likely belongs to the 'enabling framework' section or 'improvement management effectiveness' section, rather than the 'financing' section.

(NN Dec 2023)

Please include a brief incremental cost reasoning.

Agency's Comments

5 April 2024

Thank you for the comment. In Table 9 the "monitoring and reporting systems" has been moved under the enabling framework section.

7 February 2024

The incremental cost analysis is provided as a new table.

5.3 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

a) Is the institutional setting, including potential executing partners, outlined and a rationale provided?

b) Comments to proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception).

c) is there a description of potential coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area

d) are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic communication adequately described?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN May 7, 2024)

Addressed.

(NN/HS April 23, 2024)

a) b) Not yet fully addressed. The portal entry for the checkbox for agency execution is not revised to No. However, the narrative still contain a sentence "If a potential Country Office support is deemed necessary, this will be discussed with GEF Sec at the time of CEO request submission." to imply potential UNDP execution support. Please remove this sentence and any implication for UNDP's agency execution.

Coordination and Cooperation with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

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

No

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

The Implementing partner for the project will be the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change (MOEFCC) and the project will be implemented over a period of six years with UNDP as the GEF Implementing Agency. The project is expected to be implemented through the National Implementation Modality (NIM). **If a potential Country Office support is deemed necessary, this will be discussed with GEF Sec at the time of CEO request submission.** Policy guidance will be obtained through the National Steering

c-i) The implementation period on GCF website indicates is through June 2025, however, the PIF revision puts it to ending in 2024. Acceptable at PIF stage. Please update any changes during PPG phase.

d-i) The revision only indicates "including potential non-GEF funding for participation from other OCEM countries". Please also include in the PIF the review sheet language, that the GEF funding would only cover the project-relevant local cost, and that any international travel cost to and from other OCEM countries, if any, would be covered by co-financing.

(NN March 2024)

a) b) Not yet addressed.

- The portal entry for "Does the GEF Agency expect to play an execution role on this project?", the box Yes is still checked. Please remove this.

- As requested in the first review, please remove any indication on potential for GEF Agency support, i.e., namely, "with potential Country Office support...", "the scope and extent of the CO support to the implementation of the project i.e., CO support to NIM...."

c-i) There seem to be still mismatch with the official GCF information. Noting it is GCF/UNDP project, please verify if official GCF information is incorrect.

Green Climate Fund- Enhancing Climate Resilience of India's Coastal Communities (2019-2025) \$43,400,000	A Pan-India Coastal Resilience Network to share knowledge among all the 13 coastal d states) and UTs and to promote inter-sectoral coordination in the 24 target landscapes stakeholder coordination structures: -comprising representatives from relevant state-district-level governments, NGOs and academic/research institutions – will be established dialogue and coordination concerning climate-resilience. This network will support the in identifying coastal OCEMs and area around coastal/marine PA's.
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PIF:

GCF:

<https://www.greenclimate.fund/project/fp084>

This project will strengthen the climate resilience of coastal communities by protecting and restoring India's natural ecosystems such as mangroves and seagrass, which are essential for buffering against storm surges. The project will also support climate-adaptive livelihoods and value chains to increase the climate resilience of these coastal communities. The project will be implemented in 24 target ecosystems in 12 coastal districts across the states of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Odisha.

c-ii) Addressed.

d-i) Thank you for the additional description on South-South exchange. Please further clarify the proposed arrangements by CEO endorsement request. In particular, please ensure that GEF funding would only cover the project-relevant local cost, and any international travel cost to and from other OECD countries, if any, would be covered by co-financing. Please also correct the narrative "UNDP India seems to be quite advanced in supporting OECMs..." under Output 4.4, since it reads like a subjective impression by a third party, but this proposal is from UNDP.

d-ii) Addressed.

(NN/JS/HS Dec 2023)

a) Please see point b) below on the Agency's execution role.

b)

It is noted that depending on assessments to be carried out during PPG, the Agency may request to play an execution role. As the agency is aware, the implementation and execution roles on GEF projects are meant to be separate per GEF policy and guideline. The GEFSEC will analyze at the time of CEO endorsement request submission any requests for dual role playing by an agency and only approve those cases that it deems warranted on an exceptional basis. If execution support is required, we strongly encourage the agency to look at third party options as a preferred way forward and to consult with the GEF Secretariat.

