GEF-8 REQUEST FOR CEO ENDORSEMENT/APPROVAL

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General Project Information

Project Title Integrated Conservation and Sustainable Development in Socotra Archipelago and Aden Wetlands, Yemen	
Region Asia	GEF Project ID 11408
Country(ies) Yemen	Type of Project FSP
GEF Agency(ies): UNEP	GEF Agency Project ID
Project Executing Entity(s) The Environment Protection Authority of the - Ministry of Water and Environment The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN)	Project Executing Type Government CSO
GEF Focal Area (s) Multi Focal Area	Submission Date 8/20/2025
Type of Trust Fund GET	Project Duration (Months) 60
GEF Project Grant: (a) 4,416,211.00	GEF Project Non-Grant: (b) 0.00
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c) 419,539.00	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant (d) 0.00
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d) 4,835,750.00	Total Co-financing 4,900,000.00
PPG Amount: (e) 150,000.00	PPG Agency Fee(s): (f) 14,250.00
Total GEF Resources: (a+b+c+d+e+f) 5,000,000.00	
Project Tags CBIT: No NGI: No SGP: No Innovation: No Competitive Window: No	
Project Sector (CCM Only)	

Taxonomy

Influencing models, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances, Stakeholders, Private Sector, Civil Society, Type of Engagement, Non-Governmental Organization, Partnership, Information Dissemination, Consultation, Participation, Communications, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Knowledge Generation, Learning, Adaptive management, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Gender results areas, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Beneficiaries, Awareness Raising, Focal Areas, Biodiversity, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Coastal and Marine Protected Areas, Species, Invasive Alien Species, Biomes, Wetlands, Land Degradation, Land Degradation Neutrality, Land Productivity, Land Cover and Land cover change

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation	Climate Change Adaptation	Biodiversity	Land Degradation
No Contribution 0	No Contribution 0	Principal Objective 2	Principal Objective 2

Project Summary

Provide a brief summary description of the project, including: (i) what is the problem and issues to be addressed? (ii) what are the project objectives, and if the project is intended to be transformative, how will this be achieved? iii), how will this be achieved (approach to deliver on objectives), and (iv) what are the GEBs and/or adaptation benefits, and other key expected results. The purpose of the summary is to provide a short, coherent summary for readers. (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

Yemen's decade-long civil war led to weak governance, unsustainable resource use, and environmental degradation. This project will support improved management effectiveness of terrestrial and marine protected areas and landscape restoration in the Aden wetlands and in the Socotra Archipelago (GEF CIs: BD 1.2, 2.2, 4.1; LD 3.4 - see details in Section B, Table 3). It will indirectly contribute to carbon sequestration and emissions avoided in the sector of Agriculture, Forestry, and other Land Uses. Project components:

1. Strengthening Policy and Governance Frameworks: enhancing conservation policy and governance, establishing a National Wetlands Platform in Aden, and reviewing the governance of protected areas in Socotra. This makes the project transformative, showing the way toward introduction of the protected areas concept. Strengthening institutional capacity, aligning the National Wetland Management Plan with Yemen's NBSAP, and supporting the nomination of the Aden Wetlands as a Ramsar Site.

2. Demonstration of Sustainable Management: updating the biodiversity database, valuing ecosystem services, and developing a management plan for the Aden Wetlands. Gender-responsive community involvement is emphasized, along with wetland restoration and improved land use practices. Innovative approaches are applied for empowering local communities, and women in particular, in the management of Socotra's PAs (supporting GEF CI 11), supporting IAS management, and conserving unique endemic trees and nesting sea turtles.

3. Knowledge Management and Public Awareness: inclusive outreach strategy, knowledge products, capacity-building programme, awareness campaigns and a KM System.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation.

The project will also support the achievement of the GBF targets 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 11, 13, 21, 22 and 23) and SDGs (5, 6 and 15).

Project Description Overview

Project Objective

To effectively conserve biodiversity in the Socotra Archipelago and sustainably manage the Aden wetlands in Yemen

Project Components

1.Strengthening policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks and technical capacity for conservation and sustainable use of Aden wetlands landscape and Socotra Archipelago through a landscape approach

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
870,383.00	1,000,000.00

Outcome:

1.1: Improved policy, institutional and technical capability for sustainable management and conservation of internationally recognized heritages of Yemen

Output:

1.1.1: A National Wetlands Platform established to coordinate an integrated landscape approach

1.1.2: National Wetland Policy developed with a landscape approach and integrated into Yemen's NBSAP Implementation Plan

1.1.3: Institutional capacity in sustainable landscape management will be assessed then developed through a participatory approach

1.1.4: Aden Wetlands nominated as a new Ramsar Site in Yemen

1.1.5: The governance system of protected areas in Socotra reviewed and wise-governance principles promoted

1.1.6: Revision of the Socotra Conservation Zoning plan

2. Conservation of Biodiversity in Socotra and Sustainable Management of Aden Wetlands

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
2,058,066.00	1,650,000.00

Outcome:

2.1: The Aden Wetlands are Sustainably Managed

Output:

2.1.1: Aden wetlands database reviewed and updated 2.1.2 Ecosystem services of Aden wetlands identified, assessed and valued to support decision making

2.1.2: Ecosystem services of Aden Wetlands identified, assessed and valued to support decision making, and the feasibility of applying Nature Based Solutions to protect Al Hiswa wetland is assessed.

2.1.3: Integrated land-use spatial (zoning) plan and an inclusive and community-led Aden Wetlands Landscape Management Plan developed and implemented with the participation of a wide range of stakeholders

2.1.4: Degraded wetlands restored through nature based, gender-based solution practices and cost-effective interventions

2

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)

Outcome:

2.2: The management effectiveness of four active and three inactive protected areas in Socotra is measurably improved, considering the compatibility between IPLC needs and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Output:

2.2.1: Four active Protected Areas' management systems are improved, focusing on higher levels of community engagement

and empowerment, particularly of women, long-term sustainability, ecotourism, and business planning

2.2.2: Successfully developed and implemented Protected Area management approaches are replicated in at least three inactive protected areas

2.2.3: Building on the activities carried out under Output 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, alternative livelihood options around the protected areas will be identified and enhanced ensuring that these options are equally accessible to women and men

2.2.4: Lessons learned on conservation of Dragon Blood Trees and Frankincense trees in Firmhin and Homhil protected areas scaled up

2.2.5: An island-wide sustainable sea turtle conservation program established and operated in coordination with local authorities and communities

2.2.6: Lessons learned on controlling invasive alien species program will be scaled up

3.Knowledge Management, Public Awareness

Component Type	Trust Fund

Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
1,067,467.00	1,500,000.00

Outcome:

3.1 Decision makers and relevant stakeholders are aware and appreciate the importance of conservation of the Aden wetlands and Socotra Archipelago.

Output:

3.1.1: Outreach and dissemination strategy for conservation of Aden wetlands and Socotra Archipelago developed and implemented

M&E

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
210,000.00	516,760.00

Outcome:

4: Monitoring and Evaluation plan / platform is established and functional.

Output:

4.1: Regular PIRs, an efficient M&E programme, timely MTR and TE, and monitoring of gender and safeguards action plans

Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
1.Strengthening policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks and technical capacity for conservation and sustainable use of Aden wetlands landscape and Socotra Archipelago through a landscape approach	870,383.00	1,000,000.00
2. Conservation of Biodiversity in Socotra and Sustainable Management of Aden Wetlands	2,058,066.00	1,650,000.00
2		
3.Knowledge Management, Public Awareness	1,067,467.00	1,500,000.00
M&E	210,000.00	516,760.00

Subtotal	**4,205,916.00**	**4,666,760.00**
Project Management Cost	210,295.00	233,240.00
Total Project Cost ($)	**4,416,211.00**	**4,900,000.00**

Please provide Justification

N/A.

PROJECT OUTLINE

A. PROJECT RATIONALE

Describe the current situation: the global environmental problems and/or climate vulnerabilities that the project will address, the key elements of the system, and underlying drivers of environmental change in the project context, such as population growth, economic development, climate change, sociocultural and political factors, including conflicts, or technological changes. Describe the objective of the project, and the justification for it. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

Yemen hosts a significant and distinguished part of Arabia's biodiversity due to the diversity of habitats and consequent high rates of endemism in the Yemeni mainland (being the southernmost part of the Arabian Peninsula, and affected by African affinities) and hosting the Socotra Archipelago as a UNESCO Natural World Heritage of global importance that is known as the 'Galapagos of the Indian Ocean'. Socotra is the largest island in the Socotra Archipelago in the Indian Ocean. It is one of the ten islands worldwide in terms of its importance for biodiversity conservation, with a high rate of endemism (Madera 2020, 4; Hamidan 2023, 8; Van Damme 2011, 33). In the past decade, Yemen witnessed a civil war that led to a divide between Yemen's North and South, then a political conflict in the South, to which Aden and the Socotra Archipelago belong. The Socotra Archipelago attracted the interest of the international community supporting the efforts of the Government of Yemen to conserve its unique biodiversity. Since 1997, international projects funded by the GEF through the UNDP and then UNEP, offered support to conserve and sustain the conservation of biodiversity of Socotra. In the year 2000, a Presidential Decree established a total of 40 protected areas in the Archipelago, including 27 marine protected areas, and 13 terrestrial protected areas (The Republic of Yemen 2000, 2). In 2008, the Socotra Archipelago was nominated as a UNESCO Natural World Heritage site (UNESCO 2006, 7) that now also contains the first Ramsar site in Yemen (the Detwah coastal lagoon).

While the Socotra Archipelago enjoys relatively greater political stability compared to the mainland city of Aden, several significant challenges undermine the ecological well-being of this unique archipelago. Weak legislative structures, a rise in poverty, and the inadequacies within the archipelago's governance system for managing protected areas collectively contribute to preservation concerns in Socotra (Van Damme 2011, 34). Furthermore, limited technical capacity among local Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) engaged in protected area management, as well as the local environmental protection agency, coupled with rapidly increasing infrastructure developments and influx of tourists, unsustainable resource utilization practices, and conflict of interests among authorities, have collectively exerted a profound impact on Socotra's exceptional biodiversity. This complex set of issues has recently resulted in suboptimal and ineffective management of protected areas across the archipelago.

The ineffective management leads to several environmental problems, including mainly the uncontrolled livestock grazing that characterizes the island, including its protected areas, negatively affecting the propagation and growth of seedlings of scaling up conservation efforts for *Dracaena cinnabari* (Dragon Blood Tree) (IUCN status: vulnerable) and *Boswellia* spp. (Frankincense trees) (IUCN status: endangered) in the Firmhin and Homhil protected areas (Madera 2025, 6; Vahalik 2023, 11; La Montagna 2025, 2). Uncontrolled development of tourism infrastructure and 'land-grabbing', especially along coastal areas in Socotra, is also evident, especially within and around the most attractive coastal PAs that show habitat damage caused by unregulated tourism (Van Damme 2011, 40). The emerging issue of land encroachment also appears to include claiming land tenure for subsequent speculative land trade, adding to the complexity of this issue. Other major issues include localized pollution and solid waste, especially plastic waste, evident especially near settlements across the Socotra archipelago (Van Damme 2011, 40). In addition, the seasonal monsoons and associated floods continue to periodically damage coastal settlements and are also damaging considerable numbers of the endemic trees in the internal mountain areas, especially the weak and heavily harvested trees (Lvoncik 2020, 2). These factors enhance the loss of the island's unique biodiversity. The recent GEF/UNEP project *'Support to the Integrated Programme for the Conservation and sustainable Development of the Socotra Archipelago, Yemen'* GEF ID 5347,

executed by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), conducted an assessment of the management effectiveness of the Protected Areas of Socotra (Hamidan 2023, 7). Out of all protected areas surveyed, only four were found to have moderately effective management. These will be referred to here as *"effective protected areas"* and include two marine / coastal areas: (DiHamri, and Rosh), and two terrestrial areas (Homhil and Firmhin). These protected areas offered a workable environment for the GEF/UNEP/EPA/RSCN ID#5347 project, and the situation allowed for some measurable improvement towards more effective management during project implementation, while also creating the basis for subsequent upscaling and development. Three additional protected areas of high importance showed suboptimal management, and these will be referred to here as *"ineffective protected areas"*. It was deemed that these three additional areas have potential for a measurable improvement of their management effectiveness when considered and integrated into this new GEF project. These three additional areas include one coastal wetland, the Detwah Lagoon (the only Ramsar site in Yemen); one mountainous terrestrial protected area, Skund; and one coastal National Park, Abilhin, that is important as it hosts the nesting sites of the Loggerhead Sea Turtle *(Caretta caretta)* and is affected by coastal land encroachment.

The land restoration efforts conducted under the previous project GEF/UNEP/EPA/RSCN ID#5347 in the above four 'effective' protected areas included support for the reforestation and rehabilitation of the endangered and endemic trees of the island. Nurseries were established to support the reforestation, and more than 2,000 seedlings of the three main endangered trees (mainly Dragoon Blood, Frankincense, and Mangroves) were planted. These efforts were complemented by parallel work undertaken by the University of Brno and the University of Rome La Sapienza, with support from the Franklinia (Hamdiah 2024) project[1] (Madera 2024; Madera 2025), which augmented these results and also generated a significant amount of scientific research on these topics. However, the positive momentum in land restoration is still threatened if efforts are not consolidated and upscaled. Several challenges were faced: weak governance, conflicts among local authorities, and the lack of continuity in terms of protection, maintenance, and upscaling of the reforested and rehabilitated areas. This continuity can be achieved only if the new GEF project can help EPA to mobilise local communities and international partners with a combination of government resources and donor support, as key factors to maintain the current reforestation efforts and upscale it in the longer term. Studies indicate that each implanted tree seedling in the reforested areas needs at least 50 years to become resistant to grazing; therefore, clearly, a long-term effort is needed to maintain current efforts (Hamdiah 2024, 259).

An increase in access of people and goods to the island and uncontrolled development of infrastructure and urban growth are also exacerbating the influx of invasive alien species that can damage both the unique Natural heritage of Socotra as well as its food security. The recently concluded GEF/UNEP/EPA/RSCN ID#5347 supported initial EPA efforts towards setting up an effective system to manage Invasive Alien Species (Hamidan 2023, 10). This project will continue supporting such efforts, taking stock of recent studies and building on progress achieved to date. Similarly, this project will support the enhanced protection of sea turtle nesting sites that are under increasing threat due to uncontrolled construction of infrastructure (e.g, protection walls, buildings) in coastal zones, especially in the Abilhin coastal protected area.

The project will support the conservation of globally significant biodiversity in two landscapes of Yemen: the Socotra Archipelago – recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site of Outstanding Universal Value[1][1] for its exceptional levels of endemism – and the Aden coastal wetland system on the mainland. In Socotra, the project targets site-specific values within a mosaic of protected areas that contributes to the protection of globally significant biodiversity values, addressing multiple global priorities: the entire Socotra Archipelago is protected area and a UNESCO Natural World Heritage site with c. 37% plant endemism and very high reptile and molluscs' endemism (landscape-level hotspot value). Within the Socotra WHS, the project will support the conservation of multiple sites, including: the Detwah coastal lagoon, that is Yemen's first Ramsar site, being a key nursery/roost for waterbirds and elasmobranchs and an Endemic Bird Area (hosting e.g., Socotra Cormorant, Socotra White-eye). The DiHamri and Rosh Marine Protected Areas (recognized as marine KBAs hosting globally significant coral and reef-associated fauna); Homhil and Firmhin PAs (terrestrial KBAs safeguarding flagship endemics such as Dracaena cinnabari and Boswellia spp.); the Skund PA (montane terrestrial refuge for Socotra highlands' endemics); and the Abilhin National Park (coastal KBA with Loggerhead turtle nesting sites). On the mainland of Yemen, the project will focus on the Aden Wetlands (incl. Al-Haswa) constituting a nationally and regionally important IBA/KBA especially significant for over 100 species of migratory waterbirds as a critical stop-over site along the African Eurasian Flyways, and also providing important urban-wetland ecosystem services locally; the Aden Wetlands are also part of the Red Sea-Gulf of Aden mangrove and coastal systems recognized by WWF's Global 200 framework of priority sites and assessed as climate- and development-threatened.

On the one hand, the target protected areas in Socotra —Di Hamri, Homhil, Roosh, Firmhin, Skund, Abilhin, and Detwah, together capture the extraordinary terrestrial and marine biodiversity that gives the archipelago its global conservation importance. These

sites harbor habitats of high endemism, from the dragon's blood forests of Firmhin and Homhil to the highland refuges of Skund, supporting plant and reptile assemblages unique to the island group. The marine areas of Di Hamri and Roosh protect coral reefs, seagrass meadows, and lagoons that act as biodiversity steppingstones between the Red Sea, Arabian Sea, and Indian Ocean, while Abilhin and Detwah serve as critical nesting and feeding grounds for endangered sea turtles, notably loggerheads, as well as vital stopovers for migratory waterbirds. Their resilience to past coral bleaching and their role in sustaining ecological connectivity elevate these areas to global reference sites for climate adaptation and biodiversity conservation, making them indispensable for both species survival and ecosystem health.

On the other hand, the Aden wetlands, represented by the project target sites of Al Heswah, Al Mimlah and Aden Lagoons sites, contribute to global biodiversity conservation through their unique wetland and coastal ecosystems. Comprising lagoons, salt plains, mudflats, mangroves, and estuarine habitats, they provide essential wintering and feeding grounds for over 100 species of migratory birds, including the regionally endemic, White-eyed Gull, making them a vital link in the African-Eurasian flyways. The wetlands are also ecologically significant for marine biodiversity, functioning as nurseries for fish and invertebrates and sustaining endangered species such as the endemic Aden Gulf torpedo (*Torpedo adenensis*). Positioned at the confluence of major marine biogeographic provinces, the Aden wetlands support high species richness and ecological connectivity across the Red Sea, Arabian Sea, and Indian Ocean. Their global importance lies equally in their habitat and species biodiversity and ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration and climate resilience, positioning them as priority conservation areas under national law and candidates for Ramsar designation. *Please refer also to **Annex E** for additional information on the globally significant Biodiversity that the project will contribute to protecting within the project's target sites.*

The project will operate in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations: Yemen faces an ongoing conflict between Houthi rebels (holding the northern part of the country) and government forces (holding the southern parts and Socotra), worsened by regional tensions. Civilians in conflict areas endure attacks, famine, and displacement, with 18 million facing acute hunger. Aid efforts are hindered by infrastructure damage and detentions of humanitarian workers, deepening one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. This GEF project will focus its operations only in two relatively safer and accessible areas, including the Aden Wetlands (and only at selected sites located in the safer proximity of the Aden city) and in the Socotra Archipelago, which is not directly affected by the conflict (but suffers indirect impacts of the war such as: receiving very limited financial support from the Central Government to conservation efforts, with foreign entities contributing to this situation and undertaking unregulated and unsustainable development activities).

Across both landscapes, biodiversity pressures intersect with fragility and conflict dynamics. In Socotra, comparatively higher stability still coexists with weak PA governance, overlapping authorities, rapid tourism/land-grab pressures, invasive species pathways, and climate hazards (monsoon/cyclone floods) – all of which degrade habitats and undermine restoration (root causes/barriers). In Aden, the protracted conflict has eroded environmental institutions, enabled informal land conversion, polluted near-shore habitats, strained waste services, and heightened poverty-driven resource use around wetlands and mangroves (root causes), amplifying risks of elite capture, further encroachment, and species decline. Applying GEF's FCAS guidance, the project will (i) use conflict-sensitive, do-no-harm approaches and iterative risk monitoring; (ii) map and engage stakeholders – EPA, governorates/municipalities, customary leaders, fisher groups, tourism operators, CBOs/CSOs, universities, and private actors; and (iii) prioritize inclusive co-management agreements and livelihood co-benefits to reduce grievance and strengthen legitimacy. Vulnerable groups include IDPs and conflict-affected households in Aden's peripheries, women and youth with limited resource access/voice in both landscapes, artisanal fishers and pastoralists exposed to livelihood shocks, and ecosystem-dependent minorities near PA boundaries (risks/opportunities). Opportunities include: building on UNESCO/Ramsar/KBA status for financing and enforcement leverage; community nurseries and turtle-beach stewardship that convert restoration/tourism into incomes; and nature-based solutions in mangroves/wetlands that simultaneously buffer storms, improve water quality, and create jobs – implemented through adaptive management, transparent benefit-sharing, and grievance redress mechanisms to dampen conflict incentives.

Both Socotra Archipelago and the Aden Wetlands fall under contexts addressed by the GEF FCS Guidance. Yemen as a whole is affected by protracted conflict, weak governance, institutional fragility, and socio-economic hardship. The Aden wetlands are directly impacted by localized conflict, land encroachment, and industrial expansion, while Socotra, though comparatively stable, experiences weak governance, resource overuse, and growing external pressures. Both sites therefore embody the fragility dimensions the Guidance Note seeks to address which necessitates the conflict-sensitive, adaptive, and inclusive conservation approaches adopted by this project and described in detail within Appendix 8.

First, risk and context analyses will be continuously updated, integrating conflict dynamics, governance weaknesses, and climate-related hazards into the Theory of Change and region and site-level management planning. In Aden, where security risks are higher, project activities are limited to safely accessible wetlands and will be implemented through participatory land-use and wetland

management planning, micro-granting for gender-responsive livelihoods, and Ramsar nomination, all designed to build trust and legitimacy among local communities.

In Socotra, the approach emphasizes strengthening wise governance of protected areas and co-management with communities, balancing ecological priorities with local livelihood needs. Tools include the revision of the Socotra zoning plan, community nurseries, rotational grazing zones, invasive alien species management interventions, and an island-wide turtle conservation program. These activities align with FCS guidance by reducing drivers of grievance such land grabbing and resource exclusion while generating co-benefits from activities such as sustainable recreation and ecotourism-linked income, sustainable resource use that enhance resilience.

Across both sites (Aden and Socotra), the project will apply inclusive and rigorous stakeholder engagement tools such as gender-responsive consultations, local advisory groups, and grievance redress mechanisms. Vulnerable groups, including women, youth, artisanal fishers and herders, will be targeted for empowerment through livelihood diversification, decision-making roles, and tailored capacity building. A Knowledge Management System will capture lessons and enable replication under uncertain conditions, ensuring adaptive learning.

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[1] https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1463/#:~:text=Socotra%20is%20globally%20important%20for,species%2C%2095%25%20endemism).

Gender inequality in Yemen, including Aden and the Socotra Archipelago, is severe, with women facing systemic barriers to education, employment, decision-making, and resource control. Their roles are concentrated in unpaid household and subsistence work, while men dominate income-generating activities. Conflict, poverty, and environmental degradation further deepen these disparities, leaving women more vulnerable yet with limited opportunities to influence biodiversity governance and sustainable livelihoods. The project will apply a gender-responsive approach, integrating gender concerns across all components through the following actions:

Participatory assessments: Engage with women´s groups, community elders, and youth in Socotra and Aden to identify gendered needs and constraints.

Barrier analysis: Identify social, economic, and cultural barriers that hinder women's full participation and propose targeted interventions to reduce them.

Sex-disaggregated indicators: Develop indicators and targets to monitor gender-related impacts (e.g., participation rates, income changes, training outcomes).

Inclusive recruitment: Ensure gender balance in project staffing, consultancies, and decision-making bodies.

Alignment with SDG 5, particularly Target 5.4 on unpaid care, and gender-equitable access to natural resources.

Advocacy, communications, knowledge production, and knowledge management will be designed to be gender-responsive by ensuring that women's voices, experiences, and knowledge systems are adequately represented and disseminated. All project communications will apply gender-responsive language, imagery, and messaging, while advocacy efforts will highlight the role of women as agents of change in biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods. Knowledge products, such as policy briefs, manuals, and case studies, will systematically capture and document women's contributions, challenges, and success stories, ensuring they inform decision-making processes at local, national, and regional levels. Knowledge-sharing platforms will be inclusive, creating safe and accessible spaces for women, youth, and marginalized groups to engage, while capacity-building in knowledge management will intentionally target both women and men, supporting equitable participation in data generation, use, and dissemination.

The situation is more complicated and dire in the Aden wetlands. Aden's wetlands are increasingly facing pressure from industrial development at the expense of conservation efforts, leading to habitat loss and potential environmental damage. This shift from conservation to industrial use is driven by various factors, including population growth, economic development needs, and the prioritization of short-term economic gains over long-term ecological sustainability. More stakeholders are responsible for the wide range of impacts on the integrity of these coastal wetland habitats, including those impacts from industrial sectors, sewage treatment plants, mining operations, infrastructure development, and urbanization. These large wetlands' systems are aggregated at the western part of Aden and some portions of these habitats have been identified and managed by the EPA/MOWE

of Yemen to protect their values and maintain their ecological conditions to host the migratory birds that use the wetland as a critical stopover along their migration pathways[2] (Al-Thalabi 2005; Wings Over Wetlands 2009). That included support by the Regional GEF/UNEP 'African-Eurasian Flyways Project'[3], which included the Aden Wetlands among the regional network of critical sites for migratory waterbirds in partnership with BirdLife International, Wetlands International, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the African Eurasian Waterbirds Agreement (AEWA) Conventions, and the Ramsar Convention. At the time the conflict in Yemen/Aden started, these wetlands were increasingly threatened by the depletion of their natural resources caused by the increasing local impacts from the surrounding population who uses these habitats for their livelihood (and even more during times of conflict where no alternatives are available), increasing pollution, local conflicts and consequent lack of security and protection. This project will support EPA efforts to restore and protect the wetland ecosystem through a participatory management approach with the engagement of key local stakeholders, including CBOs (including women and youth groups), private sector/industry, and local authorities. The EPA will also be supported to enhance the wetlands' recognition as a site of global importance, through the nomination as a Ramsar site, and by enhancing integrated and community-based management of critical wetlands, while also promoting wetland restoration and supporting local livelihoods.

This project will address the continuous challenges on natural resources in Socotra and Aden, and will upscale the positive lessons learned from the Socotra project GEF/UNEP/EPA/RSCN ID#5347, by increasing the number of effectively managed protected areas and by introducing community-based and more financially sustainable mechanisms such as ecotourism and socioeconomic activities that are in line with the natural and cultural heritage of the archipelago. In Aden, the project will promote the integrated management of the wetlands with higher levels of community and local stakeholder involvement supported by a better understanding of the ecosystem services provided by the wetlands and an improved zoning plan.
The long-term Project Objective is to effectively conserve biodiversity in the Socotra Archipelago and sustainably manage the Aden wetlands in Yemen. The following barriers are identified and will be addressed by the project's interventions:

Barrier 1: Weak Governance and Institutional Capacity: The political context in Yemen is complex, unstable, and affected by a prolonged conflict for more than a decade, leading to weak environmental management and governance. This includes poor institutional capacity for conservation and sustainable management of natural resources and the protection of biodiversity, which significantly hinders efforts for the effective protection of the Aden wetlands and the Socotra Archipelago. The conflict situation in Yemen exacerbates governance issues, making it extremely difficult to promote and coordinate efforts and implement integrated landscape approaches. The absence of an uninterrupted and functional national coordination mechanism further fragments conservation efforts, leading to overlaps, gaps, and inefficiencies in wetlands and biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management in the Aden wetlands and Socotra Archipelago alike.

Barrier 2: Unsustainable Resource Use and Degradation of Wetlands: the Aden wetlands and the Socotra Archipelago face severe resource depletion and degradation due to a wide range of factors including: un-regulated infrastructure developments especially in coastal areas, uncontrolled tourism development (in Socotra only), unsustainable practices in the agriculture, fishing, and livestock production sectors, industrial pollution, lack of adequate waste management systems. This threatens the ecological health of the Aden wetlands and the ecosystem services they provide, and in the Socotra Archipelago the well-being of local communities and the island's Natural Heritage as a viable basis for the local economy.

Barrier 3: Limited Awareness and Knowledge: Decision-makers and stakeholders in Yemen may not fully appreciate the economic and social importance of conservation in Aden wetlands and Socotra Archipelago, partly also due to the understandable distraction due to the complex political and conflict situation. Limited awareness and knowledge hinder the support for and the effective implementation of conservation efforts.