Please remove the portal entry indicating 'Yes?' in response to a question 'Does the GEF Agency expect to play an execution role on this project?? and leave the response blank. Please remove any suggestion to carry out the Agency's executing functions before the preparation phase is developed.

c)

i) The GCF/UNDP project (2019-2025) is referred, while there appears to be mismatching project information (official GCF project information indicates 24 target ecosystems in 12 coastal districts across the three states of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Odisha; this PIF indicates the concerned GCF project targets 13 coastal states and UTs, in the 24 target landscapes). Please harmonize with the most updated information and explain as appropriate.

ii) The coordination is indicated mostly with UNDP-implemented projects. Please also identify coordination opportunities with other relevant GEF projects implemented by agencies other than UNDP as well.

d)

i) Please clarify UNDP's role in the proposed South-South exchanges under Output 4.4.

ii) Please strengthen the Output 5.1 M&E description.

Agency's Comments

7 May 2024

Thank you for the comment

a)b) as requested the sentence *If a potential Country Office support is deemed necessary, this will be discussed with GEF Sec at the time of CEO request submission.* has been removed from the PIF.

Also the portal entry for the checkbox for agency execution has been revised to state No

d-i) The text noting that the GEF funding would only cover the project-relevant local cost, and that any international travel cost to and from other OCEM countries, if any, would be covered by co-financing has been included in the PIF

5 April 2024

a, b) This is fully noted that this will be assessed at the time of CEO endorsement request.

-c-i) The information on GCF project has been revised to reflect official information

-d-i) corrected accordingly. Output 4.4 now states clearly that UNDP India, is very supportive of GoI's efforts to promote OECMs within the country and this could also be used as a springboard where the project might host a national event with international invitations from other ?OECM Countries? for India to learn and discuss how to strengthen its own processes.

Proposed arrangements for South-South collaboration will be elaborated at CEO endorsement, including specifying that GEF will only support participation from within India

7 February 2024

Thank you for the comments.

a) and b) The portal entry ?Yes? has been removed in response to related question on GEF Agency role. The narrative in this section clearly states that any decision regarding UNDP execution support would be contingent on the following: (i) based on the outcome and recommendations of the HACT Micro assessment of the Implementing Partner/Executing Agency and Responsible Party/ies; (ii) discussed and agreed with the GEF PM at PPG stage; (iii) all options for third party engagement will be identified at PPG stage.

c)

i) This change has been made

ii) The referenced table has been revised to identify GEF projects implemented by agencies, other than UNDP

d)

(i) UNDP's role is now clarified under Output 4.4, that would be further explored at PPG stage

(ii) Output 5.1 has been updated to strengthen the M&E description

5.4 a) Are the identified core indicators calculated using the methodology included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)?

b) Are the project's indicative targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators)/adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN May 7, 2024)

b-1) Addressed.

(NN April 23, 2024)

b-i) Not yet addressed. Please enter in the portal entry. CI 4.1 and 5 are still blank.

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 5 Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity (excluding protected areas)

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

(NN March 2024)

a-i) Addressed at PIF stage. Clarification provided that the PPG phase will identify the 4-5 target landscapes/seascapes with at least one seascape, after which Core Indicator 6 targets will be defined by CEO endorsement request, along with refining other Core Indicator targets.

a-ii) Refer to a-1 above.

b-i) Please report these in the portal entry so that they are shown in the table of Core Indicators in the portal-generated pdf PIF. Excel file attachment alone without appropriate portal entry is not addressing the comment.

b-ii) Addressed at PIF stage. Please ensure to take the proposed actions by CEO endorsement request.

(NN/JS/CB Dec 2023)

a)

a-i) As per the GEF-8 RMF guidelines (GEF/C.62/Inf.12/Rev.01), please provide the name and size of the protected area(s) and OECMs to be created. If these are yet to be available, please clarify this further, indicating the PPG phase will allow to identify them.

a-ii) Core Indicator 6, GHG emission mitigated, is indicated in the methodological approach, however, it is not included in the Core Indicator table. Please include it in the table as a placeholder, with indication that the target will be determined at PPG stage.

b)

b-i) Core indicators 4 and 5: the 4.5 and 5.3 dedicated to terrestrial and marine OECMs respectively are contextual indicators, i.e., they need to be reported in addition to component sub-indicators or the Core Indicator itself. In this case, please report 400,000 ha under sub-indicator 4.1 and 50,000 ha under Core Indicator 5, while keeping what is already included under 4.5 and 5.3.

b-ii) As stated in the GEF-8 BD strategy, new protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) established with GEF support should be globally significant including as defined by the Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) standard. When KBA criteria are not met, proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please ensure that:

- corresponding criteria are included for the definition of priority landscape that will receive GEF support and for the area reported under GEF Core Indicators, and that these criteria are reflected in the revised PIF.

- the sites selected during PPG to receive GEF support for OECM or PA creation meet KBA criteria or demonstrably host globally significant biodiversity according to other criteria. Evidence will have to be provided at the CEO endorsement request stage.

- the project plans for the budget and activities to go through the KBA registration process during implementation.

Agency's Comments

7 May 2024

Thank you for the comment.

The Indicator 4.1 area of landscape under improved management to benefit biodiversity of **400,000 hectares**, and Indicator 5: Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity (excluding protected areas) of **50,000 hectares**, have been included in the Portal

5 April 2024

b-i) The table of Core Indicators in the portal-generated pdf PIF has been updated as requested

7 February 2024

Thank you for the comments.

a)

a-i) At present a list of 11 target landscape/seascape sites have been identified. At PPG stage, further refinement of criteria will be done in consultation with the scientific community, on the basis of which 4-5 target landscapes/seascapes will be selected from among the eleven identified at PIF stage (including at least one seascape) for investment under the project to create, establish and manage OECMs and expand the community and private conservation areas. At PPG stage, the boundaries of these 4-5 landscape/seascapes will be further refined and established with clear identification/listing of existing PAs, forest reserves and other potential categories of OECMs within these landscapes/seascapes. This is indicated under ?notes? in Table 5

a-ii) As discussed in a-1) above, once the 4-5 landscapes/seascapes will be identified at PPG stage for project support, it would be possible to calculate core indicator 6 values. This is indicated under ?notes? in Table 5

b)

b-i). This has been updated in Annex I ? Core Indicator Worksheet

b-ii) This is agreed that criteria for identification of OECMs will include specific reference to demonstrate their global biodiversity value. At PPG stage we will ensure that (i) criteria to be included for the definition of priority landscape to receive GEF support and reported under GEF Core Indicators; (ii) demonstrate global biodiversity significance (with evidence) and (iii) budget availability will be contingent of KBA registration during the implementation phase.

5.5 NGI Only: Is there a justification of financial structure and use of financial instrument with concessionality levels?

Secretariat's Comments N/A

Agency's Comments

5.6 RISKS

a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category?

b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?

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

Secretariat's Comments

(NN May 7, 2024)

Addressed.

(CB/NN April 26, 2024)

Under the Capacity for Implementation section, it implies potential UNDP execution support. Please remove any such implication suggesting and preempting UNDP execution role.

EXECUTION		
Capacity for Implementation	Moderate	The limited capacity of government and state administrative bodies and the lack of integration of economic and ecological considerations into conservation planning and management could negatively impact the implementation of the project. This risk will be further assessed, and mitigation arrangements made in consultation with the IP for UNDP CO, following the HACT assessment to identify potential UNDP oversight, training, and technical support required for the project implementation phase. This would be reviewed by GEFSEA.

(NN March 2024)

b) Addressed. In the portal entry, the additional note is included under Overall Risk Rating.

c) Addressed at PIF stage. Please submit the finalized SESP at CEO endorsement request.