The project involves various stakeholders including institutional stakeholders (EPA/Ministry of Water and Environment (MOWE), Governors' Offices, Agriculture, Fisheries, Land Use Planning, Port/Airport authorities, Police, Tourism, etc.), local Community-based Organisations, including women associations, nature clubs in schools (already supported by the EPA in both Aden and Socotra) and youth groups, as well as the private sector (e.g, industry, tourism, fisheries, airline carriers, etc.), international partners such as the UNESCO / World Heritage Centre, FAO, the Zayed Fund, the Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI) (on IAS), the University of Rome La Sapienza, the Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh (RBGE - UK) and their Centre for Middle Eastern Plants (CMEP), University of Brno (Franklinia project), BirdLife International, the Senkengerg Institute (Germany) Ramsar Convention Secretariat, and other local actors who have different roles and interests in the project. A comprehensive table analysing stakeholders and their roles in the project is provided in Appendix 5, attachment 5c, as part of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan. The stakeholders will be involved in the project development phase through various mechanisms such as regular consultations, workshops, meetings, participation in the project steering committee or advisory team, and other feedback mechanisms as described in the Stakeholders Engagement Plan (see attachment C3).

In general, **stakeholders** in both Aden and Socotra are strongly affected by the ongoing **conflict**. In Aden, wetlands are under pressure from industrial development, pollution, and land encroachment, with local communities relying on these habitats for fuelwood, grazing, and agriculture in the absence of alternatives during insecurity. In Socotra, although comparatively morw stable, weak governance, invasive species, unregulated tourism, and local disputes over land and resources intersect with poverty and fragile institutions.

The protracted conflict in Yemen is also shaping **gender** dynamics in ways that directly affect the conservation project in Aden and Socotra. As highlighted in the annex, women and youth face systemic barriers to education, decision-making, and access to resources, with their work concentrated in unpaid household and subsistence roles while men dominate income-generating activities. The GEF guidance note on fragile and conflict-affected situations stresses that conflict exacerbates such inequalities, heightening the risks of exclusion, exploitation, and elite capture. Vulnerable groups in these landscapes include internally displaced persons, conflict-affected households in Aden's peripheries, female-headed households, artisanal fishers, pastoralists, and ecosystem-dependent minorities near protected area boundaries. Conflict reduces mobility, restricts women's participation in project meetings, and intensifies dependence on degrading resources, deepening their vulnerability to shocks. For this reason, gender-responsive actions – such as participatory assessments, barrier analysis, inclusive recruitment, and sex-disaggregated indicators – are integrated into the project to ensure that women, youth, and marginalized groups can benefit and participate equally.

These conditions undermine trust, continuity, and equitable participation in conservation.

As the consultations showed, the **private sector** holds potential to contribute positively: in Socotra, ecotourism and community-based tourism initiatives can generate sustainable income if regulated, while in Aden, sustainable agriculture, fisheries, and wetland restoration enterprises (such as mangrove nurseries) could create jobs and help buffer environmental risks.

Policy Challenges potentially undermining Nature Conservation and SLM in Aden and Socotra include:

In the Energy Sector: (i) *heavy reliance on biomass and fossil fuels:* Due to limited access to electricity and the high cost plus limited availability of LPG gas, many communities resort to wood and charcoal for cooking and heating, accelerating deforestation and habitat degradation in both Aden and Socotra, and (ii) *lack of renewable energy integration:* National energy strategies in Yemen have yet to prioritize solar or wind energy, despite Yemen's high potential, especially in Socotra (where in addition to solar, wind is an additional viable option especially during the SW Monsoon season). This situation limits sustainable alternatives and increases pressure on natural resources.

With regards to Industrial Development: *(i) unregulated coastal development:* In Aden, industrial expansion along the coast—including port activities, salt mining and informal construction—threatens mangrove ecosystems and wetlands, and *(ii) Pollution and waste management gaps:* weak enforcement of environmental regulations allows industrial effluents and solid waste to contaminate fragile habitats, particularly in urban peripheries and especially around Aden, and to a much lesser extent also near the major urban centres of Hadibu and Qalansya in Socotra, as there is no major industrial development in the archipelago.

Agriculture: (i) *Unsustainable irrigation and land clearing:* Agriculture in Aden is mainly located around the wetlands and it remains largely at the subsistence level, while in Socotra is almost absent except for date palm cultivations, livestock herding and some limited home-based horticulture for local consumption and very limited trading. National policies underpinning agricultural modernization efforts in Yemen have often overlooked traditional water-conserving and rangeland management practices, leading to over-extraction of groundwater and degradation of habitats. (ii) *Top-down aid interventions:* International agricultural aid has sometimes failed to incorporate local ecological knowledge, resulting in projects that unintentionally harm biodiversity and soil health.

Land-Use and Planning: *(i) Conflict-driven land degradation:* The war has led to widespread deforestation, overgrazing, and loss of vegetation cover, especially in peri-urban areas of Aden, and (ii) *Absence of integrated land-use planning:* There is no cohesive national framework for balancing development with conservation, leaving ecologically sensitive zones like Socotra vulnerable to ad hoc exploitation.

These policy gaps, and the associated suboptimal policy implementation capacity that is further exacerbated during this conflict period, highlight the urgent need -duly considered in the design of this GEF project- to support localized, community-based and ecologically informed planning that integrates conservation goals with energy, agriculture, and development strategies. This approach is applied throughout project activities and is also reflected in the engagement of local representatives of all the above

productive sectors in the project's local advisory bodies in both Socotra and Aden, to ensure consistent exchange of information and synergies in the formulation of sustainable management plans in both areas

Assessing project approach and design against a set of future narratives: The project intervention logic was tested against key drivers on biodiversity loss set against four different future scenarios with varying levels of climate change and varying levels of growth in the economy and nature-based tourism. Project interventions aim to enhance collaboration among sectors such as between community-based PA management, local authorities, fishing, tourism, private sector, and international research institutions in Socotra; between local communities, industrial development, and local authorities in Aden; and between quarantine services, border controls, environment, agriculture, and land development for IAS management in Socotra. Project activities focus on institutional strengthening and sustainable livelihood approaches in key seascapes and coastal and inland landscapes and wetlands at both these complex and diverse sites. The project's approach and Theory of Change, outlined in the following **section B**, is designed to be resilient and robust across multiple possible future scenarios outlined above, and to deliver enduring global environmental benefits.

This project is designed to address the key drivers of environmental degradation outlined above, and the project's expected outcomes, outputs and activities focusing on institutional strengthening and enhanced policy coherence, capacity development and community empowerment in the management of protected areas and wetlands restoration and management, are constructed so as to maximize long term impact and sustainability, and to remain valid in all foreseeable scenarios in relation to projected climatic changes or variable degrees of economic development.

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[1] Franklinia Foundation : Supporting the world's threatened trees

[2] Critical Site Network - Wetlands International

[3] The Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project | AEWA

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section asks for a theory of change as part of a joined-up description of the project as a whole. The project description is expected to cover the key elements of good project design in an integrated way. It is also expected to meet the GEF's policy requirements on gender, stakeholders, private sector, and knowledge management and learning (see section D). This section should be a narrative that reads like a joined-up story and not independent elements that answer the guiding questions contained in the guidance document. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

The Situation: At present, the political context in Yemen is complicated, resulting in weak environmental management, which negatively affects the Aden wetlands and Socotra archipelago – a global biodiversity hotspot. Weak governance, poor technical capacity, unsustainable use of natural resources, and conflict between authorities are the driving factors of weak and ineffective management of the protected areas of Socotra. The conflict situation in Yemen also impacts the important wetland ecosystem of Aden and impairs its values through pollution, depletion of natural resources, and decline of the quality of surrounding livelihood opportunities.

The Project Intervention Logic: The project's theory of change describes the project's logic for addressing the problems described in the project rationale and achieving the intended global environmental benefits. The goal of this project is to implement effective biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management practices in the Aden wetlands and Socotra Archipelago in Yemen. Due to the limited capacities, the project, by combining two different sites in one country, will demonstrate an integrated approach to biodiversity conservation applicable to both sites. The challenges with the availability of human resources and institutional capabilities make managing two separate projects challenging. By merging the interventions in two sites, the project aims to pool resources for knowledge management, training, lessons learned, and best practices, benefiting both sites. This approach also combines efforts to mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management into policy and decision-making

processes. Integration also leverages the strengths of the Socotra team in biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management, enabling knowledge transfer and training for the Aden Wetlands. Additionally, the current challenges and limited staff availability, particularly in Aden, make the project with 2 different sites combined profitable in terms of knowledge and experience exchange.

Based on a Gender Analysis (Appendix 5), the project will take into consideration gender equity and will ensure that both men and women will play an important role in conservation and sustainable development. Both genders will be targeted in capacity building, enhancing local livelihoods, and knowledge management and dissemination (see the Gender Action Plan, Appendix 5). The project will make use of gender experts to consider the Yemeni gender context and try to overcome all the barriers at the time of project implementation. A diagram of the theory of change is presented in Figure 1 (and available as a separate file for easier reading).

A set of Theory of Change (ToC) diagrams is provided in **Figures 1a to 1e** below. **Figure 1a** presents a comprehensive bird's-eye view of the ToC, while **Figures 1b–1d** highlight three detailed cross-sections of the overall framework to facilitate easier viewing. **Figure 1e** summarizes the underlying assumptions and provides the legend.

The project seeks to catalyze biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource management and harness the country's conservation potential in Yemen by focusing operations exclusively in two relatively stable and accessible locations: the **Aden Wetlands**, confined to carefully selected sites in safer proximity to Aden city, and the **Socotra Archipelago**, which remains outside the direct conflict zone but is indirectly affected by limited central government support and unregulated development activities. By restricting interventions to these target areas, the project ensures that activities can be implemented under current conditions of fragility, while maintaining flexibility to pause or adapt should insecurity escalate. This deliberate geographic focus allows for more reliable stakeholder engagement and increases the likelihood of sustained outcomes in a complex national context. UNEP will maintain close collaboration with the UN Country Team and continue field missions to government-controlled areas to ensure interventions remain aligned with both conservation and humanitarian objectives.

The project is structured around four mutually reinforcing components. **First**, institutional and technical capacities will be strengthened at both national and local levels, including development of coordinated governance platforms, revisions to policy and regulations, and capacity building for the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and other key stakeholders. **Second**, site-level management will be implemented and demonstrated, ranging from wetland restoration and expansion of Ramsar sites in Aden to reinforced protection of Socotra's protected areas. Activities in Socotra include turtle conservation, invasive species management, sustainable harvesting of endemic tree species, and livelihood initiatives such as ecotourism and small-scale enterprises that particularly engage women and youth. **Third**, a comprehensive knowledge management and awareness system will be established, including an e-library and communication strategy, to overcome barriers created by Yemen's chronic lack of accessible environmental data and to foster broader societal support for conservation. **Fourth**, the project will operationalize an adaptive monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure learning, responsiveness, and accountability across all activities.

The **causal pathways** underlying this Theory of Change are based on the logic that strengthened institutions and improved governance will provide the enabling conditions for effective conservation; that empowered communities and functioning CBOs can lead management of natural resources in ways that improve both biodiversity outcomes and livelihoods; that knowledge generation, awareness, and gender-sensitive outreach can shift decision-making and behavior in favor of sustainable practices; and that an adaptive monitoring and evaluation framework will allow the project to remain effective despite the uncertainties of conflict, poverty, and climate pressures. Together, these pathways create the foundation for reducing key threats to biodiversity, restoring degraded ecosystems, and sustaining ecosystem services that underpin human well-being.

Core Assumptions (please note a fuller elaboration of these assumptions is provided in **Appendix 13**).

1. Policy makers remain committed to and prioritize biodiversity and wetlands despite challenges and complexities in Yemen.
2. Political will and regional stability are maintained throughout the duration of the project.
3. Strong institutional capacity, knowledge generation, and efficient management are sufficient to overcome political constraints and enable sustainable site management.
4. The Environmental Protection Agency, with support from RSCN, can effectively coordinate among local, national, and international stakeholders.

5. Community buy-in is established and sustained throughout the project's duration.

6. Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is secured at inception and planning stages.

7. The capacity of community-based organizations (CBOs) in Socotra is sufficiently enhanced to ensure their operation beyond the life of the project.

8. Uninterrupted and continued access to key project sites in Aden and Socotra is maintained.

9. If suitable alternative livelihood practices are identified and promoted, local communities will accept and adopt them sustainably.

10. Knowledge generated through research is effectively transferred into practical application.

11. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system is adequately staffed, resourced, and systematically implemented.

12. Stability in target areas is preserved, allowing safe access and stakeholder engagement.

13. Close and continual institutional collaboration with national and local authorities, as well as UN partners, is maintained despite financial and governance constraints

Risk and Mitigation

The principal external risk is the potential escalation of armed conflict or spillover of insecurity into project sites, which could disrupt access, halt implementation, and undermine cooperation with local stakeholders. To mitigate this, the project will confine its activities to zones assessed as safe and accessible, build in contingency protocols for suspension and resumption, and rely on local partners for continuity where feasible. Regular coordination with the UN Country Team will provide real-time monitoring of the security situation, enabling rapid adaptation of project strategies. For a complete risk assessment, including other identified risks and their mitigation measures, refer to **Table 5.**

This condensed narrative accompanying that below ToC diagram sets out the project's causal logic, the enabling assumptions on which it rests, and its conflict-related risk management strategy. It is designed to highlight the critical pathways of change, while full details at a much more granular level are available in **Appendix 13** and the complete risk framework is presented in **Table 5**.The livelihood improvement approach has proven to be successful as a tool for conserving natural resources in Yemen, Socotra, and the surrounding areas. This is evident in the terminal evaluation report by Infield and Al Deen (2003) for the project titled *"Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity of Socotra Archipelago"* (Infield 2003, 7). The report emphasizes the positive impact on Socotrans' livelihoods, attributing it to the collective efforts of the government, donors, and private investments. Furthermore, it suggests that, in the long term, *'the populace stands to benefit from the development of sustainable livelihoods based on the islands' natural resources, particularly in fisheries and tourism'*. The proposed project will consider integrating biodiversity and nature-based solutions in sustainable development, aligning with the UN's approach to biodiversity protection. This entails ensuring a clean and healthy environment through proper and effective management of protected areas and their surroundings. Additionally, the project aims to empower local/indigenous people through capacity building and enable them to effectively manage natural resources in protected areas and beyond. Poverty reduction is anticipated through the wise use and effective management of resources, leading to a fair distribution of benefits. Land encroachments, especially in vital biodiversity areas, will be minimized. Ecosystem restoration, especially for endemic and endangered species, will be prioritized by building upon current efforts and replicating them in other sites. The overarching logic of the project intervention is that by strengthening the institutional, regulatory, and technical capacity for sustainable management and conservation (Project Component 1) and implementing efficient knowledge generation and management (Project Component 3), the project will ensure sustainable site-level management of the Aden wetlands and Socotra Archipelago (Project Component 2). This will lead to the reduction of the main threats to biodiversity and an enhancement of the status of the environment, which will result in the maintenance and enhancement of ecosystem services, resulting in positive effects on human wellbeing. All this is supported by practicing adaptive management via implementing an effective monitoring and evaluation system (Project Component 4).

ıeory of Change

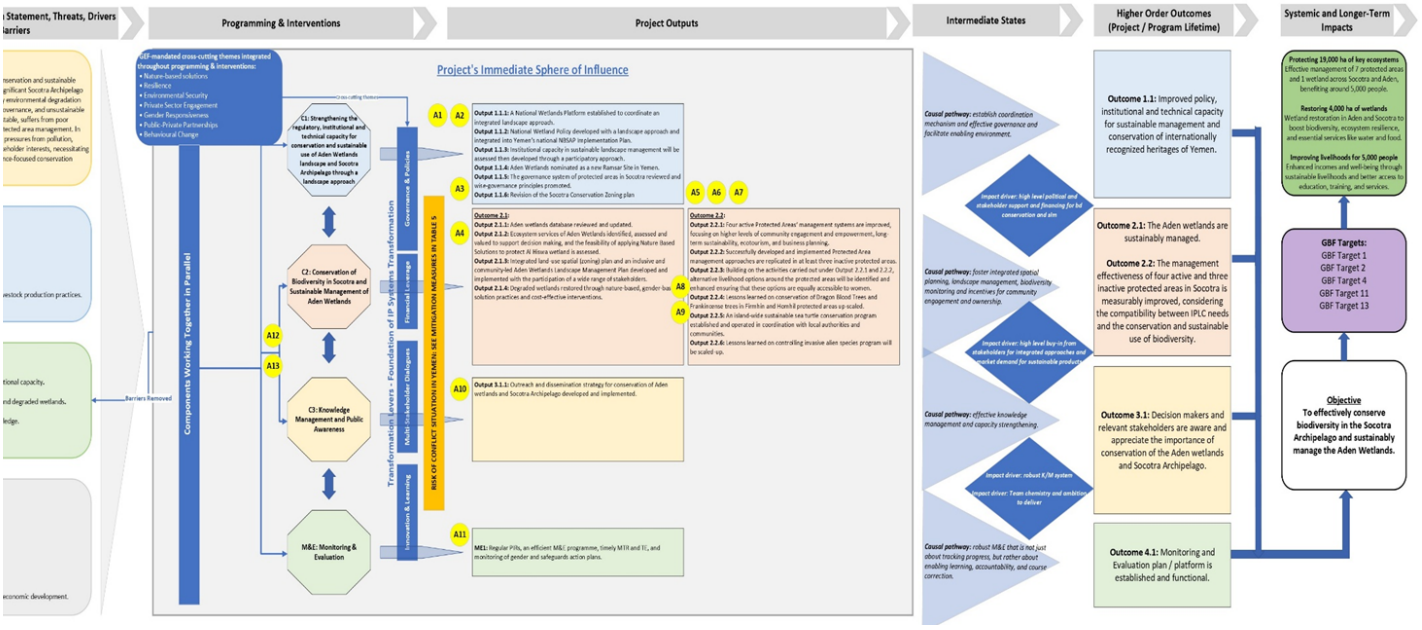
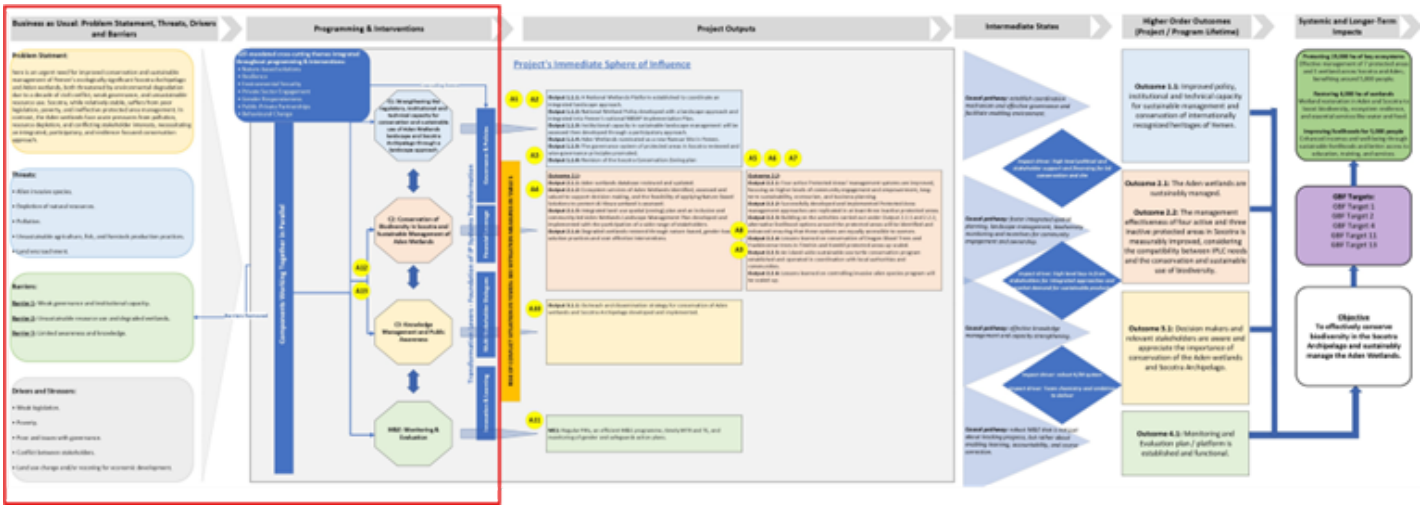


Figure 1b: Theory of Change (left-hand view):



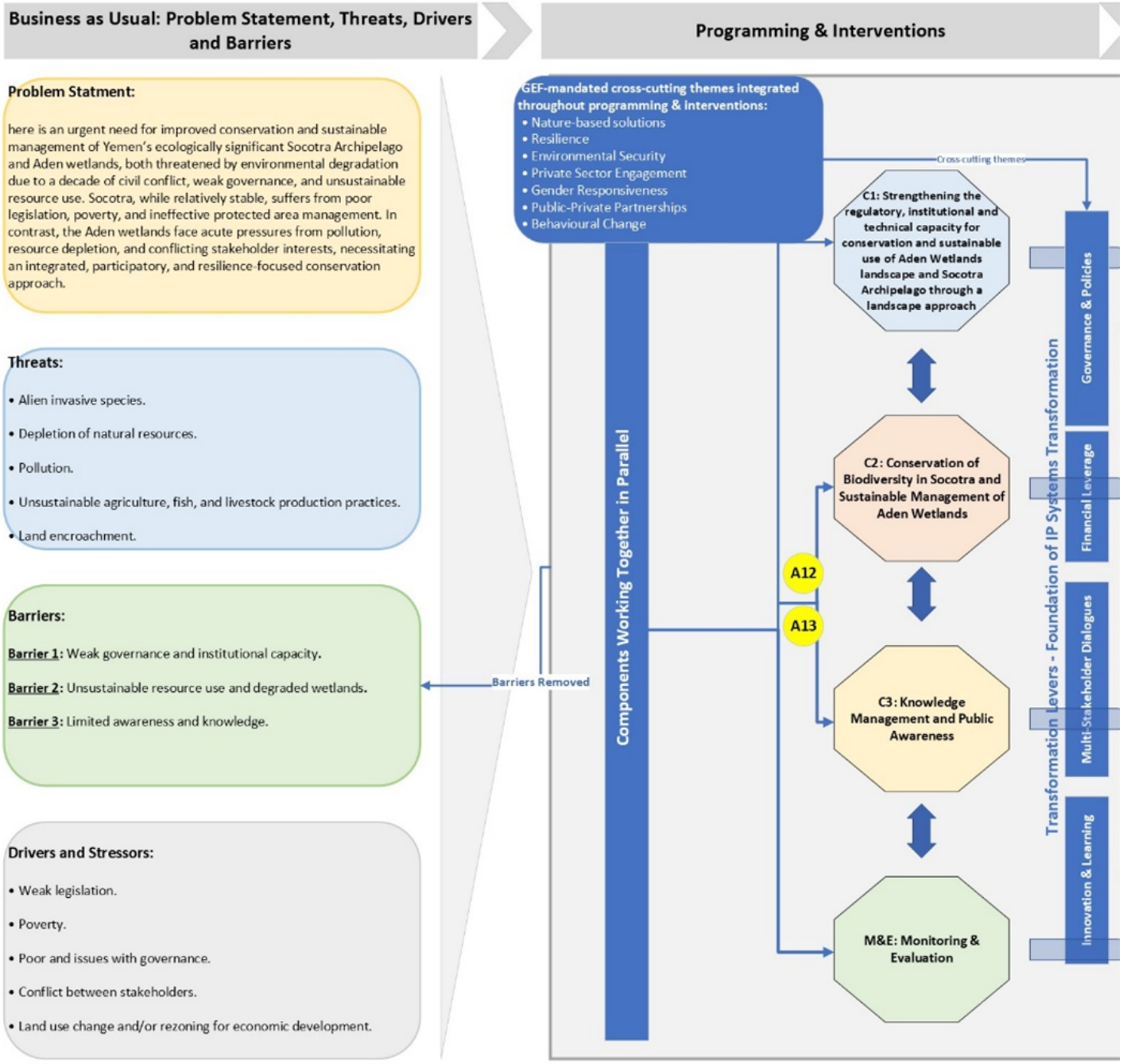
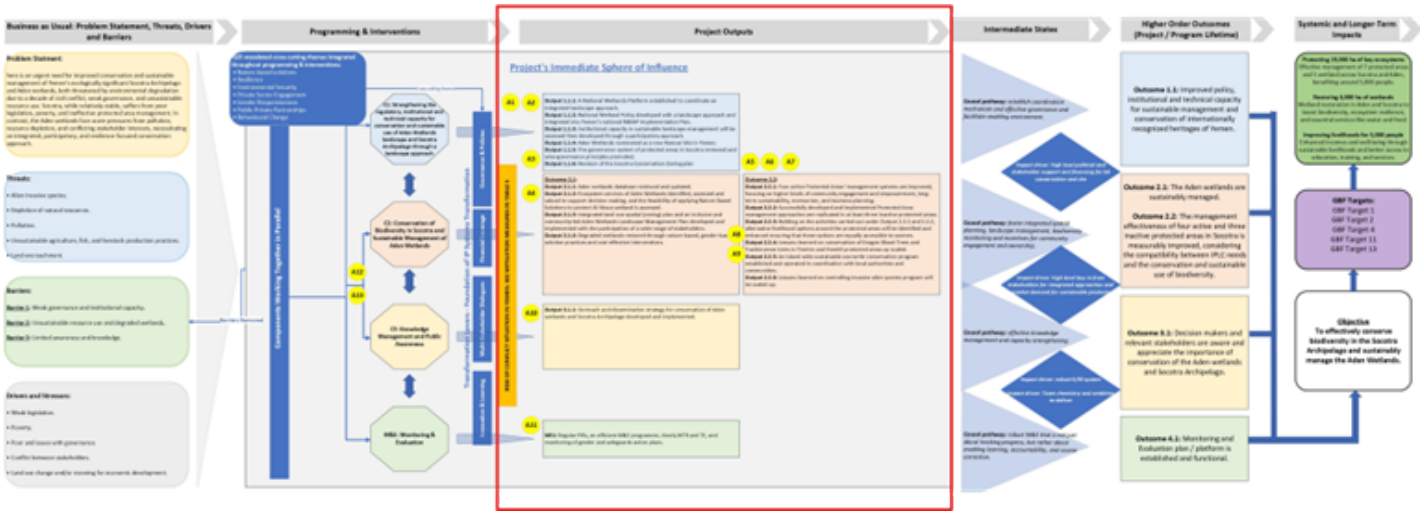


Figure 1c: Theory of Change (central view):


Business as Usual: Problem Statement, Threats, Drivers and Barriers
Programming & Interventions
Project Outputs
Intermediate States
Higher Order Outcomes (Project / Program Lifetime)
Systemic and Longer-Term Impacts
Project's Immediate Sphere of Influence
Objective
To effectively conserve biodiversity in the Socotra Archipelago and sustainably manage the Aden Wetlands.