(NN Nov 2023)

A) Yes.

b) Please elaborate further how the overall risk rating being Substantial, it is not expected to undermine the viability of the project.

c) UNDP Social and Environmental Screening template is filled in and uploaded. However, it is missing the final sign-off. Please upload a signed-off version in the portal.

Agency's Comments

7 May 2024

The entry has been revised and the reference to potential UNDP execution support is removed in the table under the capacity for implementation risk category

5 April 2024

c) This is well noted. We will work on the pre-SESP submitted at the time of PIF and develop a comprehensive SESP during the PPG for CEO ER submission.

7 February 2024

b) The overall risk rating is considered 'substantial' on the basis of the safeguard rating, which is further elaborated and detailed in UNDP SES Annex. At PPG stage, this will be further assessed and more detailed analysis will be conducted, including the preparation of ESMF and IPF that would provide means to ensure that these safeguard concerns do not undermine the viability of the project. At PPG stage, the updated and elaborate SESP, ESMF and IPF will detail out additional management actions that might be needed to further mitigate the risks including the preparation of SESA, LAP, process framework and GRM

c) Although the Pre-SESP is quality assured and cleared by the UNDP SES Team as part of the internal UNDP review and approval process, the Pre-SESP is not signed at the PIF stage according to current UNDP practice. The reason for this is, quality assurance of the safeguards including project document review will be undertaken during the project design and through the Local Project Appraisal Committee before the project is submitted to GEF for endorsement request. Once the LPAC clears it, the updated SESP at PPG stage will be signed by UNDP RR or DRR

5.7 Qualitative assessment

a) Does the project intend to be well integrated, durable, and transformative?

b) Is there potential for innovation and scaling-up?

c) Will the project contribute to an improved alignment of national policies (policy coherence)?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN March 2024)

a) Please address the remaining inconsistencies and grammatically incorrect formulations as commented above.

(NN, Nov 2023)

a) Yes overall, however, please clarify some component descriptions, correct some mismatching outputs, ensure consistency and integrity of the project description, as commented above.

b) Yes.

c) Yes.

Agency's Comments

5 April 2024

a) Revisions to the PIF, as per the above comments, have been addressed throughout the PIF. Please see the relevant references above highlighting the changes to the PIF as well as references in the PIF where these changes have been made.

7 February 2024

a) These have been addressed in above comments and responses.

6 C. Alignment with GEF-8 Programming Strategies and Country/Regional Priorities

6.1 Is the project adequately aligned with focal area and integrated program strategies and objectives, and/or adaptation priorities?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN April 23, 2024)

Addressed.

(NN March 2024)

Please revised the PPG financing table to also include BD-3, which only contains BD-1.

PPG Amount (\$)

200000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

19000

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

Please revise the Indicative Focal Area Elements in the portal entry so that BD 3-1 is removed, so that revision is reflected in the table (page 51 of portal-generated pdf PIF).

Indicative Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Co-financing
BD-1-1	GET	3,680,010.00	32
BD-1-4	GET	2,217,532.00	19
BD-3-1	GET	408,387.00	3
BD-3-2	GET	343,386.00	1
Total Project Cost		6,649,315.00	56,000

(NN Dec 2023)

Please correct discrepancies. Alignment with BD-1 and BD-3 are proposed, while PPG request is only aligned with BD-1. Please see the first review comment box.

Agency's Comments

5 April 2024

Revised the financing tables (Annex A) and included BD 1-1, BD 1-4 and BD 3-2 under the indicative focal area elements table.

7 February 2024

The discrepancy is corrected and only BD-3-2 is proposed (implementation of finance plan)

6.2 Is the project alignment/coherent with country and regional priorities, policies, strategies and plans (including those related to the MEAs and to relevant sectors)

Secretariat's Comments

(NN March 2024)

Addressed.

(NN, Nov 7, 2023)

Please correct a potential error: Table 5 indicates 'Strategic Development Goals', which is likely meant to be Sustainable Development Goals.

Agency's Comments

7 February 2024

Thank you for this comment. This is now corrected.