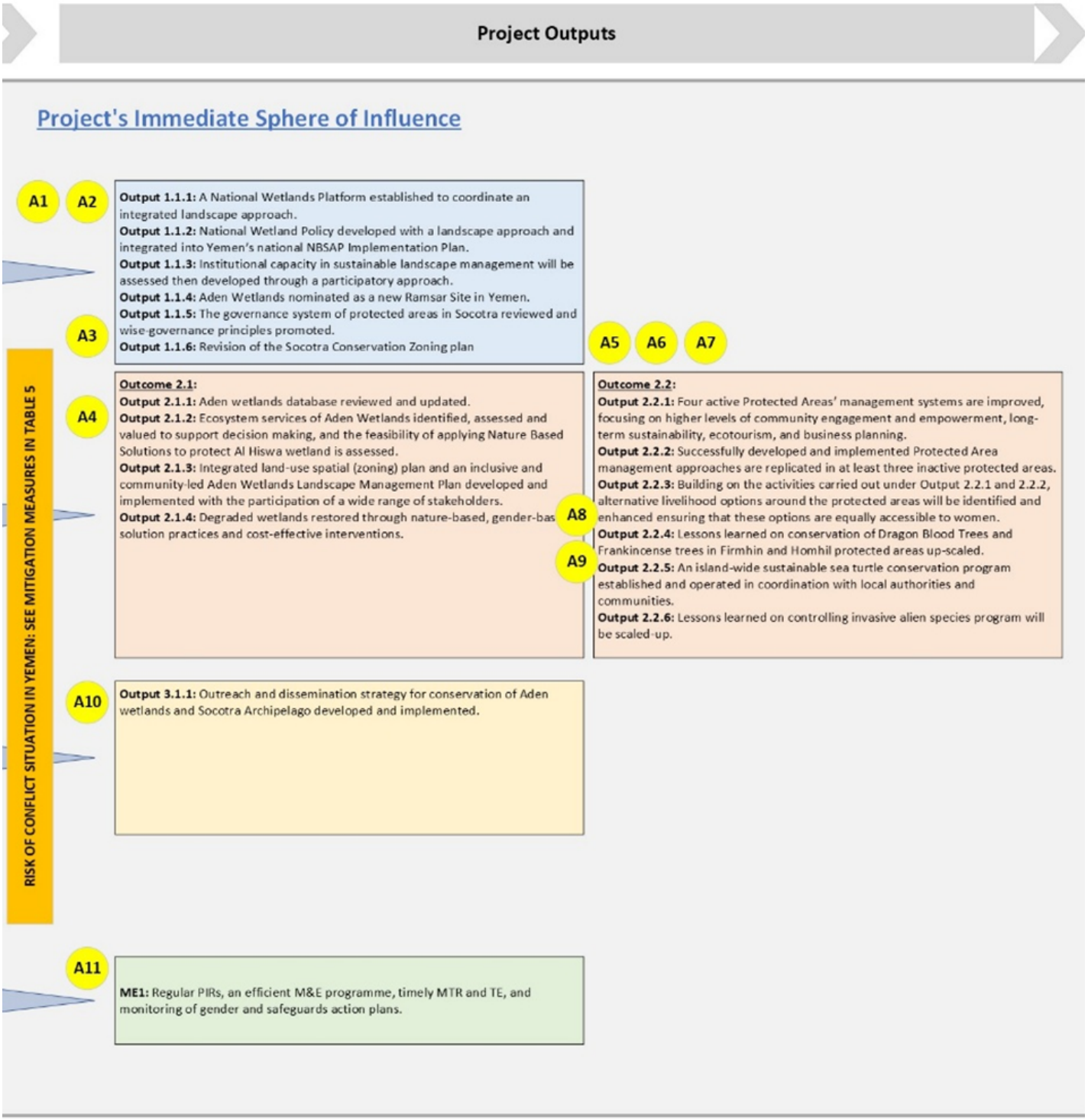
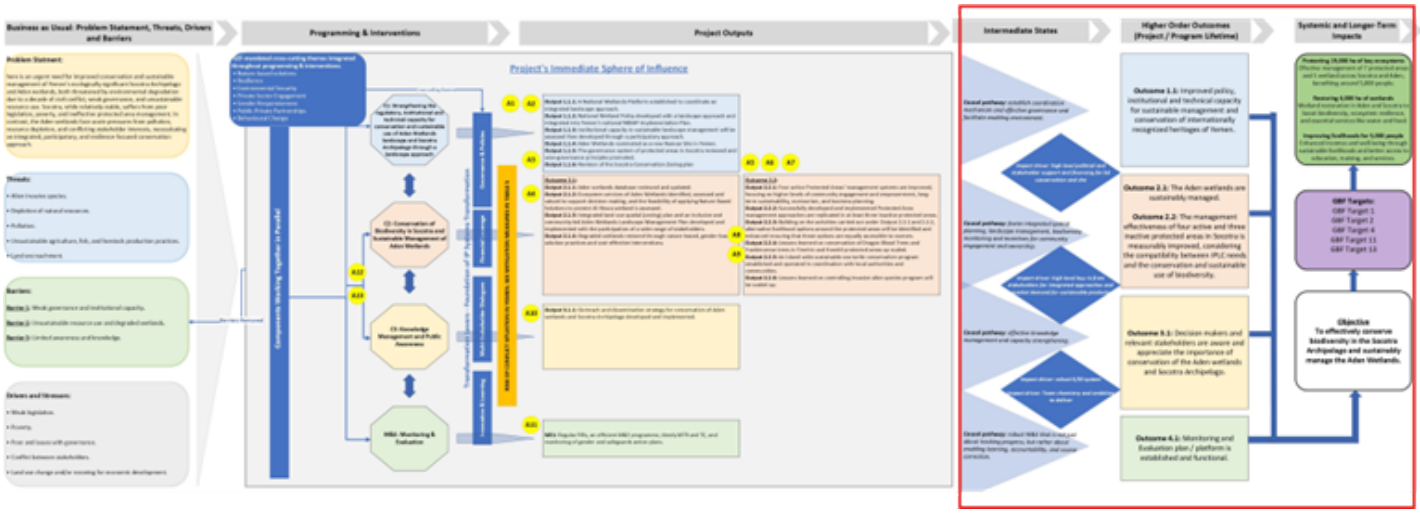


Figure 1d: Theory of Change (right-hand view):


Business as Usual: Problem Statement, Threats, Drivers and Barriers
Programming & Interventions
Project Outputs
Intermediate States
Higher Order Outcomes (Project / Program Lifetime)
Systemic and Longer-Term Impacts
Project's Immediate Sphere of Influence
Components Working Together in Parallel
C1: Strengthening the regulatory, institutional and technical capacity for conservation and sustainable use of Aden Wetlands landscape and Socotra Archipelago through a landscape approach
C2: Conservation of Biodiversity in Socotra and Sustainable Management of Aden Wetlands
C3: Knowledge Management and Public Awareness
M&E: Monitoring & Evaluation
Outcome 1.1: Improved policy, institutional and technical capacity for sustainable management and conservation of internationally recognized heritages of Yemen.
Outcome 2.1: The Aden wetlands are sustainably managed.
Outcome 2.2: The management effectiveness of four active and three inactive protected areas in Socotra is measurably improved, considering the compatibility between IPLC needs, and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
Outcome 3.1: Decision makers and relevant stakeholders are aware and appreciate the importance of conservation of the Aden wetlands and Socotra Archipelago.
Outcome 4.1: Monitoring and Evaluation plan / platform is established and functional.
GBF Targets:
GBF Target 1
GBF Target 2
GBF Target 4
GBF Target 11
GBF Target 14
Objective
To effectively conserve biodiversity in the Socotra Archipelago and sustainably manage the Aden Wetlands.

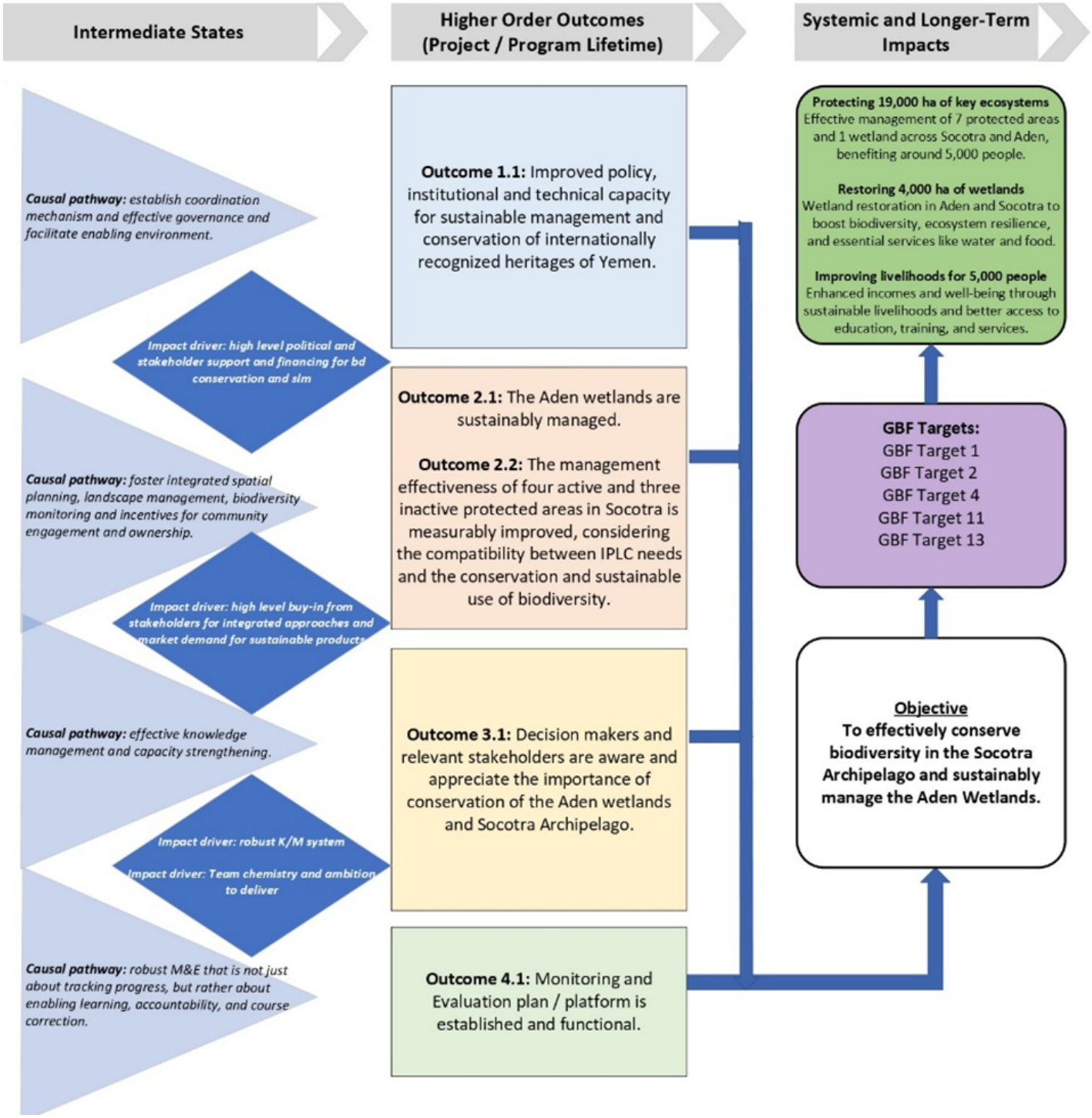
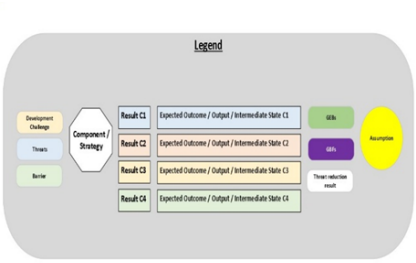


Figure 1e: Theory of Change (assumptions + legend):

Planning and TOC Assumptions:
Assumption 1: Policy makers remain committed to and prioritize biodiversity and wetlands despite challenges and complexities in Yemen.
Assumption 2: Political will and regional stability maintained throughout duration of the project.
Assumption 3: Strong institutional capacity, knowledge generation and efficient management are enough to overcome the complex political situation in Yemen, and provide preconditions for sustainable site management in Aden wetlands and Socotra archipelago.
Assumption 4: The Environmental Protection Agency, with support from the RSCN, will effectively facilitate coordination among relevant local, national and international stakeholders, enabling constructive engagement, reducing inter-agency conflicts, and fostering functional cooperation throughout project implementation.
Assumption 5: Community buy-in established and maintained throughout duration of the project.
Assumption 6: Free and Prior Informed Consent secured at inception and planning phase.
Assumption 7: The capacity of local community-based organizations (CBOs) in Socotra and will be sufficiently enhanced during the project to enable their self-sustained operation beyond the project's duration, ensuring the long-term effective management of protected areas.
Assumption 8: Uninterrupted and continued access to key project sites in Aden and the Socotra archipelago.
Assumption 9: If suitable alternative livelihood practices are appropriately identified and promoted, they will be accepted by local communities and adopted sustainably over the long term.
Assumption 10: Knowledge transferred from research to practical application.
Assumption 11: The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system will be adequately staffed, resourced, and systematically implemented, ensuring timely tracking of progress, adaptive management, and informed decision-making throughout the project lifecycle.
Assumption 12: The project assumes stability in target areas throughout the duration of its implementation. Security conditions in Aden's designated sites and the Socotra Archipelago remain sufficiently stable to allow safe access and effective stakeholder engagement.
Assumption 13: It is assumed there will be close and continual institutional collaboration. National and local authorities (MOWE/EPA) and other UN partners remain willing and able to coordinate, despite broader governance and financial constraints.
Risk: There is a risk of escalation of armed conflict or spillover of insecurity into project sites disrupts access and stakeholder cooperation. Mitigation: the project will focus only o target areas deemed secure and safe to allow for smooth project operations, it will also ensure consistent coordination with the UN country team to take stock of any changes in the safety and security situation and adapt project strategy accordingly. It will also establish flexible implementation arrangements, including contingency protocols for suspending/resuming activities, reliance on local partners for continuity, and continuous monitoring in coordination with the UN Country Teams. See table 5 for more information.



The project will **generate Global Environmental Benefits** in the BD and LD focal areas, which would not have accrued without the GEF project, by contributing to the following targets:

Table 3 Global environmental benefits and GEF Core Indicators (including comparison with PIF)

Global Environmental Benefits and GEF Core Indicators	Targets at PIF	Targets at CEO Endorsement (as verified during PPG)
GEF Core Indicator BD 1.2 Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness (hectares)	9,673 ha	6,536 ha (All 3 terrestrial PAs in Socotra)
CI BD 1.2: METT Score increase	20%	20% : Homhil: 57.6 Firmhin: 37.2 Skand: 34.8
GEF Core Indicator BD 2.2 Marine protected areas under improved management (ha)	758 ha	1,134 ha (All 3 marine PAs in Socotra)
CI BD 2.2: METT Score increase	20%	20%: Di Hamri: 72 Roosh: 57.6 Abalhin: 37.2
GEF Core Indicator LD 3.4: Areas of wetlands (including estuaries and mangroves) under restoration (ha)	4,000 ha (Aden Wetlands Component 2)	1,840 ha (All Aden wetlands + Detwah lagoon in Socotra)
GEF Core Indicator BD 4.1: Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (ha)	8,800 ha (Aden Wetlands)	1,238 ha (All target Aden wetlands combined)
GEF Core Indicator GHG 6.5: Carbon Sequestered, or emissions avoided in the sector of Agriculture, Forestry, and other Land Use (indirect)		-114,065 metric tons of CO2e
GEF Core Indicator 11: People benefiting from GEF-financed investments:	5,000 people (2500 F and 2500 M)	5,035 people (2,502 M and 2,533 F)

The targets were accurately verified during the PPG phase through consultations with the Yemeni EPA, the RSCN, and other partners. This process included stakeholder surveys, site visits by the local EPA team in Aden and Socotra, consultations with national and international experts, and an extensive literature review.

While the target areas in Socotra were generally confirmed, the targets for the Aden Wetlands had to be significantly revised downwards. This adjustment reflected the actual safety and security situation on the ground, the capacity of stakeholders, and project resources. The aim was to set realistic and achievable targets that would allow for safe project implementation and meaningful measurement of project impact.

The PPG consultations highlighted the ongoing localized conflict in mainland Yemen, particularly around the city of Aden, some of which are near military installations. This raised significant concerns about the local safety and security situation, affecting the feasibility of project activities in some of the initially anticipated target areas in the Aden wetlands. Consequently, it was determined that project activities would be realistically feasible in only three out of the original seven target areas in the Aden wetlands. These areas were chosen due to their proximity to the city, accessibility, and better safety and security conditions.

As a result, the size of the target areas in the Aden Wetlands was significantly reduced at CEO Endorsement stage compared to the PIF stage. However, it is anticipated that all the Aden wetlands will eventually benefit indirectly from the project activities. The lessons learned and experience gained in the three confirmed project target areas can later be applied and scaled up in other wetland areas when the safety and security situation improve.

Anticipated Socioeconomic Benefits from the Project: The project is expected to deliver a wide range of socioeconomic benefits both nationally and locally in Yemen.

At the national level, the project will contribute to economic development by integrating biodiversity and nature-based solutions into sustainable growth strategies. It will contribute to the restoration and sustainable management of critical ecosystems in both target regions, thereby enhancing ecosystem services that underpin national food security, disaster risk reduction, and long-term economic resilience. Further, the project is foreseen to strengthen national professional, institutional and regulatory capacity, enabling the country to mobilize future public and donor financing. This is expected to generate measurable contributions to the Global Biodiversity Framework targets, such as increasing ecosystem services by 10% by 2030, which directly supports Yemen's national economy and its international commitments.

At the local level, in both target areas, the project emphasizes poverty reduction and livelihood diversification combined with sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation efforts. In Socotra, communities will be empowered to manage ecotourism initiatives, turtle nesting sites, and community nurseries, creating new income streams while reinforcing conservation. In Aden, local households will benefit from mangrove and wetland restoration, which provide storm buffering, cleaner water, and fisheries support. Capacity-building programs will enable local community groups to sustainably manage natural resources, ensuring fair and equitable benefit sharing. The project explicitly targets the inclusion of women, youth, and vulnerable groups in decision-making and income-generating opportunities, with more than 5,000 direct beneficiaries anticipated, equally divided between men and women.

Contribution to the Global Biodiversity Framework: The project aims to conserve and restore wetlands and protected areas in Yemen, especially in Aden and the Socotra Archipelago, which are important for biodiversity and ecosystem services. By establishing a national wetlands platform, reviewing, and revising the policy and legal framework, developing and implementing integrated

landscape and protected area management plans, and enhancing alternative livelihood options, the project supports the achievement of targets 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 11, 13, 21, 22 and 23 of the Global Biodiversity Framework as outlined below in this section as well as in **Appendix 13**.

GBF Target Alignment	Project Contributions and Alignment
GBF 1 - Plan and Manage all Areas to Reduce Biodiversity Loss	• Zoning and Management Plan for Aden wetlands established • Zoning Plan for Socotra revised and updated
GBF 2 - Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems	• Aden wetlands restoration in Al Hiswa • Habitat restoration and regeneration of rare trees in Socotra PAs
GBF 3 - Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas	• PA management effectiveness increased in Socotra and Aden wetlands • Community-based PA management introduced in Socotra
GBF 4 - Halt Species Extinction, Protect Genetic Diversity, and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts	• Protection of rare endemics in Socotra • Protection of critical stopover sites for migratory waterbirds in Aden • Protection of migratory sea turtles in Socotra
GBF 9 - Manage Wild Species Sustainably to Benefit People	• Communities empowered and benefiting from PAs in Socotra and Aden • Economic values of Nature's benefits to people (Ecosystem Services) assessed in the Aden Wetlands
GBF 11 - Restore, Maintain and Enhance Nature's Contributions to People GBF 13 - Increase the Sharing of Benefits from Genetic Resources, Digital Sequence Information and Traditional Knowledge	• Bio-prospecting ABS agreement explored in Socotra • Communities empowered to manage and benefit from ecotourism in PAs in Socotra • Restoration of coastal Mangroves in Aden wetlands
GBF 6 - Reduce the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50% and Minimize Their Impact	• The project supports the implementation of the Socotra Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan (SISSAP)
GBF 20 - Strengthen Capacity-Building, Technology Transfer, and Scientific and Technical Cooperation for Biodiversity GBF 21 - Ensure That Knowledge Is Available and Accessible to Guide Biodiversity Action	• Public Databases with BD information on Socotra and Aden wetlands to be created in Aden and re-established for Socotra
GBF 22 - Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for all GBF 23 - Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action	• The project will strive to ensure fair and reasonable representation of women, youth, and vulnerable groups in the project steering committee, advisory group, local working groups in Aden and Socotra. • The project will adopt a gender-responsive approach to ensure the effective participation of women, vulnerable groups, marginalized communities, and youth in achieving project outcomes, ensuring their fair, equitable, purposeful, and informed participation as appropriate and at all levels of project implementation

Additionally, the detailed table provided in **Appendix 13** offers a summary of how the project interventions will generate global environmental benefits that would not have accrued without the GEF project.

The project builds on a wealth of existing knowledge and information generated through (a) prior studies and efforts towards the management of the wetlands including prior management plans, the latest being issued in 2005, and (b) the wide range of studies, publications and reports generated by prior UN projects in

the Socotra Archipelago from 1997 onwards as provided by the EPA and by the national and international scientific community historically engaged in supporting conservation efforts in the Archipelago.

The project will also contribute to the re-vitalization and **consolidation of existing knowledge databases** and user-friendly platforms, covering existing information for both the Aden Wetlands and the Socotra Archipelago that will be centrally managed by the EPA with support from the RSCN and partners, and made accessible online to the wider public (ref. output 2.1.1).

The project will significantly contribute to **improving and consolidating national policies** underpinning conservation and restoration efforts at both project locations, through the review, realignment, and improvement of existing policies and regulations on Wetlands Management in Aden (ref. Output 1.1.2). The project will also endeavour to foster **enhanced policy coherence** through the creation of a new multi-stakeholder National Wetlands Platform in Aden and through upgraded zoning and management plans in both Aden and Socotra (outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.6 and 2.1.3)

The project's GEF resources will significantly contribute to the **development of national professional capacity** both at the national level (through on-the-job and formal training for EPA and institutional partners in both Aden and Socotra), as well as at the local level (through tailored training programs and on-the-job training for local communities to support their meaningful engagement in Protected Areas' management and livelihood enhancement programs in both Aden and Socotra).

The experience of UN-funded projects in the past 25+ years and the country's current socio-political and conflict situation creates a significant degree of uncertainty with regards to post-project financing. By embedding project operations within the national Environment Protection Authority of Yemen, the **project's exit strategy** aims to create the conditions for improving chances of securing sufficient funding to continue supporting critical conservation efforts post-project, by (a) enhancing EPA's capacity to advocate and secure **gradually increased government funding allocations** for nature conservation and for combating land degradation, as well as (b) increasing EPA's ability to successfully execute donor-assisted projects and therefore also **mobilize additional donor support** to complement the government's funding allocations.

The long-term **sustainability of project efforts** hinges upon the **national ownership** developed through the project's focus on developing national professional and institutional capacity within the EPA of Yemen and its key national and international partners. By promoting wide stakeholder engagement in conservation planning and engaging local communities in PA management, the project will also assist the EPA in strengthening the existing legal and regulatory environment and in delegating some elements of its work, allowing it to focus on its more strategic functions and policy-oriented role liaising with its main high-level institutional partners such as the Governors' Offices and relevant Ministries. Also, by embedding project operations within the national Environment Protection Authority of Yemen, the aims to create the conditions for securing sufficient funding to continue supporting critical conservation efforts post-project (see also above on 'project exit strategy').

The project will be highly **transformative** by supporting a comprehensive revision and upgrade of management plans for both Aden and Socotra, including a historic shift towards community-based protected areas management at both project sites and especially in the Socotra World Heritage Site. Specific examples of **innovations that will be introduced by the project** include e.g. the adoption and testing of totally new methodological approaches to foster the regeneration of threatened endemic tree species that could be then scaled-up across the islands, and more widely in the Arab region and globally, where similar arid habitat conditions exist (ref. Output 2.2.4), and the adoption of a simple and user-friendly and bi-lingual digital App to facilitate IAS management in Socotra that can serve as a blueprint for subsequent adoption also in the rest of Yemen and in the Arab region (ref. Output 2.2.6).

Project activities are designed to build national professional and institutional capacity and to leverage and mobilize international partnerships to foster the **sharing of lessons learned and the replication and scaling of project efforts**. Project efforts promoting IAS management, indigenous trees' regeneration, wise use of wetlands, sea turtles' conservation, application of Nature-based

Solution in water purification, and community-based protected areas management, are just some examples of approaches that can be replicated widely by (a) broadening project activities within the surroundings of the same target areas i.e. to other PAs in Socotra, and to other wetland areas in Aden (when the security situation will allow for that). The project will generate a wealth of technical guidelines and documentation on the above and other technical topics, that will be developed directly or translated into Arabic to facilitate wider **uptake and replication** locally, nationally and in the wider Arab Region, through a tailored communication and outreach strategy (ref. Component 3). This effort will also be enhanced through close coordination with the Yemen UN Country team that will facilitate **triangular know-how exchanges and cooperation** with all other UN agencies operating in Yemen as well as with other countries in the Arab-speaking Region where similar efforts are ongoing (e.g. specifically with Jordan, Oman, Saudi Arabia, UAE, etc.).

Communication, Learning and Knowledge Strategy: The project places communication, knowledge and learning at the centre of achieving conservation and sustainable development results, especially under fragile and conflict-affected conditions. For both the Socotra Archipelago and the Aden wetlands, the project's communication, knowledge and learning strategy ensures that outcomes are not only implemented but also institutionalized, adapted, and shared at national, regional, and global levels.

The strategy seeks to enhance adaptive management, strengthen institutional and community capacities, promote replication and upscaling of tested models, and ensure inclusivity and accessibility of knowledge for women, youth, and vulnerable groups. It is guided by principles of participation, integration of scientific and local knowledge, accessibility of outputs, sustainability through institutional anchoring, and iterative "learning by doing."

Knowledge from biodiversity databases, ecosystem service valuations, METT assessments, and case studies from restoration and conservation pilots, such as Dragon Blood and Frankincense regeneration, turtle protection, and wetland nature-based solutions, will be generated and disseminated by the project through a variety of tools and platforms. A National Wetlands Database and Knowledge Management System hosted by EPA will serve as the main platform, complemented by a digital repository of management plans and zoning maps, as well as a dissemination strategy with briefs, campaigns, and regional exchanges.

Learning will be embedded through regular reflection sessions, adaptive management reviews, external exchanges and study visits, and policy dialogues informed by ecosystem service studies. Training and capacity development will target EPA staff, local communities, and CBOs on co-management, invasive species control, NbS, and gender mainstreaming. Partnerships will ensure broad reach, with EPA leading knowledge capture, RSCN providing technical expertise, CBOs and IPLCs contributing traditional knowledge, and universities and international partners such as UNEP, Ramsar, UNESCO, FAO and IUCN supporting scaling and global integration. Lessons learned and best practices in implementing the gender-related aspects of the project, including gender mainstreaming and addressing gender-based violence will be captured and widely disseminated through reporting, dissemination and visibility activities, and communication channels of the project.

Knowledge indicators are embedded into the project's results framework and tracked through KAP surveys, scorecards, and PIR, MTR, and TE reports. Sustainability will be achieved by institutionalizing KM systems in EPA, embedding outputs into Yemen's NBSAP, Ramsar processes, and Socotra WH governance frameworks, and fostering community involvement and global partnerships to secure continuity. The strategy ensures that conservation outcomes in Socotra and Aden generate lasting lessons that strengthen Yemen's environmental governance while contributing to global biodiversity knowledge.

The **cost-effectiveness** of the project is maximized through a combination of approaches such as (a) the **execution modality that builds upon existing capacity, experience and facilitie**s of both the Environment Protection Authority in Yemen and the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature in Jordan, (b) **taking stock of data and expertise generated through several recent UN/GEF funded projects** in both Socotra and Aden, and (c) mobilizing a wide range of **national and international partners** with specific and recent experience in the project sites, to support all technical and capacity development aspects of the project.

Relevant prior GEF Projects	**Complementarity of this project GEF ID 11408** *'Integrated Conservation and Sustainable Development in Socotra Archipelago and Aden Wetlands, Yemen'* **with precursor projects in the same target areas**
GEF ID 5347 – UNEP-GEF *"Support to the Integrated Program for the Conservation and Sustainable Development of the Socotra Archipelago"*. This project **started in 2016 and was recently completed in December 2024**. The **Terminal Evaluation is being arranged by UNEP at the time of writing**. This project may be considered the 'precursor' of this new project with regards to activities in Socotra, and it had four components: (1)	This recently concluded project was implemented in the same target areas in Socotra and offered a strong baseline for the design and implementation of the activities of this new GEF project. The former project team of project 5347 in Socotra supported the PPG phase of this new project by providing baseline data, facilitating stakeholder consultations, and providing relevant site-

Improved Biodiversity Conservation/Protected Area Management (BD/PAM), (2) Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Management, (3) Sustainable Land Management/Land Degradation (SLM/LD), and (4) Enabling Environment (related to the institutional framework, capacity development and sustainable financing).	level information or target areas and proposed activities. This ensured that **all activities designed for this project 11408 do take stock of lessons learned, build upon, expand and are fully complementary with recently completed work under project 5347**. This is clarified in the extensive and detailed **description of project activities provided in Appendix 8** which refers to precursor completed work from project 5347 as and where relevant. **The target areas** of the new GEF project 11408 will cover some of the same target sites and expand activities to other sites within the Socotra World Heritage Site, taking stock and building upon of the achievements of project 5347.
GEF ID 1258: this Regional UNEP-GEF Project *'Enhancing Conservation of the Critical Network of Sites of Wetlands Required by Migratory Waterbirds on the African/Eurasian Flyways'* **started in 2006 and completed in 2010**. It included a component implemented in Yemen, supporting the conservation of the Aden wetland habitat as one of the many critical sites along the migration flyways for waterbirds. It supported the site restoration and set-up of awareness and educational facilities on site, as well as formulation of the first Management Plan for the Aden wetlands (ref. Wings Over Wetlands 2009).	The activities supported by a component of the Regional GEF project 1258 (Yemen being one of the 23 countries covered by this large regional project) offered important baseline information on the global biodiversity importance of the Aden wetlands for migratory birds, particularly for waterbirds conservation. The BD data collected, and wetlands management plan developed back in 2008-9 are still held by the MOWE/EPA team and will offer an important reference and baseline for the activities planned under this new GEF project 11408. **The target areas** of this new project in Aden include selected priority and accessible sites with the same broader Aden wetlands ecosystem.

UNEP's comparative advantages include its specific experience gained through the recent and successful implementation of GEF projects in Yemen, both in Socotra (GEF ID 5347) and Aden (GEF ID 1258), working closely with the EPA and the RSCN. UNEP's technical expertise and global GEF portfolio on Biodiversity Conservation and Land Degradation will also be leveraged to facilitate the sharing of know-how and lessons learned in the Region and globally. The **UNEP Disaster Risk Reduction Team** will also support the study on the feasibility of applying Nature-Based Solutions for water purification in the Al Hiswa wetland in Aden. Also, the expertise of two UNEP-hosted **Conventions on Migratory Species** (both the CMS and AEWA) can be leveraged to support conservation efforts for migratory waterbirds in the critical flyways site of the Aden wetlands and for migratory sea turtles in Socotra.

Project Alignment with the World Heritage Committee Decisions and Recommendations: The project design has direct linkages the World Heritage Committee's recommendations for Socotra Archipelago. These include strengthening governance, revising and enforcing the 2000 Conservation Zoning Plan, establishing a comprehensive management system, implementing strict biosecurity against invasive alien species, and halting unregulated development.

The project scope and activities respond to these priorities by supporting the revision of the zoning plan, expanding invasive alien species control and biosecurity protocols, and establishing an island-wide turtle conservation program.

Restoration of dragon's blood and frankincense habitats in Firmhin and Homhil, alongside strengthened management in Skund, Abilhin, Di Hamri, and Detwah, address concerns over habitat degradation, overgrazing, and resource pressures.

Crucially, the project will support the application of Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) to all development activities, ensuring that infrastructure, tourism, to ensure that development projects are rigorously evaluated for impacts on Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), as repeatedly requested by the Committee.

To maximize alignment with UNESCO and its advisory body IUCN, the project will include them in its structured stakeholders' coordination mechanisms. This will include: (i) seeking technical backstopping from IUCN in applying World Heritage best practice standards for management planning, invasive species control, and climate resilience; (ii) contributing to regular reporting and knowledge-sharing with UNESCO/WHC to ensure project outcomes feed directly into State of Conservation reports; (iii) support joint capacity-building initiatives for EPA staff, local authorities, and community groups, co-designed with IUCN, focusing on monitoring, biosecurity, and HIA methodologies; and (iv) inviting UNESCO and IUCN participation as a member of the project technical advisory body and in key review milestones, such as the finalization of the updated zoning plan and the development of an archipelago-wide management system.

Description of Project Intervention and Activities

Summary of changes from PIF to CEO Endorsement: the original TOC was significantly expanded to duly reflect the complexity of the project. The project's title, objective, components, outcomes, and associated total budget allocations were slightly adjusted to address comments from the GEF Secretariat to reduce M&E costs allocations. In some cases, outputs were considered as activities (as opposed to stand-alone outputs), so they were clustered under a single output. In other cases, new outputs were added as they were mentioned in the PIF text but were not mentioned in the results framework e.g. the nomination of Aden Wetlands as a Ramsar site and finalising the revision of the Socotra Zoning Plan. All outputs were clustered and divided between Socotra and Aden, to help with clarity and to better guide project execution. The coverage (in ha) of target areas in Aden was revised downwards (see justification provided under **Table 3** comparing project targets and GEBs at PIF and at CEO Endorsement). Project activities are summarized below, and a detailed description is provided in **Appendix 8** (detailed project workplan).

Project Objective: To effectively conserve biodiversity in the Socotra Archipelago and sustainably manage the Aden wetlands in Yemen

Component 1. Strengthening policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks and technical capacity for conservation and sustainable use of Aden wetlands landscape and Socotra Archipelago through a landscape approach

Outcome 1.1 Improved policy, institutional and technical capacity for sustainable management and conservation of internationally recognized heritages of Yemen

In Aden, this will include: Output 1.1.1 A National Wetlands Platform (NWP) will be established engaging a diverse and representative group of stakeholders in line with the relevant legislation of Yemen and with a focus on Aden and Socotra; **Output 1.1.2** National Wetland Policy developed and integrated into Yemen's NBSAP Implementation Plan, promoting a landscape approach and providing strategic priorities, inventory, and classification of wetland ecosystems in the country while emphasizing community engagement and public awareness for wise use of wetlands that will be shared with the NWP (established under output 1.1.1); **Output 1.1.3** Institutional capacity in the wise use of wetlands and sustainable landscape management will be assessed then developed through a participatory formal and on-the-job approach to training and capacity development to inform and sustain future EPA institutional positioning, effectiveness, and sustainability; **Output 1.1.4** Aden Wetlands will be nominated as a new Ramsar Site in Yemen, in alignment with the National Wetlands Policy and in coordination with the proposed National Wetlands Platform (NWP), adhering to the standards of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

In Socotra, this will include: Output 1.1.5 The governance system of protected areas in Socotra will be reviewed and wise-governance principles promoted as a joint effort by the EPA team and local communities, with a balanced participation of women, to enhance local PA governance and management capacity, as well as fostering the meaningful engagement and empowerment of local communities in the governance of PAs in Socotra; **Output 1.1.6** An upgrading and revision of the Socotra Conservation Zoning plan will be conducted, taking stock of the achievements of the recently completed UNEP/GEF project *"Support to the Integrated Program for the Conservation and Sustainable Development of the Socotra Archipelago"* (GEF ID 5347) . This will include a desktop review of all geospatial and ecological datasets will take place, including open-source data and national datasets, consultation with key institutional stakeholders and local community groups, and will be implemented in close collaboration with the project Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to ensure the scientific soundness of the zoning proposed, to protect the natural and cultural heritage of the Socotra World Heritage site.

Component 2. Conservation of Biodiversity in Socotra and Sustainable Management of Aden Wetlands

Outcome 2.1: The Aden wetlands are sustainably managed

In Aden, this will include: Output 2.1.1 the Aden wetlands database will be reviewed and updated to make it completely accessible on-line and containing all most recent relevant information and documentation on the Aden Wetlands; **Output 2.1.2** the economic values of Ecosystem Services of Aden wetlands identified and assessed to support decision making, and the feasibility of applying Nature-based Solutions to protect water resources flowing into the Al Hiswa wetland will also be assessed. This valuation using accepted and estimated methodologies, will directly inform prioritization under the management plan and contribute to

cost0effective decision-making by quantifying trade-offs and benefits of restoration and protection options, as inputs to inform Outputs 2.1.4 and 3.1.1 during the project implementation; **Output 2.1.3** an integrated land-use spatial (zoning) plan and an inclusive and community-led Aden Wetlands Landscape Management Plan will be developed and implemented with the participation of a wide range of stakeholders. Taking stock of the existing Management Plan for the Aden Wetlands (MOWE/EPA, 2005) that will be reviewed and upgraded based on extensive consultations with the NWP members (ref **Output 1.1.1**), and developed to expand its scope in line with the guiding principles of the Ramsar Convention; **Output 2.1.4** Building on output 2.1.3, this output will focus on promoting gender-responsive livelihoods that contribute directly to wetland restoration and biodiversity conservation, while improving the economic resilience of local communities, strengthening gender-responsive participatory governance and management systems. Supported by RSCN, the EPA will conduct a participatory scoping exercise, engaging a wide range of community stakeholders to help identify livelihood patterns, resource dependencies, and barriers to sustainable income generation. As a result of the scoping exercise, the most promising and feasible nature-based livelihood options will be identified and supported through a gender-transformative micro-granting scheme.

Outcome 2.2 The management effectiveness of four active and three inactive protected areas in Socotra is measurably improved, considering the compatibility between IPLC needs and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

In Socotra, this will include: Output 2.2.1 will support the enhancement of the management systems of the four active protected areas in Socotra—Dihamri (coastal and marine), Roosh (marine), Homhil (terrestrial forest and plateau), and Firmhin (terrestrial forest). This will entail a phased, community-centred approach that strengthens local gender-balanced participation, enhances sustainability, and integrates ecotourism and viable business planning into conservation strategies. Key steps will include a review of current management systems, followed by strengthening of governance structures, while building capacity and institutional support, followed by developing site-specific ecotourism and gender- responsive sustainable livelihood plans, all while embedding monitoring and learning, resulting in annual site reviews; **Output 2.2.2** Successful Protected Area management approaches will be replicated in at least three inactive protected areas. Based on lessons learned emerging from 2.2.1 the most successful approaches for gender- responsive community-based management of Protected Areas will be gradually replicated in three additional PAs. An assessment of the target sites is followed by cross-site learning, a visit to Jordan to demonstrate successful PA management, the establishment of governance structures and co-management arrangements, the development of management plans, and the development of operational capacity, all while integrating mechanisms for monitoring and learning; **Output 2.2.3** Building on the activities carried out under Output 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, alternative gender-transformative livelihood options around the target PAs will be identified and enhanced ensuring that these options are equally accessible to women. This output will focus on promoting livelihoods that contribute directly to biodiversity conservation and combating land degradation while improving the economic resilience of local communities. As done in Aden (ref. output 2.1.4) and supported by RSCN, the EPA will conduct a participatory scoping exercise, engaging a wide range of community stakeholders – and women, in particular – to help identify livelihood patterns, resource dependencies, and barriers to sustainable income generation. As a result of the scoping exercise, the most promising and feasible nature-based livelihood options will be identified and supported through a micro-granting scheme; **Output 2.2.4** will support the scaling up of conservation efforts for *Dracaena cinnabari* (Dragon Blood Tree) (IUCN status: vulnerable) and *Boswellia* spp. (Frankincense trees) (IUCN status: endangered) in the Firmhin and Homhil protected areas will be undertaken through a comprehensive and community-driven strategy that builds on decades of scientific research, recent field experiments, and lessons learned from pilot restoration initiatives. Alongside scientific monitoring, plant-plant facilitation strategies will be promoted to support ecological recovery, and rotational "grazing-safe zones" will be established; **Output 2.2.5** will support the establishment of an island-wide sustainable sea turtle conservation program operated in coordination with local authorities and communities. Activities will build upon the accumulated experience of the EPA team in Socotra since the monitoring of sea turtle nesting sites started in 1999, and from recommendations emerging from the recent *'Species Conservation Action Plan for the Loggerhead Sea Turtle (Caretta caretta) in Socotra Island'* (2022). The plan will be embedded into national and local governance, securing sustainable financing and strong community ownership. This GEF project will provide support for the implementation of *Phase 1* of the plan, entailing: field surveys to identify new potential nesting sites, community engagement and awareness raising, and training in law enforcement and monitoring; **Output 2.2.6** will support the upscaling of lessons learned on the management of invasive alien species. Activities under this output will be implemented following the recommendations of the recently developed *Socotra Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan* (SISSAP) (Witt 2024, 22). An IAS coordination group will be established which will implement an Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) system, raise awareness, and develop guidebooks, both physical and digital to be distributed.

Component 3. Knowledge Management, Public Awareness

Outcome 3: Decision makers and relevant stakeholders are aware and appreciate the importance of conservation of the Aden wetlands and Socotra Archipelago

This will include Output 3.1, entailing the development and implementation of a project outreach and dissemination strategy for conservation of Aden wetlands and Socotra Archipelago, tailored to local capacity and needs. Awareness raising campaigns will be developed and conducted, supported by a wide range of gender-transformative communication assets tailored to the local context and targeting relevant stakeholders – women, in particular – and communities in the Aden Wetland landscapes (ref also output 1.1.4) and in the Socotra Archipelago.

Component 4. Monitoring & Evaluation

Outcome 4: Monitoring and Evaluation plan / platform is established and functional

This will include Output 4.1, entailing the timely production of annual PIRs (reporting to the GEF) and technical progress reports to document project progress and update all partners. An effective monitoring and evaluation plan (detailed in **Annex K**) including gender-specific results' indicators will be set-up and implemented to ensure the monitoring of project impact and share lessons learned. And the project MTE/MTR and TE will be arranged by UNEP.

Gender-responsiveness will be systematically mainstreamed across all interventions to ensure equitable participation, benefits, and decision-making. Under Output 1.1.3, institutional capacity assessments will integrate gender analysis, and participatory capacity-building activities will deliberately include women and men from diverse groups, ensuring their perspectives shape sustainable landscape management practices. In Output 1.1.5, the review of Socotra's protected area governance will promote wise-governance principles that emphasise gender balance in leadership, equal voice in decision-making, and recognition of women's traditional ecological knowledge. For Output 2.1.3, both the integrated land-use spatial plan and the community-led Aden Wetlands Management Plan will be developed through inclusive consultations, with women, youth, and marginalised groups empowered to influence zoning priorities and resource allocation. In Output 2.1.4, wetland restoration will adopt nature-based solutions that are also gender-responsive, ensuring women's roles, skills, and labor contributions are recognised and that restoration practices reduce gender-differentiated burdens. Finally, under Output 2.2.3, alternative livelihood options will be designed and enhanced with an explicit focus on equal access for women, supporting their entry into non-traditional sectors and reducing barriers to finance, training, and markets, thus advancing gender-equitable economic empowerment.

Gender considerations: In the context of Yemen's protracted conflict, **women's positions** are particularly precarious: they face heightened risks of gender-based violence, mobility restrictions, and loss of livelihoods, while many are displaced with their families and forced into greater dependence on fragile natural resources. For the project, this requires special attention to ensure that internally displaced populations and women are not only protected from harm but actively included in benefit-sharing and decision-making. As described in **Appendix 8**, the project will actively prioritize and support the inclusion of women who, due to the conflict, have not only been exposed to violence but also to extreme poverty after losing their jobs and becoming reliant on small crafts and manual labour. By providing these women with sustainable work opportunities, the project will contribute to supporting them with a stable income while simultaneously ensuring high participation by eg proactively supporting women applicants in developing their micro-grant applications. Moreover, engaging women in environmental work and training carries added community benefits: women tend to transfer the knowledge and values they acquire to their children and surrounding communities more effectively than men, amplifying the project's long-term impact.

Under Component 2 on community-based management of natural areas, women will be proactively targeted not only as beneficiaries but also as decision-makers in natural resource governance. Women will be engaged in restoration, ecotourism and conservation roles (e.g., stewardship of turtle nesting sites, nursery management, mangrove rehabilitation, community monitoring, and nature-based livelihoods), and their involvement in decision-making will be institutionalized through specific safeguards. The project recognises that women in Yemen face multiple barriers, including restrictive social norms and gender roles, limited mobility and security risks, unpaid care burdens, exclusion from formal institutions and land governance structures, low access to finance and training, displacement, and heightened exposure to GBV. To overcome these constraints, the project will allocate a dedicated share of financial resources to women: at least 20% of all community micro-grants and livelihood schemes will be earmarked for women's groups or female-led initiatives, complemented by tailored training, mentoring and support in preparing grant applications. Measurable targets will be set to ensure substantive participation of women in governance structures: a minimum of 40% women's participation and at least 30% in leadership or decision-making positions will be required across project advisory

bodies, Protected Area (PA) committees and the National Wetlands Platform (as detailed in the TORs in **Appendix 5e, Appendix 8,** and activities 2.1.4, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3). Gender-sensitive monitoring will include sex-disaggregated indicators on income generation, decision-making roles, training outcomes and representation in natural resource governance structures. Clear commitments – such as quotas for women's representation, allocation of funds specifically for women's livelihoods, and GBV risk mitigation and referral mechanisms embedded in community engagement protocols - will ensure women's participation is meaningful and transformative rather than symbolic. In this way, women are not only included in community management of the natural areas, but are given voice, authority and resources within decision-making platforms at local and national levels.

Mitigation measures to address political will and regional stability: recognizing the fragility of Yemen's political and security context, the project will adopt a suite of mitigation measures to safeguard stability and achievement of targets. Activities will include designing a flexible workplan with phased implementation that prioritizes secure and accessible areas, ensuring that activities can be adjusted in case of sudden instability, in close coordination with the UN Country Team. The project adopts a diversified partnership model for its execution, engaging national institutions (i.e. the EPA supported by MOWE), local government, and community-based organizations in co-management, so that responsibilities are distributed and not solely dependent on central institutions. International partners (i.e. the RSCN and UNEP, and their partners) will provide technical oversight and continuity, even remotely and during local disruptions. Risk management will also include reliance on micro-grant mechanisms and locally-driven conservation activities that can proceed even in limited-security contexts, coupled with strengthened monitoring systems for early identification of risks.

Stakeholder involvement in decisions and policy, regulatory and institutional improvements: The project adopts an inclusive stakeholder engagement strategy (ref **Appendix 5c** to the project document) to ensure decisions and policy improvements reflect shared ownership. Communities, represented through cooperatives, women's groups, and local councils, will be involved in co-management of target protected areas and wetlands, with advisory roles in zoning revisions, turtle monitoring, invasive species control, and grazing regulation. National stakeholders, including EPA/MOWE, ministries for fisheries, agriculture, and tourism, will engage in joint policy dialogues to integrate biodiversity conservation into land-use planning, EIA/HIA enforcement, and climate adaptation measures. International stakeholders such as UNESCO, IUCN, and Ramsar will provide technical guidance on aligning site-level governance with global frameworks. Specific activities will include stakeholder workshops on revising the Socotra zoning plan, training sessions on biosecurity and Ramsar standards, and joint review committees for new management instruments.

Private Sector engagement: As outlined above in *Section A*, also the **private sector** holds potential to contribute positively and will be engaged locally throughout project activities. For example, in Socotra, ecotourism and community-based tourism initiatives can generate sustainable income and contribute to conservation objectives - if adequately regulated. Hence local private ecotourism operators will be engaged in project activities such as community-based PA management, IAS management, tree regeneration and sea turtle conservation programmes. In Aden, local small-scale private sector actors will be engaged in sustainable agriculture, fisheries, and wetland restoration through local enterprises that could create jobs and help buffer environmental risks such as through the creation of as mangrove nurseries, nature-based handicrafts production or local eco-tourism ventures.

In view of the national legal framework, self-identification of the Socotra people, lack of alignment with the UN's and GEF IP-recognition criteria, and established GEF and UN precedents, it is concluded that **the Socotra communities do not fall under the category of Indigenous Peoples**. Accordingly, the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) requirement does not apply, and engagement with Socotra communities should proceed under the standard stakeholder participation and community consultation provisions of the UNEP/GEF safeguard policy.

Coordination and synergy between UNESCO World Heritage governance and Socotra governance system, and cooperation with Ramsar Convention: The project will explicitly link the governance system of the UNESCO World Heritage property with the updated Socotra governance framework by embedding World Heritage obligations into the revised Socotra management plan and zoning scheme. This alignment will ensure that Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) criteria, World Heritage Committee recommendations, and Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) become core regulatory standards in land-use and conservation planning. Coordination structures will be established to bring together the Socotra governance framework, the EPA, RSCN, and UNESCO/IUCN representatives for joint review of conservation outcomes (ref. TOR and membership of the project Technical Advisory Group in **Appendix 5e and in Appendix 7** to the project document). In parallel, cooperation with the Ramsar Convention at the Detwah Lagoon in Socotra, and for the nomination of the new Ramsar site in the Aden wetlands, will be facilitated by harmonizing monitoring protocols, integrating waterbird and turtle data into a shared knowledge platform, and aligning policy recommendations and local management planning under both the Ramsar and World Heritage conventions.

Institutional Arrangement and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

Please describe the Institutional Arrangements for the execution of this project, including financial management and procurement. If possible, please summarize the flow of funds (diagram), accountabilities for project management and financial reporting (organogram), including audit, and staffing plans. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

Additional detail on the project's Institutional Arrangements, financial flows and including the project's organizational diagram and parallel ongoing projects are provided in **Appendix 7**.

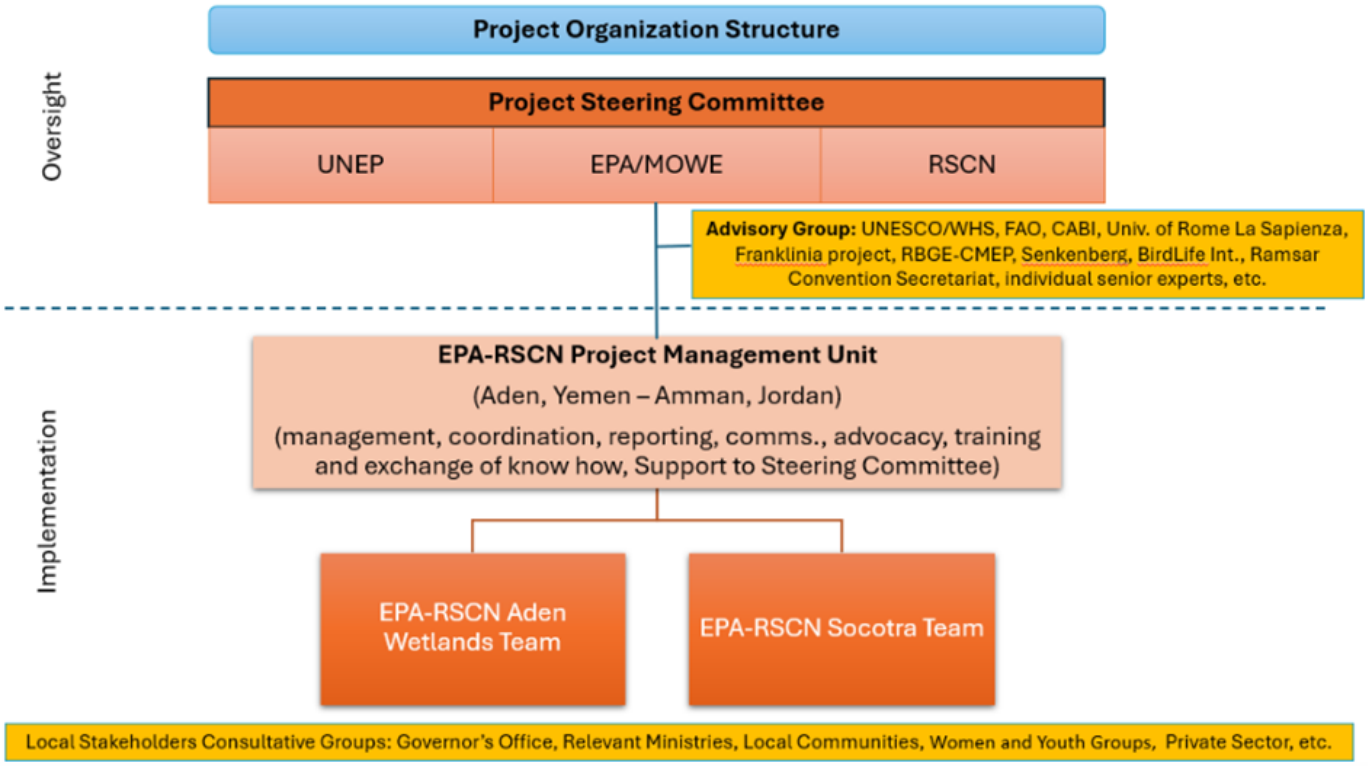


Figure - Simplified Project Organization Structure

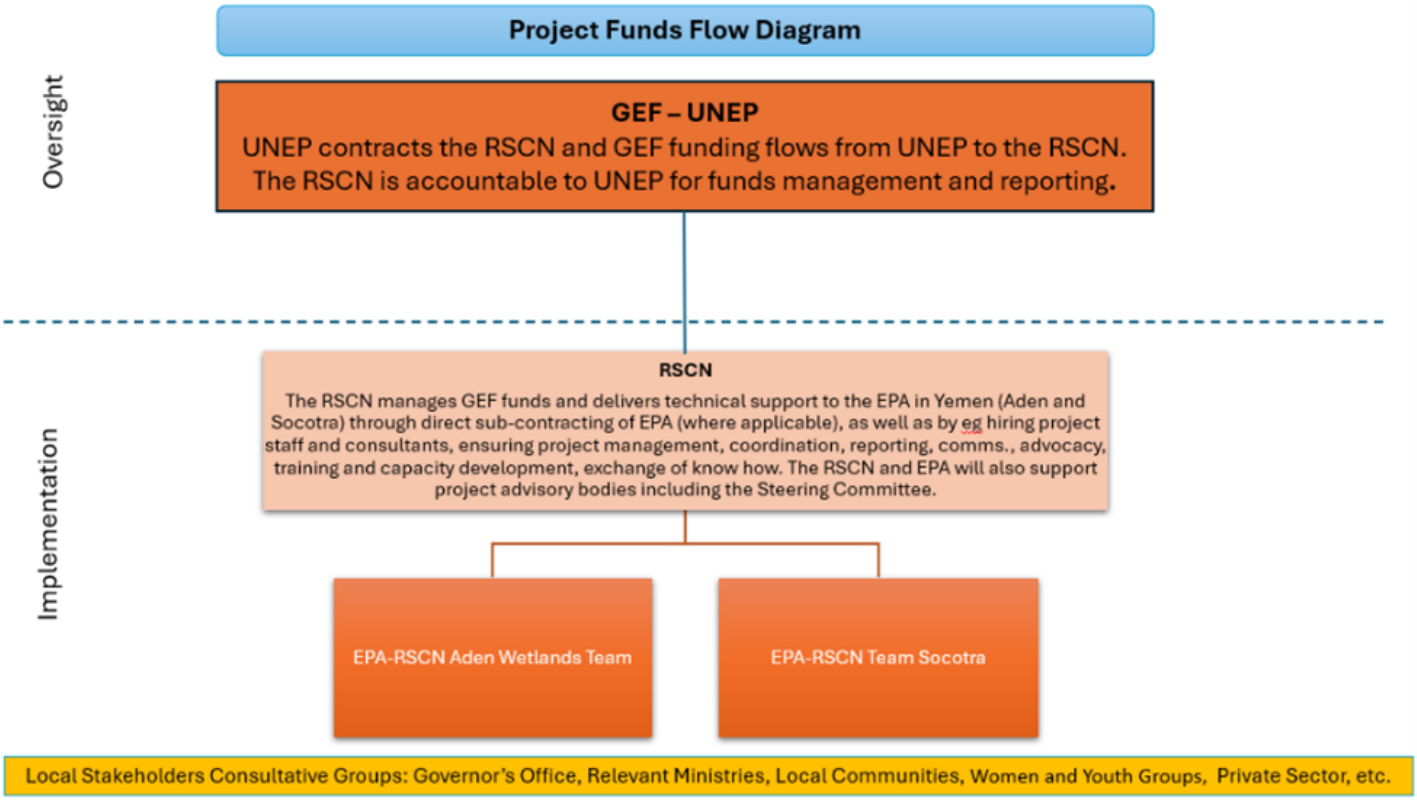


FIGURE – PROJECT FUNDING FLOW DIAGRAM

The project will be implemented by UNEP through its BD-LD GEF Unit in Nairobi, providing oversight and internal coordination with UNEP's relevant technical divisions and regional office. A legal instrument between UNEP and RSCN will facilitate the flow of GEF funds. RSCN will execute the project in partnership with EPA, ensuring fund flow and project execution in Aden and Socotra. EPA and MOWE, supported by RSCN, will ensure and support the delivery of all project activities. The RSCN in cooperation EPA will appoint technical leads and operational teams at each site for project execution and stakeholder coordination.