6.3 For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e. BD, CC or LD), does the project clearly identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and how it contributes to the identified target(s)?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN April 23, 2024)

iii) Addressed at PIF stage. During the PPG phase, please classify the first tier and second tier targets, as there are 8 indicated targets.

(NN, March 2024)

i) Addressed.

ii) Addressed.

iii) Not yet fully addressed. Please ensure consistency throughout the PIF.

- The Table 8 in the revised PIF still contains GBF Target 1, compounded with Goal D, which is not consistent with the review sheet response as well as the project baseline section (page 15 of the portal-generated pdf) that removed Target 1.

- The Table 7 in the revised PIF, under NBSAP, the project's alignment with only GBF Target 2, 3 and 4 are indicated. This is not consistent with review sheet response and Table 8 indicating alignment with Target 2, 3, 10, 11, 14, 19, 21 and 22.

(NN, Nov 2023)

Please improve consistency:

i) Please indicate Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, rather than just GBF.

ii) In addition to listing Goals and Targets, please briefly describe how the proposed project contributes to the identified targets.

iii) The proposed GBF targets are inconsistent through the proposal. For instance, in the project baseline, it notes the project supports the GBF Target 2, 3 and 4. Under the project rationale it notes Target 15 is India's increased focus. In Table 5, Target 1, 2, 3, 11, 14, 19, 21, and 22 are listed. Please identify the project's most relevant GBF Targets and maintain consistency through the proposal.

Agency's Comments

7 May 2024

iii) This comment is well noted and will be addressed at the time of PPG stage.

5 April 2024

Table 8 of PIF contains GBF targets 2, 3, 10, 11, 14, 19, 21 and 22 (with Target 1 excluded) in PIF and now reflected in the portal.

Table 7 is now corrected to reflect alignment with the GBF targets

7 February 2024

Thank you for the comments.

i) Added Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

ii) The proposed project approach to meet targets are provided in Table 8

iii) This is now rectified as follows: the increased focus on mainstreaming in the Kunming-Montreal GBF (targets 2, 3, 10, 11, 14, 19, 21, and 22) represents an important opportunity to work with a whole of society approach. A key priority for India is also Target 19, which recognizes the importance of the business and finance sectors in reaching the ambitious targets of the GBF. Consistency is now maintained throughout the document.

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Is the Policy Requirements section completed?

Secretariat's Comments
(NN, Nov 2023)

Yes.

Agency's Comments

7.2 Is a list of stakeholders consulted during PIF development, including dates of these consultations, provided?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN April 23, 2024)

i) Addressed (in line with the situation IPLCs were not consulted during the project identification phase).

(NN March 2024)

i) Not fully addressed. The checkboxes are still checked in the portal entry. Please uncheck them.

ii) Please ensure to further develop stakeholder engagement strategy and document consultations during the PPG phase.

(NN, Nov 2023)

i) Please provide more information on the stakeholder consultations. Stakeholder consultations held at PIF stage are limited to the dates of consultations with the national and state government entities, and an undisclosed list of Wildlife Institute of India, WWF, ?and others?, which are unclear. The checkbox is checked for Yes for consultations with Civil Society Organizations and Private Sector, however, they are not clearly itemized in the list of stakeholder consultations.

ii) Stakeholder engagement plan or assessment that have been done during the PIF development phase, is not attached/uploaded. Please upload in the portal documented consultations.

Agency's Comments

5 April 2024

i) The check boxes for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, Civil Society Organizations and Private Sector are correctly checked in the PIF and in the portal

7 February 2024

Thank you for the comment.

i) The consultation table has been updated. It is noted here that during the PIF phase consultation was limited. However, at PPG stage a comprehensive approach to stakeholder engagement will be developed and continued into project implementation, including specifically enhancing consultations with the private sector, local communities and IP and their institutions and state and local level entities. Consultation will ensure the application of FPIC principles where relevant and in the establishment of strong partnerships across government (at all levels) to achieve their active participation for sustainable biodiversity-related natural resources and economic development. The boxes have been unchecked.

ii) No specific stakeholder engagement plan was developed at PIF stage, although consultations were conducted to a limited extent. At PPG stage a stakeholder engagement strategy will be developed to ensure wider and comprehensive consultations with relevant stakeholders

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

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

STAR allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN, Nov 2023)

Yes.