A Project Steering Committee, including UNEP, EPA/MOWE, and RSCN, will oversee project execution. A Technical Advisory Group will ensure consultations and synergies with global partners and will include, among others: the UNESCO-WHS Centre, the FAO, CABI, University of Rome La Sapienza, and the Franklinia project, the Royal Botanical Gardens of Edinburgh (RBGE) – Centre for Middle Eastern Plants (CMEP), The Senckenberg Institute (Germany), BirdLife International, University of Aden, individual senior experts with relevant experience, etc. Local Stakeholders Consultative Groups will engage local partners and ensure regular consultations with key stakeholders, including government institutions, local communities, women and youth groups, NGOs and the private sector. The EPA – RSCN team will adjust the consultative setup for effective information sharing and stakeholder engagement.

Will the GEF Agency play an execution role on this project?

If so, please describe that role here and the justification.

N/A - UNEP will not play any execution role on this project.

As outlined above, the project will be executed by the RSCN, which will support the EPA/MOWE of Yemen in aspects of project operation. Project staff and operations will be located in the RSCN offices in Amman, Jordan, and in Yemen. The project staff will be co-located in the EPA premises in Aden and Socotra, and these premises may need some limited upgrading and equipment and operational support for this purpose. This will also ensure coordination and synergy of project activities with the ongoing work of the EPA, both in Aden and in Socotra as well as with national and regional initiatives managed by the RSCN in Jordan.

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 (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

The GEF and UN (UNDP, UNEP and FAO) have been supporting conservation efforts in Yemen and in the Socotra Archipelago and in the Aden Wetlands for several years starting in the 1990's.

The main UN/GEF-programs related to biodiversity were active in Socotra since 1997, implemented by MOWE/EPA, were the "Socotra Biodiversity Project" (1997-2001), the first and largest GEF project in Yemen implemented through UNDP, the Socotra Conservation and Development Program (SCDP) of which Phase 1 (2001-2003) was implemented through and funded by UNDP and the Royal Netherlands Embassy and Phase 2, implemented through UNDP and funded by UNDP and Italy (2004-2008) and finally the Socotra Governance and Biodiversity Project (SGBP), funded by GEF and UNDP and implemented through UNDP (2009-2014).

In the Aden Wetlands the UNEP-GEF Project (GEF ID 1258) *'Enhancing Conservation of the Critical Network of Sites of Wetlands Required by Migratory Waterbirds on the African/Eurasian Flyways'* supported the conservation of the wetland habitat as one of the many critical sites along the migration flyways for waterbirds and supported the formulation of the Management Plan for the Aden wetlands (Wings Over Wetlands 2009).

Historic UN/GEF project documents and evaluations (Infield 2019), including the IUCN evaluation of the Socotra WHS (Hawa 2013) were carefully studied during the preparation of this project, providing valuable lessons from the recent past, in relation to designing meaningful project goals and realistic activities that are consistent with the context of target areas, community involvement and capacity development.

The impact and achievements of these past UN and GEF funded initiatives projects are still visible today, in terms of local institutional and professional capacity, infrastructure, existing data and baseline studies, as well as the recognition of Socotra and Aden wetlands as globally important sites. However, the recent or ongoing projects that this new GEF project will build upon or will seek to closely align with, are the following two initiatives:

> *Recently completed:* UNEP/GEF "Support to the Integrated Program for the Conservation and Sustainable Development of the Socotra Archipelago" (GEF ID 5347). This project was recently completed, and the Terminal Evaluation is being arranged by UNEP at the time of writing. The project may be considered the 'precursor' of this new project, and it had four components: (1) Improved Biodiversity Conservation/Protected Area Management (BD/PAM), (2) Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Management, (3) Sustainable Land Management/Land Degradation (SLM/LD), and (4) Enabling Environment (related to the institutional framework, capacity development and sustainable financing). This recently concluded project offered a strong baseline for the design and implementation of this new GEF project.
>
> *Ongoing:* FAO/GEF Project "Resilient and sustainable livelihoods for rural Yemen" (GEF ID 10562) , executed by FAO in close collaboration with the MOWE/EPA of Yemen, aims to facilitate the development of sustainable and resilient livelihoods for rural Yemenis by mainstreaming climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation, and SLM across productive agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors in Socotra, and in the Hawf Region in mainland Yemen. This new GEF8 Project will benefit the baseline assessment stocktaking analysis of the FAO/GEF Project. In addition, the Project will utilize the FAO project's best practices related to fisheries, livestock production, and agriculture. Best practices of the FAO project on mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into productive sectors of fisheries, tourism, and agriculture/livestock will be replicated in targeted pilot areas where relevant. The FAO project also contributes to the Decade of Ecosystem Restoration (see: Initiative Details - FERM Registry) and this UNEP-GEF project will also seek to

contribute data into the ecosystem restoration portal, working in close coordination with FAO. This project is at it initial stages of implementation and coordination will ne ensured through FAO's membership in this UNEP-GEF project Technical Advisory Group, and through the local EPA team in Socotra.

Core Indicators

Indicate expected results in each relevant indicator using methodologies indicated in the GEF-8 Results Measurement Framework Guidelines. There is no need to complete this table for climate adaptation projects financed solely through LDCF and SCCF.

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)
9673	6536	0	0

Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
5500	0	0	0

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
Abelhin	903138	Others	3,300.00			
Skent	903138	Others	2,200.00			

Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial Protected Areas Under improved Management effectiveness

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
4173	6536	0	0

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)
Firmhin		Others	1,570.00	1,602.00			31.00		
Homhil		Others	2,023.00	2,622.00			48.00		
Skund		Others	580.00	2,312.00			29.00		

Indicator 2 Marine protected areas created or under improved management

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
758	1134	0	0

Indicator 2.1 Marine Protected Areas Newly created

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

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 2.2 Marine Protected Areas Under improved management effectiveness

Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
758	1134	0	0

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
Abalhin	903138	Others		246.00			31.00		
DiHamri	903138	Others	288.00	266.00			60.00		
Rosh	903138	Others	470.00	622.00			48.00		

Indicator 3 Area of land and ecosystems under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
0	1840	0	0

Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration

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

Indicator 3.2 Area of forest and forest land under restoration

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

Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and woodland under restoration

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

Indicator 3.4 Area of wetlands (including estuaries, mangroves) under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	1,840.00		

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)
8800	1238	0	0

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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
8,800.00	1,238.00		

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

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

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

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

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

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

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

Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

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

Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

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)

Indicator 5.1 Fisheries under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations

Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
2,000			

Type/name of the third-party certification

Indicator 5.2 Large Marine Ecosystems with reduced pollution and hypoxia

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

LME at PIF	LME at CEO Endorsement	LME at MTR	LME at TE

Indicator 5.3 Marine 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)

Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)	0	114065	0	0
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)	0	0	0	0

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

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)		114,065		
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting		2026		
Duration of accounting		20		

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

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)				
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting				
Duration of accounting				

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

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

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

Technology	Capacity (MW) (Expected at PIF)	Capacity (MW) (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at MTR)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at TE)

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	2,500	2,533		
Male	2,500	2,502		
Total	**5,000**	**5,035**	0	**0**

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

In the Socotra Archipelago, two of the project's target Protected Areas, namely Abelehin (costal/marine) and Skend (terrestrial) were, at the PIF stage, erroneously included in the GEF Core Indicators Table under Core Indicator BD 1.1.

However, as confirmed during the PPG phase, both these protected areas are considered 'already existing' as they were legally established as part of the first Socotra Conservation Zoning Plan for the Socotra Archipelago, established by Presidential Decree of Yemen in 2000. Due to a lack of resources, these PAs were not subsequently supported by active conservation measures. Therefore, in the CEO Endorsement stage, both the above target PAs are now placed under CI 1.2 (Skend) and CI 2.2 (Abelehin); the project will therefore focus on improving their management effectiveness.

The methodological approach and underlying logic adopted during project preparation started with the identification of a set of core indicators and sub-indicators, designed to support the achievement of the project objective. Indicators are based on a thorough understanding of the complex social, economic, and environmental context of Yemen, including the specificities of Aden Wetlands and of the Socotra Archipelago. When targets were created, the political and legal framework was considered, the ongoing conflict situation in Yemen, and the consequent uncertainty were also considered. Indicators were developed with the EPA and partners in close cooperation with the relevant stakeholders at the project sites. Baselines were identified using existing information and recent studies where possible, while for some indicators (e.g. national capacity, level of awareness) the baseline will be assessed at project inception to establish the baseline through a specifically tailored assessment using Capacity Development Scorecards , or Knowledge, Attitude, Practice Surveys (KAP). Indicators and associated targets were then created to be "SMART" and key stakeholders were involved in the planning cycle and the development of the theory of change. Key indicators were then prioritized according to their weight and criticalness of project success, then evidence and means of verification were developed taking the historical knowledge and trends into account. The indicators were then reviewed as a consolidated output, communicated, and discussed with key stakeholders, and they were integrated in the monitoring and evaluation framework of the project, leaving space for future adaptation during implementation.

In summary, the methodological approach to set target levels for core and sub-indicators involved a systematic process that considered existing baseline data, stakeholder input, existing benchmarks, and a balance between ambition and feasibility. Regular monitoring and evaluation, and space for adaptive management will help to ensure that targets remain relevant and achievable throughout the project's lifespan.

Key Risks

	Rating	Explanation of risk and mitigation measures
CONTEXT		

Climate	Substantial	The Socotra Archipelago and the Aden wetlands are in a very arid area with harsh climatic conditions. They are affected by strong seasonal monsoon winds. Socotra is frequently affected by cyclones that have caused major damage to local livelihoods in recent years, with a projected increase in the frequency and intensity of such events, due to climate change. Thes events have caused loss of endemic vegetation due to drought and the increasingly strong cyclonic winds. Mitigation measures: project interventions are designed (a) to strengthen EPA's capacity to assess and deal with climate risks and climate-related loss and damage and (b) leverage science and traditional and local knowledge, to promote nature-based solutions and climate-resilient approaches to community-based PA management, species conservation and habitat restoration to achieve LDN.
Environmental and Social	Moderate	In the Aden wetlands, the recent conflict has indirectly caused an increase in encroachment and un-sustainable levels of natural resources' extraction in protected wetlands. In Socotra, the situation is more peaceful and stable, and its remote location and ancient tribal customs have so far contributed to minimizing the environmental and social risks. Mitigation measures: Firstly, the project will focus only on target areas selected due to their relative peaceful and stable social situation, allowing for a secure project implementation. Secondly, the project is designed to ensure careful engagement with local communities and local institutions to gradually re-establish trust and improve the balance between the needs of local people and support the achievement of biodiversity conservation and LDN objectives (ref Appendix 5c to the project document - Stakeholder Engagement Plan).
Political and Governance	Substantial	The conflict situation in Yemen, and the weak governance (especially environmental governance), continues to negatively affect Biodiversity conservation efforts in Aden and in Socotra. The situation is more stable in Socotra due to its isolation, with local government and tribal customs also helping to relieve the indirect pressures originating from the conflict in the mainland. Mitigation measures: the project will focus only on target areas deemed secure and safe to allow for smooth project operations, it will also ensure consistent coordination with the UN country team to take stock of any changes in the safety and security situation and adapt project strategy accordingly. The project will also invest heavily in capacity development and institutional strengthening for Yemeni professionals and institutions to help improve governance and managerial capacity for biodiversity conservation and for combating land degradation with expected positive impacts bot at the national and local level. Furthermore, the project maintains strict neutrality, avoids implying recognition of informal authority, and adapts implementation to field realities and will focus on developing strengthened capacities as the conduit to improving engagement channels in Socotra between all stakeholders involved.

INNOVATION

Institutional and Policy	Substantial	The institutional and policy context remains very weak in in Yemen, mainly due to the limited national capacity and resources to enforce existing environmental policies and laws. That is currently also compounded by the ongoing conflict situation. This indeed poses substantial risks to the achievement and long-term sustainability of project outcomes; however, project design has taken these aspects into account through consultation with local partners of EPA/MOWE at each site, with the ongoing FAO/GEF Project "Resilient and sustainable livelihoods for rural Yemen" (GEF ID 10562). Finally, UNEP is a member of the UN country team and with thus regularly receive guidance of project operations. Mitigation measures: in line with the approach adopted by most other development agencies currently operating in Yemen, this GEF project will (a) ensure regular consultations with the UN Safety and Security Team and with the UN Country Team, (b) focus activities only in areas considered safe and secure, envisaging also limited interventions by international experts and with maximum reliance on national and regional expertise, and most importantly (c) the project will continue to invest in the development of national human capacity (professional, technical, institutional) and in demonstrating innovative approaches to BD conservation and combating desertification (e.g, community-based PA management, wise use of wetlands, nature-based solutions for wetlands restoration, etc.), expecting that once the institutional and policy context in Yemen will improve, such national capacity will enable a positive transformation and the introduction and up-scaling of such innovations in the wider national environmental governance system
Technological	Low	In Yemen, the level of technological know-how and technology applications is yet limited in the fields of BD conservation and in combating land degradation. Mitigation measures: the project will foster the introduction of simple and user-friendly technological tools that, combined with traditional and local knowledge, can support biodiversity conservation and land restoration objectives (e.g, the new App for IAS management, on-line databases to support zoning plans for Aden and Socotra, remote sensing to monitor land restoration efforts, etc.).
Financial and Business Model	Moderate	The project execution modality takes stock of the current financial instability in the country, with high and frequent currency exchange fluctuations and lack of adequate local banking services, that negatively affect all local businesses as well as all project operations. Mitigation measures: the project adopts an execution approach that combines the local execution capacity and know-how of the EPA in Yemen, with the regional execution capacity of the RSCN that is based in Jordan and can support the technical as well as the financial management, administrative and financial reporting aspects of project execution. This approach has demonstrated its effectiveness in the recently completed GEF/UNEP/EPA/RSCN project ID 5347 in Socotra.
EXECUTION		
Capacity	Moderate	Yemen unfortunately continues to suffer from a chronic lack of qualified national professionals. Qualified and trained national experts tend to leave the

		country due to the lack of jobs and the conflict situation, in search of better employment options in the region and globally. The investments in developing human capacity made by prior UN and GEF funded initiatives in recent years are indeed visible, but local professional capacity remains limited. Mitigation measures: the project will take a multi-pronged approach by (a) building upon and leveraging existing national capacities, (b) creating opportunities for qualified Yemeni professionals to return and work in the project with the EPA, and (c) continuing to invest in on-the-job capacity building targeting new generations of conservation professionals with a dedicated internship programme for young nationals. The project will also create opportunities and build capacities of the EPA and Governate representing Socotra to build communication channels and to strengthen engagement with other state actors to facilitate and oversee private sector financing and investment on the island of Socotra.
Fiduciary	Moderate	The financial systems and procedures are well established in the executing agency (RSCN) and collaboration with the EPA functioned well in the recently concluded GEF project. However, the issue of money transfers from Jordan to Yemen and to Socotra Island, as well as the continuous demands on the project's human and financial resources due to the complexity and unpredictability of logistics, are expected to present moderate challenges for the project. Mitigation measures: the key aspect here will be allowing for the maximum possible degree of adaptive management and planning flexibility to account for and address unpredictable events and to deal with locally specific situations. This approach was successfully adopted used in the recent GEF project and the experience and lessons learned will be applied in this new project. Mitigation will also include transparent procurement oversight, third-party verification when feasible, and grievance redress mechanisms accessible to communities and stakeholders.
Stakeholder	Low	Building trust, mutual understanding and support with all key project stakeholders will be a key ingredient for project success. Especially during the ongoing times of conflict or post-conflict, the importance of establishing comprehensive and transparent stakeholder engagement mechanisms is paramount. Mitigation measures: during the project preparation phase, site selection and stakeholder consultations were conducted at all levels and to the extent possible and though local partners, considering the limitations faced by the PPG team due to the ongoing conflict in mainland Yemen and in the Region (e.g, the PPG was undertaken during the brief war between Israel and Iran in July 2025, that prevented most travel in the region for an extended period). The experience gained, lessons learned, and local contacts established during the recently completed GEF/UNEP/EPA/RSCN project ID 5347 in Socotra are also expected to provide a sound basis for adequate stakeholder engagement in this new project.

Other	Moderate	Political conflict in the Middle East Region and in mainland Yemeni may continue to pose major challenges to project execution, such as difficulties in

		organizing regional and internal air travel, problems in mobilizing international consultants and partners, procurement difficulties due the scarcity of goods and services at project sites and obstacles for vendors to deliver good to Yemen, as well as negatively affecting the capacity of the local EPA team and partners to engage in the project, as they may have to deal with other more pressing priorities due the safety and security situation. Key Mitigation Measures to maximise chances of realising the intended global benefits expected by this project include (as outlined above): adequate site selection (focusing only on safer areas in Aden and Socotra), regular consultations with UN Country Team, maximum reliance on the capacity of local partners and continued investments in building national professional and institutional capacity.
Overall Risk Rating	Moderate	Overall the project's risk is considered moderate, as the careful site selection will ensure a focus of operations only in safer areas, and adequate risk mitigation measures (outlined above) have been put in place in line with approaches successfully applied by the recently completed UNEP-GEF project ID 5347 in Socotra and with the ongoing GEF FAO project 11562 (Mainland Yemen and Socotra) that were successfully tested in recent years. The main caveat may be to consider and plan for possible project adjustments to the project timelines, if needed to account for national and regional instability that may cause unforeseeable delays and sometime may necessitate no-cost extensions of the project duration (as happened for ID 5347).

C. ALIGNMENT WITH GEF-8 PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES AND COUNTRY/REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Explain how the proposed interventions are aligned with GEF- 8 programming strategies and country and regional priorities, including how these country strategies and plans relate to the multilateral environmental agreements.

For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e., BD, CC or LD), please identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and explain how.

Confirm if any country policies that might contradict with intended outcomes of the project have been identified, and how the project will address this. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

Biodiversity Focal Area: The project will target restoration of degraded wetlands, effective management of protected areas and mainstreaming biodiversity. Hence the project is fully aligned with GEF8 Biodiversity Objective 1: Improving conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of natural ecosystems. The Project will specifically contribute to (i) effective management of protected area systems; (ii) sustainable use of biodiversity; and (iii) ecosystem restoration.

Land Degradation Focal Area: The Project seeks to avoid, reduce, and reverse land degradation through landscape restoration. Specifically, the project will support investments in restoration of degraded lands through nature-based solutions aiming to support livelihoods and strengthen community based natural resources management. Restoration activities will help improve ecosystem connectivity.

The project contributes to the Constitution and to the **National Environmental Legislation of Yemen** and is fully aligned with the institutional mandate and ongoing programmes of the MOWE and the EPA of the Republic of Yemen. The project is also fully consistent with the mandate of the MOWE/EPA to implement national environmental action plans and assessments falling under the relevant global environmental conventions that have been ratified by the Republic of Yemen.

Yemen ratified the **Convention on Biological Diversity** (CBD) in 1996, and the latest National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) was produced in 2024 (Ministry of Water and Environment 2024). Yemen also signed the **UN Convention to Combat Desertification** (UNCCD) in 1997 and produced its latest Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS) Report to UNCCD in 2022 (UNCCD 2022).

Yemen's commitment to Biodiversity conservation is also testified by the signature of other relevant conventions such as the **Ramsar Convention for the Conservation of Wetlands**, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), and AEWA (African Eurasian Waterbirds Agreement).

Table: Contributions to the GBF

GBF Target Alignment	Project Contributions and Alignment
GBF 1 - Plan and Manage all Areas to Reduce Biodiversity Loss	• Zoning and Management Plan for Aden wetlands established • Zoning Plan for Socotra revised and updated
GBF 2 - Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems	• Aden wetlands restoration in Al Hiswa • Habitat restoration and regeneration of rare trees in Socotra PAs
GBF 3 - Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas	• PA management effectiveness increased in Socotra and Aden wetlands • Community-based PA management introduced in Socotra
GBF 4 - Halt Species Extinction, Protect Genetic Diversity, and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts	• Protection of rare endemics in Socotra • Protection of critical stopover sites for migratory waterbirds in Aden • Protection of migratory sea turtles in Socotra
GBF 9 - Manage Wild Species Sustainably to Benefit People	• Communities empowered and benefiting from PAs in Socotra and Aden • Economic values of Nature's benefits to people (Ecosystem Services) assessed in the Aden Wetlands
GBF 11 - Restore, Maintain and Enhance Nature's Contributions to People GBF 13 - Increase the Sharing of Benefits from Genetic Resources, Digital Sequence Information and Traditional Knowledge	• Bio-prospecting ABS agreement explored in Socotra • Communities empowered to manage and benefit from ecotourism in PAs in Socotra • Restoration of coastal Mangroves in Aden wetlands
GBF 6 - Reduce the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50% and Minimize Their Impact	• The project supports the implementation of the Socotra Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan (SISSAP)
GBF 20 - Strengthen Capacity-Building, Technology Transfer, and Scientific and Technical Cooperation for Biodiversity GBF 21 - Ensure That Knowledge Is Available and Accessible to Guide Biodiversity Action	• Public Databases with BD information on Socotra and Aden wetlands to be created in Aden and re-established for Socotra
GBF 22 - Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for all	• The project will strive to ensure fair and reasonable representation of women, youth, and vulnerable groups in the project steering committee, advisory group, local working groups in Aden and Socotra. • The project will adopt a gender-responsive approach to ensure the effective participation of women, vulnerable groups, marginalized communities, and youth in achieving project outcomes, ensuring

GBF 23 - Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action	their fair, equitable, purposeful, and informed participation as appropriate and at all levels of project implementation

The project contributes to the realization of objectives set in both the National Environmental Action Plan (Ministry of Water and Environment, 2005), as well as in the more recent Yemen NBSAP (Ministry of Water and Environment, 2024). Specifically, the project's alignment with the latest Yemen NBSAP (2024) and the GBF Targets.

Table 6 PROJECT CONTRIBUTION TO NBSAP AND ALIGNMENT WITH GBF TARGETS

Yemen NBSAP 2024 Pathway	NBSAP Targets	GBF Target Alignment	Project Contributions and Alignment
NBSAP Pathway 1: Ensure urgent conservation and restoration needs to halt extinction of species	**Target 1:** By 2030: 20% of areas of environmental importance should be under spatial planning and effective management. By 2050, all land in Yemen should be under spatial planning to prevent land use changes in biodiversity-rich ecosystems….	GBF 1 - Plan and Manage all Areas to Reduce Biodiversity Loss	• Zoning and Management Plan for Aden wetlands established • Zoning Plan for Socotra revised and updated
	Target 2: By 2030, restore 20% of degraded ecosystems on land and inland waters, coastal marine environments, wetlands, mangroves, and forests…	GBF 2 - Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems	• Aden wetlands restoration in Al Hiswa • Habitat restoration and regeneration of rare trees in Socotra PAs
	Target 3: By 2030, 20% of biodiversity-rich ecosystems should be conserved and managed under effective and interconnected terrestrial and marine protected areas with joint management systems, where local communities play an active role in conserving and managing existing protected areas.	GBF 3 - Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas	• PA management effectiveness increased in Socotra and Aden wetlands • Community-based PA management introduced in Socotra
	Target 4: Take urgent measures to prevent extinction caused by human activities, natural factors, and climate changes for threatened species, and restore and conserve species to significantly reduce the risk of extinction. Additionally, preserve and restore genetic diversity within native, wild, and domesticated species communities….	GBF 4 - Halt Species Extinction, Protect Genetic Diversity, and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts	• Protection of rare endemics in Socotra • Protection of critical stopover sites for migratory waterbirds in Aden • Protection of migratory sea turtles in Socotra
	Target 9: By 2030, manage all ecosystems sustainably to increase the flow of ecosystem services and enhance ecosystems' contribution to the national economy and community	GBF 9 - Manage Wild Species Sustainably to Benefit People	• Communities empowered and benefitting from PAs in Socotra and Aden • Economic values of Nature's benefits to people (Ecosystem

	livelihoods by 10%, and by 70% by 2050.		Services) assessed in the Aden Wetlands
NBSAP Pathway 2: Promote communities access and equitable benefit sharing from biological resources and contribution to national economy	**Target 11:** By 2030, restore 20% of priority degraded ecosystems to enhance the flow of ecosystem services to support community livelihoods and the national economy, including providing disaster risk reduction services….	GBF 11 - Restore, Maintain and Enhance Nature's Contributions to People	• Bio-prospecting ABS agreement explored in Socotra • Communities empowered to manage and benefit from ecotourism in PAs in Socotra • Restoration of coastal Mangroves in Aden wetlands
NBSAP Pathway 3: Safeguard ecosystem integrity through sustainable uses and reduced anthropogenic pressure	**Target 6:** By 2030, prevent the introduction of any new invasive species into the country. Identify and take necessary measures to eradicate existing invasive alien species in environmentally priority sites and control them in lower priority sites.	GBF 6 - Reduce the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50% and Minimize Their Impact	• The project supports the implementation of the Socotra Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan (SISSAP)
NBSAP Pathway 4: Guarantee adequate means to support implementation of the biodiversity conservation	**Target 18:** By 2030, ensure an adequate scientific base, transfer traditional knowledge, enhance scientific research capabilities, monitoring capabilities, encourage innovations, and enable stakeholders to design, implement, and use advanced technology to conserve biodiversity. Ensure unrestricted access to necessary information, data, and technology for all stakeholders, including community members, involved in biodiversity management and conservation.	GBF 20 - Strengthen Capacity-Building, Technology Transfer, and Scientific and Technical Cooperation for Biodiversity GBF 21 - Ensure That Knowledge Is Available and Accessible to Guide Biodiversity Action	• Public Databases with BD information on Socotra and Aden wetlands to be created and re-established
NBSAP Pathway 6: Strengthening ecosystems governance and institutional capacities, and arrangements for improved ecosystems management	**Target 19:** By 2030, ensure fair and reasonable representation of women, youth, and vulnerable groups in committees, working groups, and departments whose primary mission is biodiversity management. Adopt a gender-responsive approach to ensure the effective participation of women, vulnerable groups, marginalized communities, and youth in achieving national and international biodiversity Targets, providing them with opportunities to access natural resources and ensuring their fair, equitable,	GBF 22 - Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for all GBF 23 - Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action	The project will strive to ensure fair and reasonable representation of women, youth, and vulnerable groups in the project steering committee, advisory group, local working groups in Aden and Socotra. The project will adopt a gender-responsive approach to ensure the effective participation of women, vulnerable groups, marginalized

	purposeful, and informed participation at all levels of environmental action and biodiversity-related decision-making		communities, and youth in achieving project outcomes, ensuring their fair, equitable, purposeful, and informed participation as appropriate and at all levels of project implementation

Relevant national policies, laws, and regulations supporting Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Management include Law No. (26) of 1995 ('On Environment Protection') and its by-law No. (148) of 2000, Law No. (16) of 2004 ('On Protecting the Marine Environment from Pollution'), Prime Minister's Decree No. (104) of 2002, 'Concerning the Approval of the Regulations Protecting Endangered Flora and Fauna', protects endangered species. Perhaps the most crucial Decree related to Biodiversity and Protected Areas on Socotra for this project is the Socotra Conservation Zoning Plan (2000; Presidential Resolution 275: "Concerning Socotra Archipelago"), the revision of which is addressed in Output 1.1.6 of this project.

National Legislation and protocols on IAS Management in Yemen do exist; however, they are currently suboptimal (e.g, no provisions are made for IAS invasions from mainland Yemen into Socotra, while there are provisions for IAS invasions from outside of Yemen), and their enforcement remains very limited. For example, the EPA Law no. 26 of 1995 (and by-law 148 of 2000) states that protected regions, such as some of the Aden Wetlands or most of the Socotra archipelago, should be kept free from invasive alien species. Furthermore, the Cabinet Decree 48 (Article 2) of 2008 instructs relevant ministries to establish an IAS prevention system in all key access points into Yemen. Also, Article 10 in the Socotra Conservation Zoning Plan (The Republic of Yemen 2000) specifically forbids the import of seeds or seedlings in Socotra without prior approval of the EPA.

The Datwah Lagoon on Socotra (a project target area) was the first Ramsar site listed in Yemen, and the project will support the nomination process for the Aden wetlands (ref. **Output 1.1.4**).

Socotra holds one globally endangered bird species, four globally vulnerable species, and ten endemic species; the latter statistic causing Bird Life International to designate Socotra an Endemic Bird Area (EBA) in 2016 (Porter 2016). At present there are 21 Important Bird Areas, designated as such for one of four reasons: they hold species of global conservation concern; they hold restricted-range species; they contain biome-restricted species; and/or they contain important congregations of either waterbird, marine and terrestrial, seabirds, or are a bottleneck site where at least 20,000 storks, raptors, or cranes regularly pass through during migration (Porter 2016).

The Aden Wetlands are considered highly important for migratory birds, holding 16,000 waterbirds, 12 species of birds with regionally important populations, and three globally threatened species (Wings Over Wetlands 2009). The wetlands host 1% of globally important bird populations, with the marshes and intertidal areas providing them with feeding grounds. Its designation as an Important Bird Area is due to it supporting "an appreciable assemblage of rare, vulnerable, or endangered species of birds and an appreciable number of individuals of more than one species" (Wings Over Wetlands 2009).

Yemen is a country severely affected by land degradation, drought, and desertification. This situation is exacerbated by Climate Change effects, jeopardising the natural resource base underpinning major elements of the local economy in rural areas, which is mostly of a subsistence nature. These issues have so far only been partly addressed in the context of the Socotra WHS (e.g, through prior UNEP-GEF project #5347), which supported efforts towards the preparation of a first Sustainable Land Management (SLM) plan, and by prior selected ad hoc studies on soil erosion and land use (Pietsch 2010).

The project also responds to and supports the implementation of several of the needs, priorities and urgent response measures for the conservation the Socotra WHS, as identified in the most recent **UNESCO** WHS reactive mission report (UNESCO 2025, 12). The UNESCO WHS is also included in the project Technical Advisory Group to ensure consistent communication and coordination of efforts with UNESCO.

The UNEP-GEF and FAO-GEF projects in Socotra will also contribute to the Decade of Ecosystem Restoration (see: Initiative Details - FERM Registry) as both projects will contribute data to the ecosystem restoration portal, working in close coordination as they are both supporting the EPA of Yemen.

D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

We confirm that gender dimensions relevant to the project have been addressed during Project Preparation as per GEF Policy and are clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B).

Yes

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

Yes

If the project expects to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment, please indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality:

Closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources;

Yes

Improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or

Yes

Generating socio-economic benefits or services for women.

Yes

2) Does the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?

Yes

Stakeholder Engagement

We confirm that key stakeholders were consulted during Project Preparation as required per GEF policy, their relevant roles to project outcomes has been clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B) and that a Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been developed before CEO endorsement**.**

Yes

Select what role civil society will play in the Project

Consulted only;

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor; Yes

Co-financier;

Member of project steering committee or equivalent decision-making body ;

Executor or co-executor; Yes

Other (Please explain) Yes

Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

And if so, has its role been described and justified in section B project description?

Yes

Environmental and Social Safeguards

We confirm that we have provided information regarding Environmental and Social risks associated with the proposed project or program, including risk screenings/ assessments and, if applicable, management plans or other measures to address identified risks and impacts (this information should be presented in Annex E).

Yes

Please provide overall Project/Program Risk Classification

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Medium/Moderate	Medium/Moderate		

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge management

We confirm that an approach to Knowledge Management and Learning has been clearly described during Project Preparation in the Project Description and that these activities have been budgeted and an anticipated timeline for delivery of relevant outputs has been provided.

Yes

Socio-economic Benefits

We confirm that the project design has considered socio-economic benefits to be delivered by the project and these have been clearly described in the Project Description and will be monitored and reported on during project implementation (at MTR and TER).

Yes. We confirm that the project design has considered socio-economic benefits to be delivered by the project and these have been clearly described in the Project Description and will be monitored and reported on during project implementation (at MTR and TER).

ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

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

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	GEF Project Grant($)	Agency Fee($)	Total GEF Financing ($)
UNEP	GET	Yemen	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	Grant	2,301,605.00	218,652.00	2,520,257.00
UNEP	GET	Yemen	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-2	Grant	2,114,606.00	200,887.00	2,315,493.00
Total GEF Resources ($)						**4,416,211.00**	**419,539.00**	**4,835,750.00**

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Was a Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount ($)

150000

PPG Agency Fee ($)

14250

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	PPG($)	Agency Fee($)	Total PPG Funding($)
UNEP	GET	Yemen	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	78,176.00	7,427.00	85,603.00
UNEP	GET	Yemen	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-2	71,824.00	6,823.00	78,647.00
Total PPG Amount ($)					**150,000.00**	**14,250.00**	**164,250.00**

Please provide Justification

Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Sources of Funds	Total($)
UNEP	GET	Yemen	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	2,605,860.00
UNEP	GET	Yemen	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	2,394,140.00
Total GEF Resources					**5,000,000.00**

Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Co-financing($)
BD-1-1	GET	2,301,605.00	2400000
LD-2	GET	2,114,606.00	2500000
Total Project Cost		**4,416,211.00**	**4,900,000.00**

Confirmed Co-financing for the project, by name and type

Please include evidence for each co-financing source for this project in the tab of the portal

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount($)
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Water and Environment	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	3000000
Civil Society Organization	RSCN	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1900000
Total Co-financing				**4,900,000.00**

Please describe the investment mobilized portion of the co-financing

N/A.

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

GEF Agency(ies) Certification

GEF Agency Type	Date	Project Contact Person	Phone	Email
GEF Agency Coordinator	8/20/2025	Ersin Esen	41229178196	Ersin.Esen@un.org

Project Coordinator	8/20/2025	Johan Robinson	254709023130	johan.robinson@un.org

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

Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) with this template.

Name of GEF OFP	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
Mr. Faisal S. Al Thalabi	GEF Technical Focal Point, Acting Chairman of Environment Protection Authority Aden, Republic of Yemen	Ministry of Water and Environment	12/22/2022

ANNEX C: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Please indicate the page number in the Project Document where the project results and M&E frameworks can be found. Please also paste below the Project Results Framework from the Agency document.

Project Objective	Objective level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks	UNEP MTS reference* Relevant Programme of Work (PoW) Outcomes	Relevant SDG target(s) and indicators
Project Objective: To effectively conserve biodiversity in the Socotra Archipelago and sustainably manage the Aden wetlands in Yemen	GEF Core Indicator BD 1.2 Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness (hectares)	Area is 6,536 ha as confirmed with EPA during PPG Basline PA METT are avilable for all target sites in Socotra	**At project mid-point:** 2,500 ha **At project end:** 6,536 ha	Remote sensing; field surveys and PA METT assessments; review of approved policies, laws and regulations, as well as annual incremental monitoring and PIRs	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves Political will remains stable and supportive Technical and institutional capacity (augmented through project training) is retained during and post-project Implementation of activities identified in the	**UNEP MTS (2022-2025) Tematic Subprogramme:** Nature Action **Outcome 3:** Nature conservation and restoration are enhanced **UNEP PoW (2022-2025) Strategic Objective:** Living in harmony with nature: Recovery of nature occurs and contributes positively to ecosystem stability and human well-being	**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

					management plans **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Technical and institutional capacity (augmented through project training) may be lost due to to emigraton and conflict Restricted access to key restoration and conservation sites in the Aden wetlands due to security concerns, damaged infrastructure, or administrative barriers may delay or prevent implementation of site-level activities. Suboptimal techn ical and operational capacity of implementing institutions (e.g., EPA, local government) may result in inefficiencies or limited oversight of landscape-level interventions. Delays in mobilizing and building trust with	**PoW 2030 outcome**: Recovery of nature occurs and is contributing positively to ecosystem stability and human well-being. **PoW 2026–2029 outcome:** The rates of loss of ecosystems, species and genetic diversity do not exceed natural background rates. **PoW 2026–2029 outcome:** There is a net increase in the extent of healthy, resilient and sustainably managed natural and productive landscapes and seascapes.	

					local communities, including securing FPIC (Free, Prior and Informed Consent), may postpone co-management and restoration efforts.		
	CI BD 1.2: METT Score increase	Homhil: 48 Firmhin: 31 Skand: 29 Abalhin: 31 Roosh: 48 Di Hamri: 60	**At project mid-point:** 10% increase Homhil: 52.8 Firmhin: 33.1 Skand: 31.9 Abalhin: 33.1 Roosh: 52.8 Di Hamri: 66 **At project end:** 20% increase Homhil: 57.6 Firmhin: 37.2 Skand: 34.8 Abalhin: 37.2 Roosh: 57.6 Di Hamri: 72	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above
	GEF Core Indicator BD 2.2 Marine protected areas under improved management (ha)	Area is 1,134 ha as confirmed with EPA during PPG Baseline PA METT avilable for all sites in Socotra	**At project mid-point:** 450 ha **At project end:** 1,134 ha	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above
	CI BD 2.2: METT Score increase	DiHamri: 60 Roosh: 48	**At project mid-point:**	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above

		Abalhin: 31	10% increase Di Hamri: 66 Roosh: 52.8 Abalhin: 33.1 **At project end:** 20% increase Di Hamri: 72 Roosh: 57.6 Abalhin: 37.2				
	GEF Core Indicator LD 3.4: Areas of wetlands (including estuaries and mangroves) under restoration (ha)	Area is 1,840 ha as confirmed with EPA durng PPG Currently there is no restoration effort ongoing at the target sites A first PA METT will be conducted at project inception	**At project mid-point:** 800 ha **At project end:** 1,840 ha Aden Wetlands & Datwah Lagoon in Socotra Component 2	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above
	GEF Core Indicator BD 4.1: Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (ha)	Target Area is 1,238 ha - confirmed with EPA during PPG Currently there is no management at the target sites A first PA METT will be conducted at project inception	**At project mid-point:** 500 ha **At project end:** 1,238 ha Aden Wetlands	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above
	GEF Core Indicator 6.5: Carbon sequestered or emissions avoided in the	Baseline and targets estim ated at project design stage, using	**After project end:** 114,065 metric tons of CO2e	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above

	sector of Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use (direct)	the Ex-ACT tool					
	GEF Core Indicator 11: People benefiting from GEF-financed investments	Baseline is zero as project has not started. The targets wee estimated during stakeholder consultations and recent literature review, held during the PPG phase	**At project mid-point:** 2000 (50% F) **At project end:** 5,035 people (2533 F and 2502 M)	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above
Component 1. Strengthening policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks and technical capacity for conservation and sustainable use of Aden wetlands landscape and Socotra Archipelago through a landscape approach							
Project Outcome	**Outcome Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**	**Relevant PoW Outcome(s) and indicator(s)[2]**	**Relevant SDG target(s) and indicators**
Outcome 1.1: Improved policy, institutional and technical capacity for sustainable management and conservation of internationally recognized heritages of Yemen	**Indicator 1.1** increase in level of capacity	To be estalished at project outset with a rapid assessment using a tailored Capacity Development Scorecard[1] for the staff of the EPA and representatives from all NWP members	**At project mid-term:** A 50% increase in capacity among EPA staff and NWP members surveyed at inception **At project end:** A 100% increase in capacity among NWP members surveyed at inception	Stakeholder interviews conducted at project outset, mid-term and end, capacity development scorecard results	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improvess Political will remains stable and supportive Technical and institutional capacity in the EPA and NWP member institutions is retained during the project Minimal turnover of EPA staff and NWP members **Risks:**		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

					Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Technical and institutional capacity may be lost due to to emigraton and conflicts		
Project Outputs	**Output Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**	**Relevant PoW Direct Outcome(s)**	**Relevant SDG target(s) and indicators**
Aden							
Output 1.1.1 A National Wetlands Platform established to coordinate an integrated landscape approach.	**Indicator 1.1.1** A Status and operational level of the National Wetlands Platform (NWP)	NWP does not exist	**At project mid-term:** NWP established and held its first meeting **At project end:** NWP operational and meeting regularly	NWP documents such as: TOR, meeting reports, recorded decisions, procurement records, technical specifications, database schemas and design documents etc.	**Assumptions** NWP member organization respond to EPA's convening call, and can engage meaningfully to support NWP mandate **Risks** Other more pressing priorities (including security and conflict) distract NWP members and negatively affect levels of egagement and committment		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators
Output 1.1.2 National Wetland Policy developed with a landscape approach and integrated into Yemen's national GBF	**Indicator 1.1.2** Increase in level of uptake of National Wetlands Policy and inclusion into the national GBF (NBSAP) Plan	A National Wetland Policy is not in place for Yemen	**At project mid-term:** a National Wetlands Policy is drafted and submitted to NWP members for review **At project end:** a National Wetlands Policy is approved by the NWP, well known within all	Draft policy documents, records of NWP meetings, EPA and NWP members' websites referring to the policy, NWP members' own policies	**Assumptions** NWP member organization can engage meaningfully to support the drafting and approval process **Risks**		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

(NBSAP) Implementation Plan.			NWP mamber institutions, and readily available online	and regulations referring to the new wetlands policy, as well as government directive and/or decree.	Other more pressing priorities (including security and conflict) distract NWP members and negatively affect levels of engagement and committment in policy drafting, review, and approval		
Output 1.1.3 Institutional capacity in sustainable landscape management will be assessed then developed through participatory approach.	**Indicator 1.1.3** Increase in level of institutional capacity	To be established at project outset with rapid Training Needs Assessments (TNA[6]), and a strategic assessment to guide future EPA institutional positioning, (b) assessing baseline capacity through a tailored Capacity Development Scorecard[7] to be developed for this specific purpose, and finally (c) by developing and administering a baseline Knowledge, Attitude, Practice Survey (KAP[8])	**At project mid-term:** A 50% increase in capacity among EPA staff and NWP members surveyed at inception **At project end:** A 100% increase in capacity among EPA staff and NWP members surveyed at inception	Stakeholder interviews conducted at project outset, mid-term and end, using TNA records, capacity development scorecard and KAP survey results	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves Political will remains stable and supportive Technical and institutional capacity in the EPA and NWP member institutions is retained during the project **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Technical and institutional capacity may be lost due to to emigraton and conflict		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators
Output 1.1.4 Aden Wetlands nominated as a new Ramsar Site in Yemen	**Indicator 1.1.4** status of the Ramsar nomination process	Not started	**At project mid-term:** nomination process initiated and nomination files ready for submission to the	Draft and final nomination files and supporting documentation; Ramsar Convention Secretariat	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their

			Ramsar Convention Secretariat **At project end:** Process completed and the Aden wetlands are nominated as a new Ramsar Site	records and websites' information and unique identification number	Political will remains stable and supportive Underlying technical studies can be conducted in a timely fashion Ramsar Convention process runs smoothy **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate, hampering the process Political will may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Technical and institutional capacity may be lost due to to emigraton and conflict, thus negatively affecting the timely completion of the required studies and submission process		associated indicators
Socotra							
Output 1.1.5 The governance system of protected areas in Socotra reviewed and wise-governance principles promoted.	**Indicator 1.1.5** increse in level of institutional capacity and level of inclusion of wise-use principles	The baseline will be established at project outset through a participatory assessment and will be conducted across all project target protected areas in Socotra, using a combination of all these	**At project mid-term:** 50% increase in measured capacity level among EPA staff and community leaders and community groups engaged in PA management compared to survey results at project inception **At project end:**	Stakeholder interviews conducted at project outset, mid-term and end, using capacity development scorecards, IUCN assessment t ools, and PA METT asssessment results.	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves Political will remains stable and supportive Technical and institutional capacity in the EPA and local community		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

		established tools to be adapted to the project's needs: the IUCN's assessments[2], Capacity Develoment Scorecards, complemented by findings from the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) previously applied in Socotra (Hamidan 2023, 31)	100% increase in measured capacity level among EPA staff and community leaders and community groups engaged in PA management compared to survey results at project inception		groups is retained during the project **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will may be distracted by other more pressing priorities such as major political events or environmental disasters Technical and institutional capacity may be lost due to to emigraton and conflict		
Output 1.1.6 Revision of the Socotra Conservation Zoning plan	**Indicator 1.1.6** availability ad legal status of revised and upgraded socotra zoning plan	A draft revision of the zoning plan was undertaken by UNEP-GEF project (ID 5347) and this provides the baseline	**At project mid-term:** Upgraded plan is drafted and submitted for review and legislative endorsement **At project end:** Upgraded plan is finalised, approved by stakeholders and has legal status to support implementation	Project's progress reports; draft zonig plan documents; laws and regulations issued by the GoY	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves Political will remains stable and supportive Technical and institutional capacity in the EPA, Governor's offoce and local community groups is retained during the project **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will may be distracted by other more pressing priorities such as major political events or		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

					environmental disasters Technical and institutional capacity may be lost due to to emigraton and conflict The pocess for endorsing the plan in the Yemeni legal and governmental sys tems may be very slow, cumbersome, unpredictable and largely outside of the EPA's and project team's control.		
Component 2. Conservation of Biodiversity in Socotra and Sustainable Management of Aden Wetlands							
Project Outcome	**Outcome Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**	**Relevant PoW Outcome(s) and indicator(s)[2]**	**Relevant SDG target(s) and indicators**
Outcome 2.1: The Aden wetlands are sustainably managed	GEF BD Core Indicator 4.1: Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (ha)	Target Area is 1,238 ha - confirmed with EPA during PPG Currently there is no management at the target sites A first PA METT will be conducted at project inception	**At project mid-point:** 500 ha **At project end:** 1,238 ha Aden Wetlands	Remote sensing; field surveys and PA METT assessments; review of approved policies, laws and regulations, as well as incremental monitoring and PIRs	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves Political will remains stable and supportive Technical and institutional capacity (augmented through project training) is retained during and post-project **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will may be distracted by	**UNEP MTS (2022-2025) Tematic Subprogramme:** N ature Action **Outcome 3:** Nature conservation and restoration are enhanced **UNEP PoW (2022-2025) Strategic Objective:** Living in harmony with nature: Recovery of nature occurs and contributes positively to ecosystem stability and human well-being **PoW 2030 outcome**: Recovery of nature occurs and is contributing positively to ecosystem stability	**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

					other more pressing priorities Technical and institutional capacity (augmented through project training) may be lost due to to emigraton and conflict	and human well-being. **PoW 2026–2029 outcome:** The rates of loss of ecosystems, species and genetic diversity do not exceed natural background rates. **PoW 2026–2029 outcome:** There is a net increase in the extent of healthy, resilient and sustainably managed natural and productive landscapes and seascapes.	
	GEF LD Core Indicator 3.4: Areas of wetlands (including estuaries and mangroves) under restoration (ha): 4,000	Area is 1,840 ha as confirmed with EPA durng PPG Currently there is no restoration effort ongoing at the target sites A first PA METT will be conducted at project inception	**At project mid-point:** 800 ha **At project end:** 1,840 ha Aden Wetlands Component 2	Remote sensing; field surveys and PA METT assessments; review of approved policies, laws and regulations	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves Political will remains stable and supportive Technical and institutional capacity (augmented through project training) is retained during and post-project **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Technical and institutional capacity (augmented through project	**UNEP MTS (2022-2025) Tematic Subprogramme:** N ature Action **Outcome 3:** Nature conservation and restoration are enhanced **UNEP PoW (2022-2025) Strategic Objective:** Living in harmony with nature: Recovery of nature occurs and contributes positively to ecosystem stability and human well-being **PoW 2030 outcome**: Recovery of nature occurs and is contributing positively to ecosystem stability and human well-being. **PoW 2026–2029 outcome:** The rates of loss of ecosystems, species and genetic	**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

					training) may be lost due to to emigraton and conflicts	diversity do not exceed natural background rates. **PoW 2026–2029 outcome:** There is a net increase in the extent of healthy, resilient and sustainably managed natural and productive landscapes and seascapes.	
Project Outputs	**Output Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**	**Relevant PoW Direct Outcome(s)**	**Relevant SDG target(s) and indicators**
Aden							
Output 2.1.1 Aden wetlands database reviewed and updated	**Indicator 2.1.1** level of database functionality and level of user uptake	Database not existing	**At project mid-point:** database structure and management set-up established, populated with available information and being tested **At project end:** database functioning and publicly available; showing inreasing number of users since launch date	Database webpage, records of access and usage, MTR and TE results, assessment of database quality and user-friendliness meaured though users' online feedback and comments	**Assumptions** A suitable cloud IaaS and SaaS[3] or physical hardware and software platform can be set-up for the EPA (possibly in partnership with an international organization) Capacity to maintain the database during and post-project is secured by the EPA **Risks** Database established without clear and approved business requirements and technical specifications A suitable cloud IaaS and SaaS or physical hardware and software platform cannot		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

					be set-up and maintained within the the EPA premises Resources to maintain the datase post-project are not mobilised by the EPA due to to Government's lack of funding and other pressing priorities		
Output 2.1.2 Ecosystem services of Aden wetlands identified, assessed and valued to support decision making, and the feasibility of applying Nature-based Solutions to protect Al Hiswa wetland is assessed.	**Indicator 2.1.2** level of stakeholders' increase in the level of understanding of ES and economic values provided by the Aden Wetlands	The baseline values will be established at project outset with a tailored Knowledge, Attitude, Practice Survey (KAP[4]) to measure the level of understanding of ES and economic values of wetlands among EPA staff and NWP members	**At project mid-term:** A 50% increase in the level of understanding of ES and economic values of wetlands among EPA staff and NWP members surveyed at inception **At project end:** A 100% increase in capacity among EPA staff and NWP members surveyed at inception	Stakeholder interviews conducted at project outset, project mid-term and project end, using KAP survey methods	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves Political will remains stable and supportive Technical and institutional capacity in the EPA and NWP member institutions is retained during the project **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Technical and institutional capacity may be lost due to to emigraton and conflict		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators, and partcularly: **SDG Target 15.9**: By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts
Output 2.1.3 Integrated land-use spatial (zoning) plan	**Indicator 2.1.3** level of users' uptake of the zoning plan (ZP) and	management plan requires major updating post-conflict, and	**At project mid-term:** MP and ZP drafted based on	MP and ZP documents; records of stakeholders' consultations;	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6,

and an inclusive and community-led Aden Wetlands Landscape Management Plan developed and implemented with the participation of a wide range of stakeholders	management plan (MP)	an accurate zoning plan is not in place	wide stakeholder consultation **At project end:** MP and ZP in place, available and being used by all NWP members	interviews with stakeholders and records of their feedback and comments	stable or improves Political will remains stable and supportive to underpin the ZP and MP formulation Technical and institutional capacity in the EPA and NWP member institutions is retained during the project **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will and engagament in ZP and MP formulation process may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Technical and institutional capacity may be lost due to to emigraton and conflicts		15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators
Output 2.1.4 Degraded wetlands restored through nature-based, gender-based solution practices and cost-effective interventions.	**Indicator 2.1.4.1** ha of wetlands under restoration	No restoration efforts are ongoing at project outset Tagret area is the al Hiswa wetland as confirmed with the EPA during PPG	**At project mid-term:** nature based solutions applied for wetland restoration in 90 ha **At project end:** nature based solutions applied for wetland restoration in 185 ha	Inventory / study of appropriate NbS for the al Hiswa wetlands; Remote sensing; field surveys; project progress reports; MTE and TE assessments; stakeholder interviews	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves Political will remains stable and supportive of the engagement of local communities in wetland restoration and PA management		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

					Economically viable and locally adapted nature-based solutions are identified and taken up by local communities Women groups can be meaningfully engaged in project activities **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will and engagament by local communities, espacially by women groups, may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Other more economically viable but NOT nature-friendly solutions are apparent and tend to prevail among local communites, thus damaging the wetlands' ecosystem integrity and functionality		
	Indicator 2.1.4.2 no. of people benefitting from nature-friendly uses of wetlands (gender-disaggregated)	Records pre-conflict will be re-assessed at project inception – PPG estimates indicate a potential target group of direct beneficiaries of up to 876 local residents	**At project mid-term:** at least 350 people (50% women) benefitting **At project end:** at least 876 people (50% women) benefitting	Project progress reports; stakeholder interviews and repeat surveys (baseline, mid-term and project end)	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves Political will remains stable and supportive of the engagement of local communities in wetland		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

		(335 M and 541 F)			restoration and PA management Economically viable and locally adapted nature-based solutions are identified and taken up by local communities Women groups can be meaningfully engaged in project activities **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will and engagament by local communities, espacially by women groups, may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Other more economically viable but NOT nature-friendly solutions are apparent and tend to prevail among local communites, thus damaging the wetlands' ecosystem integrity and functionality		
Project Outcome	**Outcome Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**	**Relevant PoW Outcome(s) and indicator(s)[2]**	**Relevant SDG target(s) and indicators**
Outcome 2.2 the management effectiveness of four	GEF BD Core Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial protected areas under improved management	Area is 6,536 ha as confirmed with EPA during PPG	**At project mid-point:** 2,500 ha	Remote sensing; field surveys and PA METT assessments; review of	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains	**UNEP MTS (2022-2025) Tematic Subprogramme:** Nature Action	**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and

active and three inactive protected areas in Socotra is measurably improved, considering the compatibility between IPLC needs and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.	effectiveness (hectares) BD CI 1.2: METT Score increase 20%	Baseline PA METT avilable for all sites in Socotra, conducted in 2023 and still valid	**At project end:** 6,536 ha	approved policies, laws and regulations	stable or improves Political will remains stable and supportive Technical and institutional capacity (augmented through project training) is retained during and post-project **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Technical and institutional capacity (augmented through project training) may be lost due to to emigraton and conflict	**Outcome 3:** Nature conservation and restoration are enhanced **UNEP PoW (2022-2025) Strategic Objective:** Living in harmony with nature: Recovery of nature occurs and contributes positively to ecosystem stability and human well-being **PoW 2030 outcome**: Recovery of nature occurs and is contributing positively to ecosystem stability and human well-being. **PoW 2026–2029 outcome:** The rates of loss of ecosystems, species and genetic diversity do not exceed natural background rates. **PoW 2026–2029 outcome:** There is a net increase in the extent of healthy, resilient and sustainably managed natural and productive landscapes and seascapes.	15.9 and all their associated indicators
	GEF BD Core Indicator 2.2 Marine protected areas under improved management (ha): 758 ha BD CI 2.2: METT Score increase 20%	Area is 1,134 ha as confirmed with EPA during PPG Basline PA METT avilable for all sites in Socotra, conducted in 2023 and still valid	**At project mid-point:** 450 ha **At project end:** 1,134 ha	Remote sensing; field surveys and PA METT assessments; review of approved policies, laws and regulations	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves Political will remains stable and supportive Technical and institutional	**UNEP MTS (2022-2025) Tematic Subprogramme:** Nature Action **Outcome 3:** Nature conservation and restoration are enhanced **UNEP PoW (2022-2025) Strategic Objective:** Living in	**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

					capacity (augmented through project training) is retained during and post-project **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Technical and institutional capacity (augmented through project training) may be lost due to to emigraton and conflict	harmony with nature: Recovery of nature occurs and contributes positively to ecosystem stability and human well-being **PoW 2030 outcome**: Recovery of nature occurs and is contributing positively to ecosystem stability and human well-being. **PoW 2026–2029 outcome:** The rates of loss of ecosystems, species and genetic diversity do not exceed natural background rates. **PoW 2026–2029 outcome:** There is a net increase in the extent of healthy, resilient and sustainably managed natural and productive landscapes and seascapes.	
Project Outputs	**Output Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**	**Relevant PoW Direct Outcome(s)**	**Relevant SDG target(s) and indicators**
Socotra							
Output 2.2.1 Four active protected areas' management systems are improved, focusing on higher levels of community engagement and	**Indicator 2.2.1.1** METT Score increase	Baseline PAMETT scores - same as used at the objective level Di Hamri: 60 Roosh:48 Homhil:48 Firmhin:31	**At project mid-point:** 10% increase Di Hamri: 66 Roosh: 52.8 Homhil: 52.8 Firmhin: 34.1	METT reports; project progress reports; MTE and TE assessments; community-EPA meeting reports	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves Political will in EPA and other local institutions in Socotra remains stable and supportive of the engagement		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

empowerment, particularly of women, long-term sustainability, ecotourism, and business planning.			**At project end:** 20% increase Di Hamri: 72 Roosh: 57.6 Homhil: 57.6 Firmhin: 37.2		of local communities in PA management Economically viable and locally adapted nature-based solutions are identifid and taken up by local communities Women groups can be meaningfully engaged in project activities **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will and engagament by local communities, especially by women groups, may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Other more economically viable but NOT nature-friendly solutions are apparent and tend to prevail among local communites, thus damaging the PAs' ecosystem integrity and biodiversity		
	Indicator 2.2.1.2 level of empowerment of local community groups in PA management	No framework agreements are in place between the EPA and local community groups to manage these target PAs	**At project mid-point:** Agreements drafted for all four PAs and being tested in at least two PAs **At project end:**	Agreements' documents; project progress reports; periodic PA METT assessments; MTE nd TE assessments;	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves Political will in EPA and other local institutions in Socotra		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