Agency's Comments

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN, Nov 2023)

Yes.

Agency's Comments

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat's CommentsN/A

Agency's Comments
SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat's CommentsN/A

Agency's Comments
SCCF B (Tech Transfer, Innovation, Private Sector)?

Secretariat's CommentsN/A

Agency's Comments
Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat's CommentsN/A

Agency's Comments
8.2 Is the PPG requested within the allowable cap (per size of project)? If requested, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?

Secretariat's Comments
(NN, Nov 2023)

Yes.

Agency's Comments
8.3 Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN, Nov 2023)

Yes.

Agency's Comments

Annex B: Endorsements

8.4 Has the project been endorsed by the country?(ies) GEF OFP and has the OFP at the time of PIF submission name and position been checked against the GEF database?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN March 2024)

Addressed.

(NN/HS Dec 2023)

The template utilized for this project removed the footnote that conditions the selection of the executing partner to the following: "Subject to the capacity assessment carried out by the GEF Implementing Agency, as appropriate". Per the attached email back in March when we were aiming to constitute June 2023 Work Program, Agencies were informed that LoEs "with modifications cannot be accepted and will be returned". While the removal of the footnote seems to be trivial, it is not: this footnote reduces the chances of having an executing partner that does not meet the fiduciary and procurement standards required to safely execute the project. Please obtain an email from the OFP accepting this footnote to be part of the LoE (this is an alternative to request a new LoE).

Agency's Comments

7 February 2024

Thank you for the comment. The GEF OFP has accepted via email (dated 1 December 2023) that the footnote in the standard template of LOE is part of the LoE issued by OFP for this project on 18 October 2023. The OFP's email is included for reference.

Are the OFP endorsement letters uploaded to the GEF Portal (compiled as a single document, if applicable)?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN March 2024)

Addressed.

(NN/HS Dec 2023)

The template utilized for this project removed the footnote that conditions the selection of the executing partner to the following: "Subject to the capacity assessment carried out by the GEF Implementing Agency, as appropriate". Per the attached email back in March when we were aiming to constitute June 2023 Work Program, Agencies were informed that LoEs "with modifications cannot be accepted and will be returned". While the removal of the footnote seems to be trivial, it is not: this footnote reduces the chances of having an executing partner that does not meet the fiduciary and procurement standards required to safely execute the project. Please obtain an email from the OFP accepting this footnote to be part of the LoE (this is an alternative to request a new LoE).

Agency's Comments

7 February 2024

Thank you for the comments. Clarified in the above response.

Do the letters follow the correct format and are the endorsed amounts consistent with the amounts included in the Portal?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN March 2024)

Addressed.

(NN/HS Dec 2023)

The template utilized for this project removed the footnote that conditions the selection of the executing partner to the following: "Subject to the capacity assessment carried out by the GEF Implementing Agency, as appropriate". Per the attached email back in March when we were aiming to constitute June 2023 Work Program, Agencies were informed

that LoEs with modifications cannot be accepted and will be returned?. While the removal of the footnote seems to be trivial, it is not: this footnote reduces the chances of having an executing partner that does not meet the fiduciary and procurement standards required to safely execute the project. Please obtain an email from the OFP accepting this footnote to be part of the LoE (this is an alternative to request a new LoE).

Agency's Comments

7 February 2024

Clarified in the above response from OFP.

8.5 For NGI projects (which may not require LoEs), has the Agency informed the OFP(s) of the project to be submitted?

Secretariat's Comments N/A

Agency's Comments

Annex C: Project Location

8.6 Is there preliminary georeferenced information and a map of the project's intended location?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN March 2024)

Addressed.

(NN, Nov 2023)

Maps are provided, however, georeferenced information is not provided. Please provide georeferenced information.