			Agreements operational in all four PAs		remains stable and supportive of the engagement of local communities in PA management Local communities see the social and economic advantage of engaging in PA management Women groups can be meaningfully engaged in project activities **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Political will and engagament by local communities, especially by women groups, may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Other more economically viable but NOT nature-friendly solutions are apparent and tend to prevail among local communites, thus limiting their engagement in PA management and damaging the PAs' ecosystem integrity and biodiversity		
Output 2.2.2 Successfully developed and implemente	**Indicator 2.2.2.1** METT score increase	Baseline PAMETT scores - same	**At project mid-point:** 10% increase	PA METT reports; project progress reports	Same as above		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6,

d Protected Area managemen t approaches are replicated in at least three inactive protected areas		as used at the objective level Skand: 29 Abalhin:31 Detwah Lagoon:	Skand: 31.9 Abalhin: 33.1 Detwah Lagoon: **At project end:** 20% increase Skand: 34.8 Abalhin: 37.2				15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators
	Indicator 2.2.2.2 level of empowerment of local community groups in PA management	No framework agreements are in place between the EPA and local community groups to manage these target PAs	**At project mid-point:** Agreements being drafted for all three PAs and being tested in at least one PA **At project end:** Agreements operational in all three PAs	Agreememts' documents; PA METT assessments; project progress reports; MTE and TE assessments	Same as above		
Output 2.2.3 Building on the activities carried out under Output 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, alternative livelihood options around the protected areas will be identified and enhanced ensuring that these options are equally accessible to women and men.	**Indicator 2.2.3.1** no. and diversity of practices under improvement	Alternative livelihood options around target protected areas are not documented / recorded	**At project mid-point:** At least three different alternative livelihood options supported by the project are documented **At project end:** At least seven different alternative livelihood options supported by the project are documented	Project progress reports; PA METT assessments; community feedback during MTE and TE assessment	Same as above		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators
	Indicator 2.2.3.2 no. of people benefitting (gender-disaggregated)	Baseline is zero at project outset: no alternative livelihood options	**At project mid-term:** at least 1,700 people (50% women) benefitting	Project progress reports; MTE and TE interviews	Same as above		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and

		around target protected areas are documented / recorded. The potential number of beneficiaries was estimated during PPG at 4,159 (2,167 M and 1,992 F)	**At project end:** at least 4,159 people (50% women) benefitting	with local communities			15.9 and all their associated indicators
Output 2.2.4 Lessons learned on conservation of Dragon Blood Trees and Frankincense trees in Firmhin and Homhil protected areas scaled up.	**Indicator 2.2.4.1** % total no. of trees transferred out from EPA-supported nurseries and planted in the field	Baseline used is the total n. of trees transferred into the field as of 2023 from EPA-CBOs nurseries: Frankincense: 528 Dragon Blood: 620	**At project mid-term:** at least 1,000 additional (meaning: additional to baseline) Frankincense and 1,200 additional Dragon Blood seedlings transferred into the field **At project end:** at least 2,000 additional Frankincense and 2,400 additional Dragon Blood seedlings transferred into the field	Project progress reports; technical reports by EPA and Fanklinia project; MTE and TE assessments	**Assumptions:** Local safety and security remains stable or improves EPA is able to team-up and pool resources with international (eg Franklinia project, FAO GEF project), and local institutions (eg Ministry of Agiculture) and can support the engagement of local communities in the tree-regeneration programme Local communities see the social and economic advantage of engaging in training and implementation of tree-regeration efforts Women groups can be meaningfully engaged in project activities (i.e. have time		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

					and are available to do so) **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Engagament by local communities, especially by women groups, may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Other more economically viable but NOT nature-friendly solutions are apparent and tend to prevail among local communites, thus limiting their engagement in the tree-regeration programme		
	Indicator 2.2.4.2 no. of people (gender disaggregated) and level of capacity of local community stakeholders engaged in applying regeneration-friendly measures	200 people (of which 80 women) engaged in tree-planting by the EPA-CBOs efforts in Firmhin and Homhil in 2024 Baseline capacity levels to be established at project outset with a simple Capacity Development Scorecard[5]	**At project mid-term:** a 50% increase in the n. of people involved (gender-disaggregated) and gender balance improved to 50% **At project end:** a 100% increase in the n. of people involved (gender-disaggregated) and gender balance improved to 50%	Project progress reports; technical reports by EPA and Fanklinia project; MTE and TE assessments	EPA is able to team-up and pool resources with international (eg Franklinia project, FAO GEF project), and local institutions (eg Ministry of Agiculture) and can support the engagement of local communities in the tree-regeneration programme Local communities see the social and economic advantage of engaging in training and implementation		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

					of tree-regeration efforts. Women groups can be meaningfully engaged in project activities (i.e. have time and are available to do so) **Risks:** Local safety and security may deteriorate Engagament by local communities, especially by women groups, may be distracted by other more pressing priorities Other more economically viable but NOT nature-friendly solutions are apparent and tend prevail among local communites, thus limiting their engagement in the tree-regeration programme		
Output 2.2.5 An island-wide sustainable sea turtle conservation program established and operated in coordination with local authorities and communities.	**Indicator 2.2.5** decrease in the number of illegal turtle kills recorded	Currently the turtle surveillance programme is not operational, hence baseline data will be gathered in year 1 of the project and progress monitored thereafter	**At project mid-point:** A decrease of at least 20% in the no. of illegal killings is recorded **At project end:** A decrease of at least 60% in the no. of illegal killings is recorded	EPA sea turtle surveillance team's records; turtle nest counts; project progress reports	**Assumptions** The ongoing conflict situation in the region will calm down and trade will resume at normal levels, thus reducing price of food on the island and reducing pressure on illegal sea turtle killings for meat consumption		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

					Collaboration with local police and military authorities will be positive, conducive and supportive of this effort by the EPA Local communities will meaningfully engage and support the programme **Risks** The conflict situation in the region may continue to negatively affect local trade, increasing the price and reducing availability of food on the island, thus further increasing pressure on sea turtles killed for meat consumption Local police and military authorities may not necessarily be fully supportive of this effort as they also (illegally) may take advantage of this source of meat Local communities may not meaningfully engage and support the programme, for the same reasons.		
Output 2.2.6 Lessons learned on controlling invasive	**Indicator 2.2.6** recorded numbers of Intentional and accidental	No records of alien, invasive and potentially invasive	**At project mid-point:** Detection of alien, invasive and potentially invasive spp. improved by	EPA IAS team's records; project	**Assumptions** The initial EPA awareness raising and outreach		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6,

alien species program will be up scaled.	introduction of alien, invasive and potentially invasive species	species are being kept by te EPA, hence baseline data will be gathered in year 1 of the project and progress monitored thereafter	40% from baseline and a decrease of 40% in the establishment of novel IAS **At project end:** Detection rates improved by 80% from baseline and no new IAS detected	progress reports	campaign on IAS will be impactful and will support project implementation Political will in partner organizations and local communities (that is vital for effective IAS management), will be sufficiently strong to support project objectives and EPA's mandate **Risks** Key stakeholders may be distracted by other more pressing and immediate priorities, and the political will to engage may be insufficient A major IAS invasion crisis may distract the efforts of the EPA to deal with the emergency response, while losing track of the longer-term tasks and goals of the IAS Management Plan		15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators, and particularly: **SDG Indicator 15.8.1**: Proportion of countries adopting relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species
Component 3. Knowledge Management, Public Awareness							
Project Outcome	**Outcome Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**	**Relevant PoW Outcome(s) and indicator(s)[2]**	**Relevant SDG target(s) and indicators**
Outcome 3 Decision makers and relevant stakeholders aware and appreciate the	**Indicator 3.1** increase in the level of awareness (gender-disaggregated)	Baseline levels of awareness and attitudes will be established at project outset with a tailored Knowledge,	**At project mid term:** At least a 40% improvement in KAP score	Project progress reports and KAP survey reports (stakeholder interview results)	**Assumptions** Baseline survey will be conducted in a timely manner at project outset, and stakehlders willing		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their

importance of conservation of the Aden wetlands and Socotra Archipelago		Attitude, Practice Survey (KAP[6]) to be developed and conducted with a significative sample of key stakeholders nd repeated at mid-term and project end	**At project end:** At least 80% improvement in KAP score		to participate and respond Key stakehlders interviewed will stay in their positions during the project's life Social and political situation remains stable **Risks** Basline survey is not carried out in a timely fashion due to external circumstances Key stakehlders interviewed will NOT stay in their positions during the project's life due to change in jobs or migration Social and political situation becomes more unstable hampering project efforts and obviously distracting stakeholders		associated indicators
Project Outputs	**Output Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**	**Relevant PoW Direct Outcome(s)**	**Relevant SDG target(s) and indicators**

Output 3.1.1 Outreach and dissemination strategy for conservation of Aden wetlands and Socotra Archipelago developed and implemented.	**Indicator 3.1.1.1** level of use and uptake of the strategy	Zero – communication strategy not in place	**At project mid-term:** KM and communication strategy in place and EPA team in Aden and Socotra have participated in its formulation. Implementation has started. **At project end:** KM and communication strategy being actively implemented by EPA team	Project progress reports and communication strategy's implementation reports produced by the EPA awareness and education team in Aden and Socotra	**Assumptions** Sufficient professional capacity can be mobilised in the EPA team and retained for the project's duration **Risks** It is hard for the EPA to retain qalified staff during and post-project as these same comunication skills are also in demand in other sectors, especially in the private sector		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators
	Indicator 3.1.1.2 no. and diversity of products developed (eg webpages, newsletter issues, posters, press articles, social media posts, etc.) in both arabic and english	Zero - No communication assets in place	**At project mid-term:** At least 20 different products developed and disseminated **At project end:** At least 60 different products developed and disseminated (total: 80 at project end)	Project progress reports and communication strategy's implementation reports produced by the EPA awareness and education team in Aden and Socotra Archive of communication assests produced being kept by the EPA	**Assumptions** Sufficient professional capacity can be mobilised in the EPA team and retained for the project's duration **Risks** It is hard for the EPA to retain qalified staff during and post-project as these same comunication skills are also in demand in other sectors, especially in the private sector		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators
	Indicator 3.1.1.4 no. and diversity of people reached (gender-disagggregated)	Zero – communication strategy not in place and no records available	**At project mid-term:** At least 3,000 peple reached (50% women)	Project progress reports and communication strategy's implementation reports produced by the EPA awareness	**Assumptions** Sufficient professional capacity can be mobilised in the EPA team and retained for the project's duration		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their

			At project end: At least 9,000 people reached (50% women)	and education team in Aden and Socotra	**Risks** It is hard for the EPA to retain qalified staff during and post-project as these same comunication skills are also in demand in other sectors, especially in the private sector		associated indicators
Component 4. Monitoring & Evaluation							
Project Outcome	**Outcome Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**	**Relevant PoW Outcome(s) and indicator(s)[2]**	**Relevant SDG target(s) and indicators**
Outcome 4: Monitoring and Evaluation plan / platform is established and functional	**Indicator 4.1** level of timeliness and completeness of M&E products produced	Zero – project not started yet	**At project mid-term:** M&E pan is in place and baseline surveys have all been implemented in Y1 to establish baselines for selected indicators (see above), FPIC and grievance mechanism in place **At project end:** Surveys repeated at mid-term and project end for effective impact monitoring. Gender and safeguards plan revisited at least once during the course of the project.	Project progress reports, survey reports	**Assumptions** External social, political and conflict situation does not deteriorate Adequate external advisory capacity to support EPA at project outset and throughout project implementation can be mobilised in a timely fashion **Risks** External social, political and conflict situation deteriorates, hampering project implementation Adequate external advisory capacity to support EPA at project outset cannot be mobilised in a timely fashion due to difficulty in finding suitable experts willing or		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

					able to work in Yemen in support of the EPA		
Output 4.1 Regular PIRs, an efficient M&E programme, timely MTR and TE		Zero – project not started	M&E plan being implemented Annual PIRs and technical prohìgress reports of high quality are produced in a timely fashion by the project team Mid-term and Terminal evaluations organised in a timely fashion by UNEP	Project progress reports, PIS, MTE and TE reports, baselines and repeat M&E surveys' reports	**Assumptions** External social, political and conflict situation does not deteriorate Adequate external advisory capacity to support EPA at project outset and throughout project implementation can be mobilised in a timely fashion **Risks** External social, political and conflict situation deteriorates, hampering project implementation Adequate external advisory capacity to support EPA at project outset and throughout project implementation cannot be mobilised in a timely fashion due to difficulty in finding suitable experts willing or able to work in Yemen in support of the EPA		**SDG Goal 15** - Targets 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.6, 15.8 and 15.9 and all their associated indicators

[1] UNDP capacity assessment methodology | United Nations Development Programme

[2] Strengthening voices for better choices : a capacity needs assessment process - resource | IUCN

[3] IaaS (Infrastructure as a Service) provides virtualized computing resources over the internet, while SaaS (Software as a Service) delivers software applications via the cloud, eliminating the need for local installation

[4] LM2-Tool13_-_KAP.pdf

[5] UNDP capacity assessment methodology | United Nations Development Programme

[6] LM2-Tool13_-_KAP.pdf

ANNEX D: STATUS OF UTILIZATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)

Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:

Project Preparation Activities Implemented	GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount ($)		
	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent To date	Amount Committed
International Consultants (1.PPG coordinator and quality assurance; 2.PPG team leader with expertise in BD, PA Management, Wetland consultant, Project Design; 3.PA Management, Community Engagement Expert; 4. Environment and Community Engagement Expert; 5.Gender Mainstreaming, Social and Environmental Safeguards Expert. In addition, the EA has engaged: 6.GIS team (1 senior, 2 juniors) to produce the maps of the project areas; 7.Technical Support to the PPG from a team of 3 experts: A-Protected areas management; B-Wetland restorations and management; C-Community engagement).	130,000.00	73,360.00	56,640.00
National Consultants (Contracts of local consultants to collect relevant data and information in Socotra Archipelago and Aden Wetlands and participate in the local meetings in Socotra. Four consultants in Socotra Island: 1.Mr. Abdul Wahab Sa'ad, team leader; 2.Mr. Sheikhah Mubarak, gender specialist in the island; 3.Mr. Salem Hawash: Assistant in Haribo Directorate; 4.Mr. Mazen Hasiba: Assistant in Qalansyeh Directorate. Two consultant in Aden: 1.Faisal al Th'Alabi, Team leader; 2.Sarah Turkey, Gender Specialist in Aden)..	8,250.00	8,250.00	0.00
Travels in the project area (The EA (RSCN) representative conducted one (1) International travel to the Project sites to organize stakeholder consultation meetings in Socotra and Aden on 4th to 15th November 2025 (total 3,227 USD actual costs including travel costs and periderms). In addition, the per diems are foreseen for several stakeholders' representatives to participate in the final validation session and consultation regarding the activities both in Socotra and Aden within the project).	10,000.00	3,227.00	6,773.00
Meetings and Stakeholders consultations at national, regional and local levels (Total 55 meetings in Socotra have been organized: 50 bilateral (individual) and 5 group stakeholders' consultations. Total 15 meeting in Aden have been organized: 12 bilateral (individual) and 3 group stakeholders' consultations).	1,750.00	1,750.00	0.00
Total	**150,000.00**	**86,587.00**	**63,413.00**

ANNEX E: PROJECT MAP AND COORDINATES

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

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Di Hamri	12.667167	54.191333	

Location Description:

Coastal – Marine Protected Area

Activity Description:

Ecotourism, diving

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Roosh	12.610296	54.349899	

Location Description:

Marine Protected Area

Activity Description:

Ecotourism, diving

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Homhill	12.598296	54.333076	

Location Description:

Terrestrial Protected Area

Activity Description:

Ecotourism, tree regeneration

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Firmihin	12.488061	54.015709	

Location Description:

Terrestrial Protected Area

Activity Description:

Ecotourism, tree regeneration

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Detwah Lagoon	12.42176	53.30219	

Location Description:

Coastal Lagoon Protected Area, Ramsar Site

Activity Description:

Ecotourism, snorkeling

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Skund	12.5582	54.0137	

Location Description:

Terrestrial Protected Area

Activity Description:

Ecotourism, tree regeneration

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Abilhin	12.598296	54.333076	

Location Description:

Costal – Marine Protected Area

Activity Description:

Ecotourism, sea turtle conservation

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Al Heswah	12.83746	44.94451	

Location Description:

Wetland Protected Area

Activity Description:

Ecotourism, local livelihoods

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Al-Mimlah	12.84880	45.01529	

Location Description:

Wetland Protected Area

Activity Description:

Ecotourism, local livelihoods

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Buharat Al Baga'a	12.82228	45.01983	

Location Description:

Wetland Protected Area

Activity Description:

Ecotourism, local livelihoods

Please provide any further geo-referenced information and map where project interventions are taking place as appropriate.

Overview of the Biodiversity Importance of the Socotra Archipelago and the Aden Wetlands

Biodiversity of Yemen

Yemen's biodiversity is of remarkable global importance, spanning both terrestrial and marine ecosystems that support unique species and ecological processes. On land, the country's varied topography, from coastal plains and wadis to mountain ranges, hosts a mosaic of habitats, many of which are home to endemic and regionally significant species of plants, reptiles, birds, and invertebrates. These terrestrial systems provide essential ecosystem services, including soil stabilization, water regulation, and resources for rural livelihoods, while also functioning as critical stopover and breeding grounds for migratory birds moving along the African-Eurasian flyway.

Marine ecosystems along Yemen's coasts are equally vital, encompassing coral reefs, seagrass beds, mangroves, lagoons, and extensive mudflats. These habitats sustain high levels of biodiversity, including reef-building corals, coastal and pelagic fish, marine mammals, and threatened turtle species, many of which are of international conservation concern. They also serve as crucial nursery grounds that maintain regional fisheries and provide resilience against climate change impacts such as sea-level rise and warming seas.

Socotra Archipelago – project Target Area

The Socotra Archipelago holds exceptional global biodiversity importance, both for its terrestrial ecosystems and for its surrounding marine environments. Its value derives from a unique combination of isolation, evolutionary history, and ecological integrity, which have together produced an extraordinary degree of endemism and diversity.

In terms of terrestrial diversity, Socotra is among the world's top ten islands in terms of botanical conservation importance. Roughly 37% of its 825 recorded plant species are endemic, including iconic species such as the dragon's blood tree (*Dracaena cinnabari*) and the cucumber tree (*Dendrosicyos socotranus*). Entire genera, such as *Dirachma* and *Dendrosicyos*, occur nowhere else. This endemism extends to fauna: 27 of 30 terrestrial reptile species are unique to the archipelago, making it one of the richest reptile assemblages of any island group. Similarly, six bird species are endemic, and the islands host 22 Important Bird Areas recognized

globally for conservation. Invertebrates, too, show striking patterns: studies of woodlice, for example, recorded a 73% endemism rate, far surpassing neighbouring regions.

In terms of marine diversity, it is equally remarkable compared to land diversity. Situated at the confluence of the Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Red Sea, Socotra serves as a biological crossroads. Its coral reefs and associated fish communities display affinities with East African, Arabian, and Indo-Pacific systems, acting as stepping stones that facilitate connectivity and gene flow across the wider region. Surveys have documented over 250 species of reef-building corals and more than 730 coastal fish species, levels comparable to the entire Red Sea despite Socotra's smaller scale. Importantly, the outer-island reefs showed resilience to the mass coral bleaching, highlighting their global value for understanding resistance and recovery under climate change. The islands also provide critical nesting habitat for seabirds and turtles, and waters that support numerous cetaceans.

Internationally, Socotra has been acknowledged as a UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve, listed among WWF's Global 200 Ecoregions, and included by Conservation International as a Biodiversity Hotspot. The IUCN recognizes it as a globally important centre of endemism, and BirdLife International has mapped 22 Important Bird Areas across the archipelago. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) and UN agencies have supported studies and programs since the mid-1990s, confirming its standing among the world's most important conservation areas.

Aden Wetlands – project Target Area

The Aden wetlands are a complex of lagoons, salt plains, mudflats, marshes, and beaches. These coastal wetlands form part of a broader gradient of habitats along Yemen's long coastline (over 2,500 km), which transitions among the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Arabian Sea. The wetlands function as critical resting, feeding, and wintering grounds for large numbers of migratory waterbirds. Over 100 migratory species use the Aden wetland complex. Birds of global or regional conservation interest are present, including the White-eyed Gull (endemic to Red Sea / Gulf of Aden basin). Some specific groups are being newly or better recorded, showing that biodiversity is incompletely known. For example, recent surveys of hermit crabs along Aden's coasts found 10 species, including one (*Dardanus lagopodes*) recorded for the first time in the Gulf of Aden.

In terms of marine biodiversity, the wetlands interlink with marine ecosystems via lagoons, estuarine zones, mudflats, seagrass meadows, and mangroves. These provide nursery habitats, feeding grounds, and shelter for many marine and coastal species. For example, *Torpedo adenensis*, the Aden Gulf torpedo, is endemic (or nearly so) to the eastern Gulf of Aden and is classified as Endangered. Also, sea urchin surveys have recently added new records for the region. Further, the broader Red Sea and Gulf of Aden area has globally significant numbers of reef-building corals and fish species. For example, PERSGA reports over 300 reef-building coral species and more than 1,300 fish species in the combined Red Sea/Gulf of Aden region. Furthermore, the Aden wetlands lie where multiple marine biogeographic provinces meet, making them important for connectivity, gene flow, and species turnover. They serve as stepping stones between larger marine systems in the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, and the Red Sea.

In terms of global significance, the combination of high species richness, migratory bird importance, presence of endemic and threatened species, and habitat diversity make the Aden wetlands a priority for conservation in the region. The Aden wetlands have been legally declared protected areas under Yemeni government decrees and several of them are currently being considered for nomination under the Ramsar Convention as wetlands of international importance. It is important to highlight that the wetlands contribute to global biodiversity via providing critical ecosystem services which provide habitats for migratory species (birds and marine), nurseries for fish and invertebrates, carbon sequestration (wetlands and mangroves), and maintenance of ecosystem processes.

Protected Area Maps and Descriptions

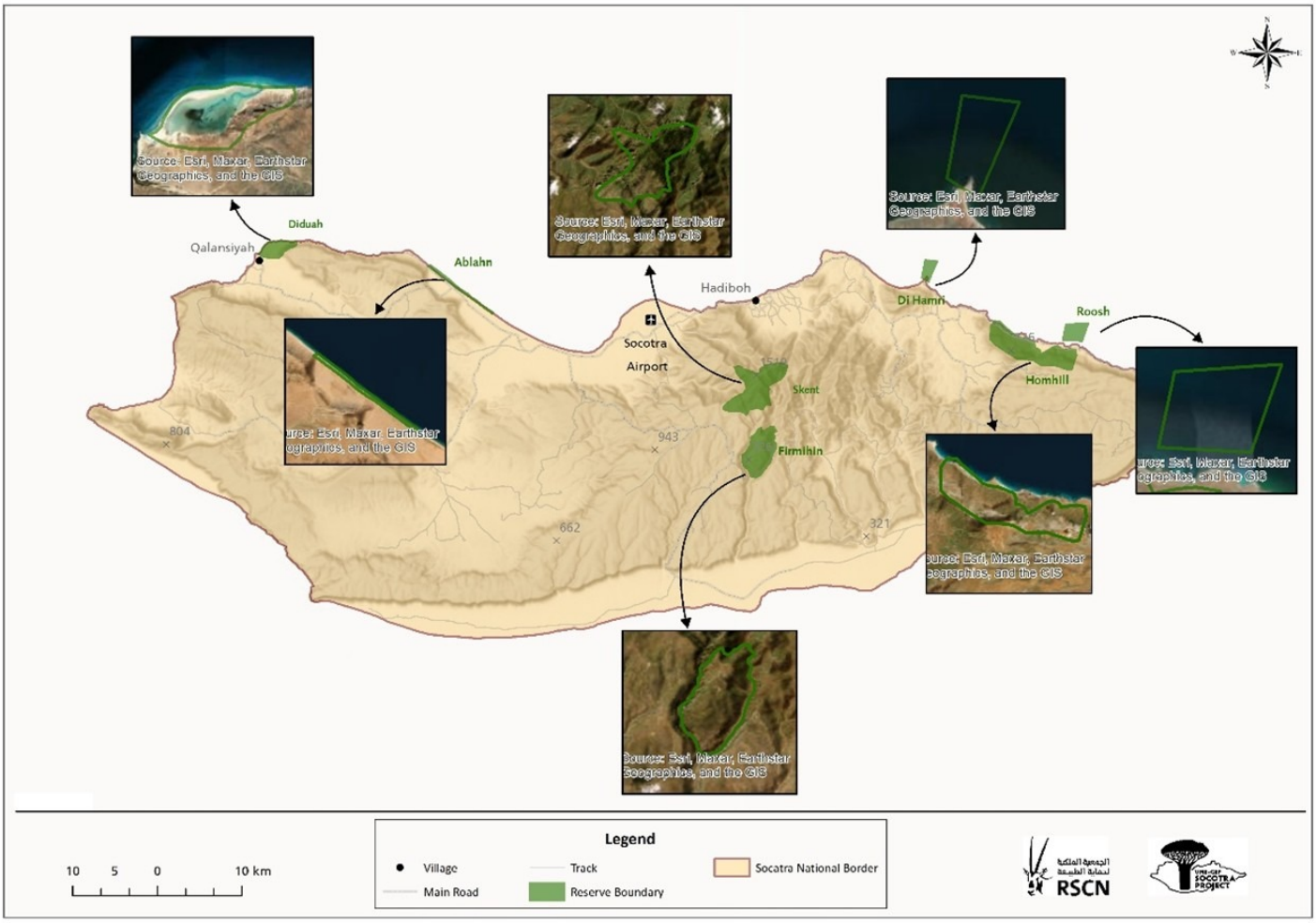


Table 14 Protected areas Information

Geo Name ID *Required field if the location is not an exact site*	**Location Name** *Required field*	**Latitude** *Required field*	**Longitude** *Required field*	**Area** (in ha)	**Number of beneficiaries** *Optional text field*	**Location Description** *Optional text field*	**Activity Description** *Optional text field*
Socotra							
n/a	Di Hamri	12.667167	54.191333	266		Coastal – Marine Protected Area	Ecotourism, diving
n/a	Roosh	12.610296	54.349899	622		Marine Protected Area	Ecotourism, diving
n/a	Homhill	12.598296	54.333076	2,622		Terrestrial Protected Area	Ecotourism, tree regeneration
n/a	Firmihin	12.488061	54.015709	1,602		Terrestrial Protected Area	Ecotourism, tree regeneration
n/a	Detwah Lagoon	12.42176	53.30219	602		Coastal Lagoon Protected Area, Ramsar Site	Ecotourism, snorkeling
n/a	Skund	12.5582	54.0137	2,312		Terrestrial Protected Area	Ecotourism, tree regeneration

n/a	Abilhin	12.598296	54.333076	246		Costal – Marine Protected Area	Ecotourism, sea turtle conservation
			Sub-total Socotra	**8,272**	**4,159** (2,167 M and 1,992 F)		
			Marine PAs	*1,134*			
			Terrestrial PAs	*6,536*			
			Wetland (Ramsar site)	*602*			
Aden							
n/a	Al Heswah	12.83746	44.94451	185		Wetland Protected Area	Ecotourism, local livelihoods
n/a	Al-Mimlah	12.84880	45.01529	943		Wetland Protected Area	Ecotourism, local livelihoods
n/a	Buharat Al Baga'a	12.82228	45.01983	110.11		Wetland Protected Area	Ecotourism, local livelihoods
			Sub-total Aden Wetlands	**1238.11**	**876** (335 M and 541 F)		
			totals	**9,510.11**			

Overview of the Biodiversity Importance of the Socotra Archipelago and the Aden Wetlands

Biodiversity of Yemen

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Marine ecosystems along Yemen's coasts are equally vital, encompassing coral reefs, seagrass beds, mangroves, lagoons, and extensive mudflats. These habitats sustain high levels of biodiversity, including reef-building corals, coastal and pelagic fish, marine mammals, and threatened turtle species, many of which are of international conservation concern. They also serve as crucial nursery grounds that maintain regional fisheries and provide resilience against climate change impacts such as sea-level rise and warming seas.