Agency's Comments

7 February 2024

An additional Table C.1 has been provided in Annex C to show the coordinates of the proposed eleven sites, in addition to the coordinates that are already reflected in the 2 maps in Annex C

Annex D: Safeguards Screen and Rating

8.7 If there are safeguard screening documents or other ESS documents prepared, have these been uploaded to the GEF Portal?

Secretariat's Comments
(NN, Nov 2023)

Yes.

Agency's Comments

Annex E: Rio Markers

8.8 Are the Rio Markers for CCM, CCA, BD and LD correctly selected, if applicable?

Secretariat's Comments
(NN March 2024)

Addressed.

(NN/JS/HS Dec 2023)

Since this is a 100% BD project, please select BD as Principle Objective (2).

Please change CCA to (0); LD to (0) (or justify for (1)); CCM to (0) or justify for (1).

Agency's Comments

7 February 2024

Rio markers are revised accordingly

Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet

8.9 Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN, Nov 2023)

Yes.

Agency's Comments

Annex G: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.10 Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. Is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat's Comments N/A

Agency's Comments

9 GEFSEC Decision

9.1 Is the PIF and PPG (if requested) recommended for technical clearance?

Secretariat's Comments

(NN May 7, 2024)

For the review sheet section 1 item, March 1a-iv), please correct the portal entry and resubmit.

(NN April 23, 2024)

Not at this time. Please address comments and resubmit. Please ensure revisions are highlighted and/or summarized in a table. Please sure revisions are reflected in the portal entry.

(NN March 2024)

Not at this time. Please address comments and resubmit. Please ensure revisions are highlighted and/or summarized in a table. Please sure revisions are reflected in the portal entry.

(NN/JS/HS/CB/VACL Dec 2023)

Not at this time. Please address comments and resubmit. Please ensure revisions are highlighted and/or summarized in a table.

Agency's Comments

5 April 2024

The comments have been fully addressed throughout the PIF. The changes made in the PIF are highlighted as well as references as to where these changes have been made in the PIF.

Further, the revisions are also reflected in the portal entry.

4 February 2024

Comments are addressed with revisions highlighted.

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency at the time of CEO Endorsement/ Approval

Secretariat's Comments

(NN May 2023)

- In relation to the comments/responses 1a-iii), Please ensure to identify marine and coastal PAs and OECMs the project will target to achieve.

- In relation to the comment 3.2, please strengthen the knowledge sharing and M&E components description by CEO endorsement request.

_ In relation to the comment 3.2, please develop a gender analysis and mainstreaming action plans, relevant gender pertinent indicators and budget at the time of CEO endorsement.

- In relation to the comment 5.4 a-i) please identify 4-5 landscape/seascapes during the PPG phase, define Core Indicator 6 target, along with refining other Core Indicator targets by CEO endorsement request.

- In relation to the comment 5.3 d) i), please further clarify the proposed arrangements of South-South exchange under Output 4.4, by CEO endorsement request. In particular, please ensure that GEF funding would only cover the project-relevant local cost, and any international travel cost to and from other OECM countries, if any, would be covered by co-financing.

- In relation to the comment 5.4 b-ii) Please ensure the proposed actions will take place during the PPG phase, ensuring that (i) criteria to be included for the definition of priority landscape to receive GEF support and reported under GEF Core Indicators; (ii) demonstrate global biodiversity significance (with evidence) and (iii) budget availability will be contingent of KBA registration during the implementation phase.

- In relation to the comment 6 b) please ensure further assessment and more detailed analysis will be conducted as proposed, during PPG phase, and 6 c) please submit the finalized SESP at CEO endorsement request.

- In relation to the comment 6.3, during the PPG phase, please classify the first tier and second tier KMGBF Targets, as there are 8 indicated targets.

- In relation to the comment/response 7.2, please ensure to further develop stakeholder engagement strategy and document consultations during the PPG phase.

- Under Project Rationale, please revise the Output 1.3 to Output 1.4 where it refers to MRV (portal generated PIF page 10).

Agency's Comments

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	12/15/2023	2/7/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	3/27/2024	4/5/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	4/23/2024	5/7/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/7/2024	5/9/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/9/2024	