Socotra Archipelago – project Target Area

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Internationally, Socotra has been acknowledged as a UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve, listed among WWF's Global 200 Ecoregions, and included by Conservation International as a Biodiversity Hotspot. The IUCN recognizes it as a globally important centre of endemism, and BirdLife International has mapped 22 Important Bird Areas across the archipelago. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) and UN agencies have supported studies and programs since the mid-1990s, confirming its standing among the world's most important conservation areas.

Aden Wetlands – project Target Area

The Aden wetlands are a complex of lagoons, salt plains, mudflats, marshes, and beaches. These coastal wetlands form part of a broader gradient of habitats along Yemen's long coastline (over 2,500 km), which transitions among the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Arabian Sea. The wetlands function as critical resting, feeding, and wintering grounds for large numbers of migratory waterbirds. Over 100 migratory species use the Aden wetland complex. Birds of global or regional conservation interest are present, including the White-eyed Gull (endemic to Red Sea / Gulf of Aden basin). Some specific groups are being newly or better recorded, showing that biodiversity is incompletely known. For example, recent surveys of hermit crabs along Aden's coasts found 10 species, including one (*Dardanus lagopodes*) recorded for the first time in the Gulf of Aden.

In terms of marine biodiversity, the wetlands interlink with marine ecosystems via lagoons, estuarine zones, mudflats, seagrass meadows, and mangroves. These provide nursery habitats, feeding grounds, and shelter for many marine and coastal species. For example, *Torpedo adenensis*, the Aden Gulf torpedo, is endemic (or nearly so) to the eastern Gulf of Aden and is classified as Endangered. Also, sea urchin surveys have recently added new records for the region. Further, the broader Red Sea and Gulf of Aden area has globally significant numbers of reef-building corals and fish species. For example, PERSGA reports over 300 reef-building coral species and more than 1,300 fish species in the combined Red Sea/Gulf of Aden region. Furthermore, the Aden wetlands lie where multiple marine biogeographic provinces meet, making them important for connectivity, gene flow, and species turnover. They serve as stepping stones between larger marine systems in the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, and the Red Sea.

In terms of global significance, the combination of high species richness, migratory bird importance, presence of endemic and threatened species, and habitat diversity make the Aden wetlands a priority for conservation in the region. The Aden wetlands have been legally declared protected areas under Yemeni government decrees and several of them are currently being considered for nomination under the Ramsar Convention as wetlands of international importance. It is important to highlight that the wetlands contribute to global biodiversity via providing critical ecosystem services which provide habitats for migratory species (birds and marine), nurseries for fish and invertebrates, carbon sequestration (wetlands and mangroves), and maintenance of ecosystem processes.

Protected Area Maps and Descriptions

I. Socotra

Homhil Protected Area, Socotra (Active)

Site Map

Homhil Protected Area, situated in the eastern mountains of Socotra, spans approximately 2,622 ha and includes highland plateaus, steep valleys, and iconic forested slopes. The area is best known for hosting some of the most intact populations of the endemic frankincense trees (*Boswellia spp.*), contributing to the area's outstanding botanical value.

The protected area was declared under Republican Decree No. 275 (2000) and is managed by the Homhil Local Conservation Association in collaboration with the EPA and local authorities. Its topography ranges from 200 to 700 meters above sea level, with the twin mountains of Jebel Hamderwah and Jebel Jin framing lush natural pastures and springs used for agriculture and livestock. The area includes sacred water basins like Knerhen-Kabkab, a tourist attraction nestled between cliffs overlooking the Arabian Sea.

Ecological surveys have recorded 163 plant species in Homhil, 97 of which are endemic to the archipelago and 7 to the site itself. At least 19 species are classified as threatened under IUCN criteria. Homhil also provides habitat for unique fauna, including endemic reptiles and birds.

Local communities maintain traditional herding and agriculture practices, but overgrazing remains a significant threat, particularly to young *Dracaena* and *Boswellia* regeneration. Firewood collection, unsupervised

tourism, and seasonal droughts compound environmental degradation. The area was also extremely affected by the 2015 and 2019 cyclones which destroyed the majority of the frankincense forest.

Conservation priorities for Homhil include post-cyclone ecosystem restoration, biodiversity monitoring, community-based water resource management, development of eco-tourism infrastructure, restoration of degraded rangelands, and capacity-building for local management teams.

Di Hamri Protected Area, Socotra (Active)

Site Map

Located on the northeastern coast of Socotra Island, Di Hamri Marine Protected Area covers approximately 266 ha, including the rocky coastal promontory of Ras Di Hamri and the surrounding marine waters to a depth

of 300 meters. It lies 32 kilometers from Hadibo, the capital of Socotra, with the closest village being Di Hamri, located just 800 meters inland.

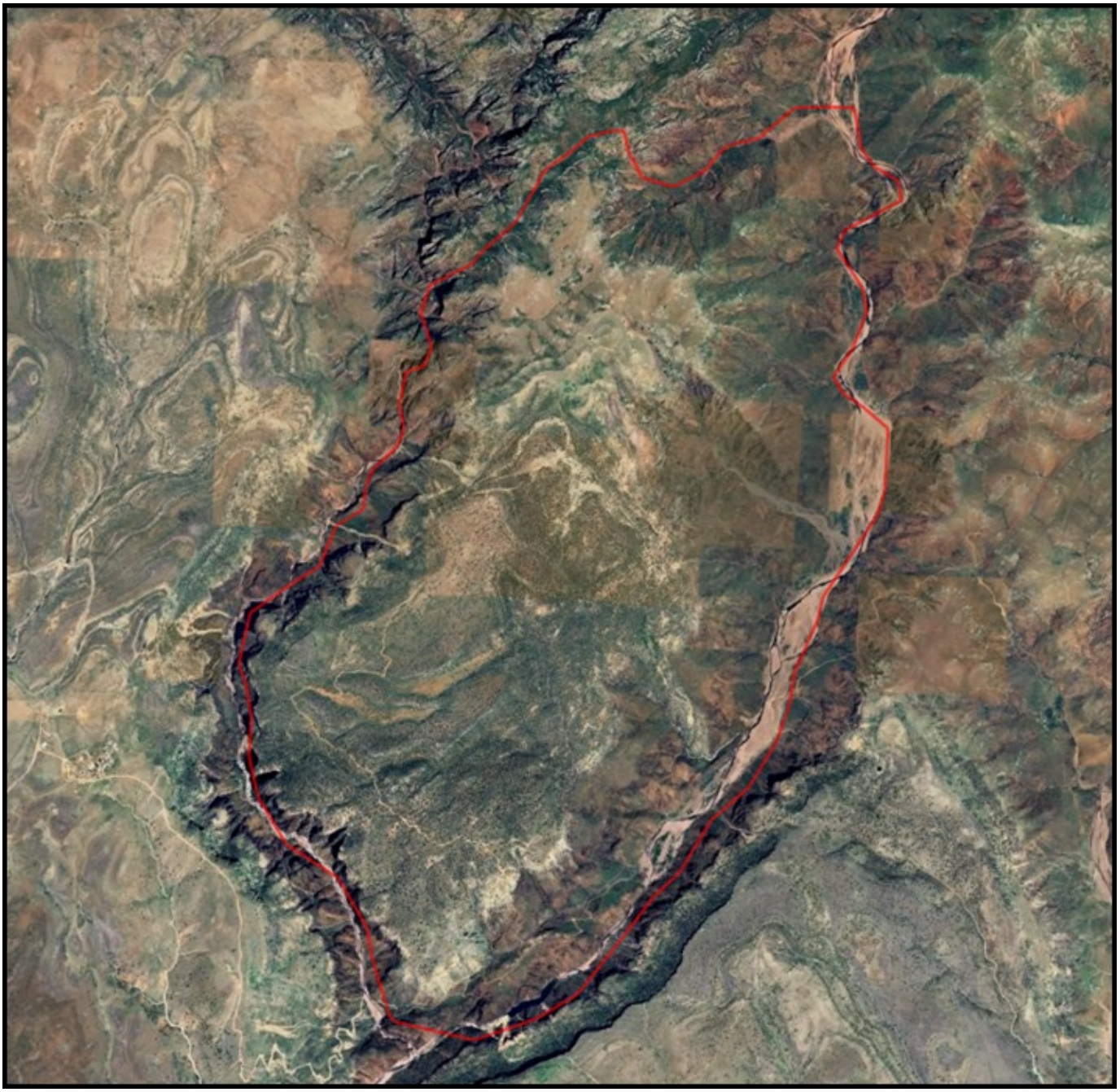
Di Hamri is a legally declared nature sanctuary under Republican Decree No. 275 (2000) and is co-managed by the local Di Hamri Conservation Association with support from national and international partners. The site is globally significant for its exceptional marine biodiversity. Surveys recorded 35 plant species (32 endemic to Socotra), 150 fish species, 80 species of coral, 19 species of crabs, 4 species of lobsters, and 2 types of sea turtles. The coral reefs and reef-associated fish are among its most iconic ecological features, making the site a prime location for eco-tourism.

Despite its ecological importance, Di Hamri faces conservation challenges such as overfishing, plastic pollution, natural disasters, and encroaching tourism. The lack of freshwater and telecommunications, alongside outdated infrastructure, also limits community development. However, the site benefits from an operational community-run eco-camp, solar energy facilities, and a basic freshwater network.

Conservation goals include safeguarding biodiversity, developing sustainable eco-tourism based on natural and cultural values, implementing community-led water and fisheries management, and raising local awareness. The management strategy emphasizes participatory governance, combining conservation with local livelihood development, and monitoring key environmental indicators to ensure long-term ecological resilience. A reconfiguration of the site under the new UNEP project is anticipated with the aim to enhance ecological integrity and address climate and human induced threats.

Firmhin Protected Area, Socotra (Active)

Site Map



Firmhin Protected Area, located in the central highland zone of Socotra Island, was officially declared a protected area under Decree No. (7) of 2022. With a total area of 1,602 hectares. It represents one of the most ecologically and culturally significant landscapes on the island and is part of the core zone of the Socotra Archipelago World Heritage Site, inscribed by UNESCO for its outstanding biodiversity and endemism.

The protected area is centered around the Firmhin Plateau, a high-altitude limestone expanse renowned for harboring the world's largest and densest populations of Dragon's Blood Trees (*Dracaena cinnabari*), an iconic and endemic species whose umbrella-like crown and crimson resin have made it a symbol of Socotra's natural heritage. The plateau's unique microclimate, fed by mist and seasonal rain, supports a

variety of rare and endemic plants, including *Euphorbia*, *Aloe*, and *Boswellia* species, creating a mosaic of shrublands, woodlands, and rocky habitats.

Firmhin is home to several small pastoralist communities who depend on traditional grazing systems, utilizing goats and sheep for subsistence. The PA establishment decree of 2022 formally acknowledges community rights to sustainable natural resource use and calls for local participation in management. Although population figures are not specified in the decree, the area is known to be seasonally inhabited by herders, particularly during periods of pasture abundance. The local population associated with the site accounts for at least several hundred people distributed across several villages including permanent and semi-permanent settlements.

The site's biodiversity value is compounded by its role as a refuge for many endemic birds, reptiles, and invertebrates, many of which are not found anywhere else on Earth. Ecosystem services provided by the area include carbon sequestration, groundwater recharge, and cultural heritage values linked to traditional land-use systems and spiritual significance of the Dragon's Blood Tree.

Key challenges facing conservation in Firmhin include overgrazing, unsustainable wood harvesting, climate-induced vegetation stress, and pressures from expanding tourism without adequate regulation. The area's vulnerability to climate change is particularly concerning, as it affects the regeneration capacity of the endemic tree species and alters traditional ecological balances.

The decree establishes the Firmhin Protected Area with a focus on strict conservation of biodiversity, sustainable development for surrounding communities, and promotion of scientific research and eco-tourism. It mandates the preparation of a detailed management plan, development of zoning regulations, and formation of a participatory governance structure involving local authorities, environmental agencies, and community representatives.

Roosh Protected Area, Socotra (Active) - (Please consult ANNEX E saved as a separate document in the portal)

Located on the northeastern coast of Socotra Island, Di Hamri Marine Protected Area covers approximately 266 ha, including the rocky coastal promontory of Ras Di Hamri and the surrounding marine waters to a depth of 300 meters. It lies 32 kilometers from Hadibo, the capital of Socotra, with the closest village being Di Hamri, located just 800 meters inland.

Di Hamri is a legally declared nature sanctuary under Republican Decree No. 275 (2000) and is co-managed by the local Di Hamri Conservation Association with support from national and international partners. The site is globally significant for its exceptional marine biodiversity. Surveys recorded 35 plant species (32 endemic to Socotra), 150 fish species, 80 species of coral, 19 species of crabs, 4 species of lobsters, and 2 types of sea

turtles. The coral reefs and reef-associated fish are among its most iconic ecological features, making the site a prime location for eco-tourism.

Despite its ecological importance, Di Hamri faces conservation challenges such as overfishing, plastic pollution, natural disasters, and encroaching tourism. The lack of freshwater and telecommunications, alongside outdated infrastructure, also limits community development. However, the site benefits from an operational community-run eco-camp, solar energy facilities, and a basic freshwater network.

Conservation goals include safeguarding biodiversity, developing sustainable eco-tourism based on natural and cultural values, implementing community-led water and fisheries management, and raising local awareness. The management strategy emphasizes participatory governance, combining conservation with local livelihood development, and monitoring key environmental indicators to ensure long-term ecological resilience. A reconfiguration of the site under the new UNEP project is anticipated with the aim to enhance ecological integrity and address climate and human induced threats.

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Firmhin is home to several small pastoralist communities who depend on traditional grazing systems, utilizing goats and sheep for subsistence. The PA establishment decree of 2022 formally acknowledges community rights to sustainable natural resource use and calls for local participation in management. Although population figures are not specified in the decree, the area is known to be seasonally inhabited by herders, particularly during periods of pasture abundance. The local population associated with the site accounts for at least several hundred people distributed across several villages including permanent and semi-permanent settlements.

The site's biodiversity value is compounded by its role as a refuge for many endemic birds, reptiles, and invertebrates, many of which are not found anywhere else on Earth. Ecosystem services provided by the area include carbon sequestration, groundwater recharge, and cultural heritage values linked to traditional land-use systems and spiritual significance of the Dragon's Blood Tree.

Key challenges facing conservation in Firmhin include overgrazing, unsustainable wood harvesting, climate-induced vegetation stress, and pressures from expanding tourism without adequate regulation. The area's vulnerability to climate change is particularly concerning, as it affects the regeneration capacity of the endemic tree species and alters traditional ecological balances.

The decree establishes the Firmhin Protected Area with a focus on strict conservation of biodiversity, sustainable development for surrounding communities, and promotion of scientific research and eco-tourism. It mandates the preparation of a detailed management plan, development of zoning regulations, and formation of a participatory governance structure involving local authorities, environmental agencies, and community representatives.

Roosh Protected Area, Socotra (Active) - (Please consult ANNEX E saved as a separate document in the portal)

Roosh Protected Area, declared under Decree No. 572 (2000), is a marine reserve on Socotra's northeastern coast. Covering 622 ha, the site includes the rocky outcrop of Ras Di'ibhal, shallow marine lagoons, coral reefs, sandy beaches, and adjacent coastal communities such as Saqra and Taharhum.

Roosh is ecologically vital for its coral reef ecosystems. Surveys conducted between 1999–2000 recorded over 158 coral species from 21 genera and 5 families, including many species not previously documented in the Arabian Sea. These coral communities form diverse, patchy reef structures that support an array of marine life including reef fish, crustaceans, mollusks, sea turtles, and occasional dolphins and sharks.

The marine ecosystem is particularly important for larval dispersal and coral reproduction, acting as a nursery and genetic reservoir for marine biodiversity across the region. Despite past coral bleaching events, the reefs have shown resilience and continue to host live coral cover of up to 28%. Seasonal ocean currents and temperature fluctuations drive complex ecological dynamics, making Roosh a valuable site for climate change monitoring.

Surrounding villages rely on traditional fishing, livestock rearing, and limited agriculture. There are basic community facilities including a small eco-camp, visitor center, freshwater systems, and a local conservation association. However, the area faces pressures from illegal fishing, plastic waste, unmanaged tourism, and limited conservation staffing.

The management plan for Roosh aims to enhance reef protection, promote sustainable fisheries, develop eco-tourism linked to coral reef appreciation, and strengthen environmental awareness. Strategic zoning, stakeholder engagement, and scientific monitoring are central to ensuring long-term viability of the site's ecological and socio-economic functions.

Skund Protected Area, Socotra (Inactive) (Please consult ANNEX E saved as a separate document in the portal)

Located in the central highlands of Socotra Island, the Skund Protected Area occupies the upper elevations of the Hajhir Mountains, overlooking the capital, Hadibo, with a total area of 2,312 hectares. It stretches from the southeast at Fadhen Damro and southwest at Damrqadah, to the eastern Hajhir Dada'a, with its northern boundary forming a natural gate into the capital. E ntry to the area is limited, primarily through a single gate called "Karb Desfef," preserving its isolation and ecological integrity. The terrain ranges from 200 to 1,550 meters above sea level, contributing to a distinct microclimate characterized by frequent mist, high humidity, and abundant rainfall, especially between June and September.

Approximately 70 people live within the area, scattered across six small villages. These communities rely on traditional livelihoods such as livestock grazing—cattle, goats, sheep, and camels—though they face challenges such as limited income sources and lack of infrastructure. There are no health, education, water, or electricity services, and access is restricted to steep, unpaved mountain paths.

Ecologically, Skund is a biodiversity hotspot. It harbors 201 plant species, including 106 endemic to the Socotra Archipelago and 55 endemic to the Hajhir range alone. Habitats include sub-montane shrublands, dense evergreen woodlands, and highly localized plant communities not found elsewhere. The area also supports at least 24 important bird species, alongside numerous reptiles and invertebrates. The red, fertile soils and a mix of ancient igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary rocks underpin the lush vegetation and abundant springs.

Despite its ecological richness, Skund faces threats from poverty, unmanaged grazing, and a lack of conservation enforcement. However, its remoteness and rugged terrain have so far shielded it from major development.

Key conservation goals include biodiversity protection, sustainable tourism development, improved community engagement, and positioning the area as a center for scientific research.

Abilhin Sea Turtle National Park, Socotra (Inactive) - (Please consult ANNEX E saved as a separate document in the portal)

The Abilhin Sea Turtle National Park, located on the northwest coast of Socotra Island, is a unique coastal reserve encompassing a vital 11 km stretch of sandy beach between Qarma and Qabho (Gadamah), including adjacent terrestrial zones extending inland up to 3 km, with total area of 246 hectares. The park is recognized for its critical role as a nesting ground for sea turtles, especially *Caretta caretta* (loggerhead turtle), and has been officially designated as a national park under Presidential Decree No. 572 (2000).

Nearby settlements include the small coastal villages of Abilhin and Qabho and the larger community of Salmahu, collectively home to approximately 380–400 people. These communities depend on fishing, livestock grazing, and limited crop cultivation. Infrastructure is sparse, with only a modest school, a basic health post, a few freshwater wells (mostly saline), and no access to electricity except through generators.

The area's biodiversity is rich and includes significant marine ecosystems with seaweed, seagrass, coral reefs, mangroves (*Avicennia marina*), and a range of fish and invertebrates. Abilhin is among the most important turtle nesting sites on the island, where long-term monitoring by local residents since 2000 has recorded consistent nesting activity. The adjacent coastal vegetation includes saline-tolerant species such as *Croton socotranus*, *Suaeda spp.*, and *Tamarix nilotica*, offering important ecological services and erosion control.

However, threats such as unregulated land grabbing and construction near the coast, road development, sand and rock extraction, and noise/light pollution from nearby infrastructure are causing habitat degradation and disturbing turtle nesting.

Conservation efforts are focused on community-led turtle monitoring, habitat protection, and raising awareness about sustainable land use and eco-tourism development.

Ditwah Protected Area, Socotra (Inactive) – Wetlands Ramsar Site - (Please consult ANNEX E saved as a separate document in the portal)

Situated in the northwestern corner of Socotra Island near the town of Qalansiyah, the Ditwah Protected Area encompasses 6.02 km² of unique coastal and lagoon ecosystems, with an expanded buffer zone covering up to 10.29 km². The site includes shallow marine inlets, sandy spits, and surrounding limestone hills, creating a visually stunning landscape framed by the sea to the north and rugged terrain to the south.

Ditwah lies close to several small settlements associated with Qalansya city, with a total population of approximately 2,531 residents. The local economy is based on artisanal fishing, palm cultivation, and goat herding. While the protected area itself lacks infrastructure, essential services like health and education are available in nearby Qalansiyah. The area experiences a moderate climate, with seasonal monsoon winds and rainfall supporting a range of terrestrial and marine habitats.

The ecological value of Ditwah is high. It hosts diverse marine life including algae, seagrasses, mollusks, crustaceans, sponges, echinoderms, and reef-associated fish. The brackish lagoon and surrounding mudflats provide feeding grounds for numerous migratory seabirds, making it a potential site of international importance for avian biodiversity. The area's aesthetic appeal—sparkling white sands, turquoise waters, and dramatic backdrops—offers great potential for eco-tourism.

Major challenges include unregulated tourism including visitor facilities and services, increasing population pressure, which could disrupt the ecological integrity of the site.

Conservation priorities center on habitat protection, community-based management, and the development of sustainable tourism ventures that can benefit local livelihoods while safeguarding ecological functions.

II. Aden Wetlands

Al Heswah Protected Area, Aden - (Please consult ANNEX E saved as a separate document in the portal)

The Al-Heswah Protected Area, located southwest of the city of Aden along Yemen's Red Sea coastline, represents a mixed ecological and socio-environmental site. Covering an area of approximately 185 hectares, the site lies adjacent to several densely populated neighborhoods including Al-Heswah, Abu Harbah, and Al-Mualla. It is surrounded by an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 residents, many of whom rely on the area directly or indirectly for agriculture, grazing, firewood collection, and other subsistence activities.

Al-Heswah is distinguished by its seasonal wetland system, which is sustained primarily through the discharge of treated and semi-treated wastewater from Aden's central treatment facilities. This hydrological input has given rise to a mosaic of ecological habitats including freshwater lagoons, brackish marshes, saline flats, and mangrove-associated vegetation. The wetland supports a notable diversity of plant species, including both native and invasive types such as *Hyphaene thebaica* (doum palm), *Acacia tortilis*, and *Prosopis juliflora*. The area also functions as a critical stopover and wintering ground for migratory birds, placing it on the African-Eurasian flyway and adding to its conservation importance.

Despite its ecological significance, the site faces a number of pressing challenges. Principal among them is pollution, particularly from untreated wastewater and solid waste from adjacent urban areas, which compromises water quality and habitat integrity. Furthermore, land encroachment, informal housing, and the expansion of agriculture and livestock grazing into sensitive areas have led to significant habitat degradation. The spread of invasive plant species has also altered the native vegetation structure, reducing biodiversity and ecosystem resilience. These issues are intensified by weak enforcement mechanisms, fragmented governance, and a lack of formal legal protection or integrated management.

In light of these threats, several conservation priorities have been identified for the protected area. These include the restoration of native plant communities, the control and removal of invasive species, and the improvement of wastewater treatment processes to ensure ecological safety. Establishing clear conservation and use zones within the site, strengthening institutional mandates, and introducing a biodiversity monitoring program—especially focused on avian species—are also critical. Equally important is the integration of local

communities into management efforts through awareness raising, co-management structures, and environmental education.

The site offers significant opportunities for sustainable local development. With proper investment, Al-Heswah could become a hub for eco-tourism, particularly birdwatching and guided nature walks. It can also serve as an outdoor classroom for environmental education, and as a model for urban green infrastructure, contributing to climate resilience and public well-being in Aden. Further, the protected area can serve as a demonstration site for sustainable use of ecosystem services related to community-based vinegar production and sustainable grazing and plant harvesting.

It is important to note that recent field information indicates the potential reduction of the protected area's size by up to 50%, due to ongoing and anticipated land encroachments, urban expansion, and industrial development. The northern sections of the protected area are particularly affected by these pressures. As such, the current project will need to reassess the site's legal status including boundaries and configuration, and develop a revised area map based on thorough field verification and consultations with relevant stakeholders.

Al Mimlah Protected Areas, Aden - (Please consult ANNEX E saved as a separate document in the portal)

Al Mimlah Protected Area is located in the southern coastal zone of Aden, Yemen, within the Al-Buraika district (around 62,000 inhabitants). The site encompasses an approximate area of 943 hectares, comprising a complex of evaporation basins and salt marshes connected to the sea through natural and artificial channels. The surrounding region is home to several local communities, with residents engaged historically in salt production, fisheries, and related coastal livelihoods. Some of these populations still reside within or adjacent to the protected area and maintain strong socio-economic ties to the site.

Ecologically, Al Mimlah is of critical biodiversity significance. It hosts important coastal wetland ecosystems, including saline lagoons, mudflats, and a mosaic of salt-tolerant vegetation. The area supports a diverse array of avifauna, particularly migratory and resident waterbirds such as the Lesser Flamingo (Phoeniconaias minor), Greater Flamingo (Phoenicopterus roseus), Western Reef Heron, and Spoonbill. The site also contains plant species adapted to high salinity conditions, such as Tamarix spp., Suaeda spp., and Typha elephantina. These ecosystems provide vital services, including supporting fisheries, groundwater recharge, and climate regulation.

However, Al Mimlah faces severe challenges. Urban encroachment, industrial expansion, unregulated waste disposal (including hazardous substances from vehicle maintenance and fiber glass industries), and degradation of traditional salt basins are compromising its ecological integrity. A particularly pressing concern is the documented increase in land-use change and pollution, which threatens the habitat quality and reduces the site's capacity to support wildlife.

Conservation and sustainable use priorities for Al Mimlah include restoring degraded habitats, regulating urban and industrial activities, and enhancing stakeholder engagement in co-management frameworks. Preserving the traditional salt production system, which functions both as a cultural heritage and an ecological system, is vital. Additionally, there is an urgent need to develop and implement an updated zoning plan, coupled with environmental monitoring and pollution control measures, to safeguard ecosystem services and ensure the resilience of this unique coastal protected area.

Aden Lagoons (Buharat Al Baga'a) - (Please consult ANNEX E saved as a separate document in the portal)

The Aden Lagoons Protected Area, located along the southern coastline of Yemen in the city of Aden, comprises a network of coastal wetlands and saline lagoons, recognized for their outstanding ecological and socio-economic value. The total surface area of the lagoons is approximately 110.11 hectares, subdivided into three main sections: the northern lagoon (34.5 ha), the central lagoon (75.61 ha), and associated tidal flats.

The protected area is surrounded by densely populated urban neighbourhoods, with an estimated local population of approximately 600,000 inhabitants living in and around the lagoon system. Many of these communities depend on the lagoons for traditional fishing, salt harvesting, and other coastal-based livelihoods.

Ecologically, Aden Lagoons serve as one of Yemen's most important coastal wetland ecosystems. The site provides vital foraging, nesting, and roosting habitats for both migratory and resident waterbirds. Notable species include the Lesser Flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*, ~2200 individuals), Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*), Western Reef Heron, Spoonbill, Osprey, and numerous shorebirds. The area also supports diverse fish species such as mullets and threadfin breams, in addition to crabs, shrimp (*Penaeidae*), and mollusks. Rich seagrass beds (e.g., *Halophila stipulacea*, *Cymodocea serrulata*) and salt-tolerant vegetation further enhance the site's biodiversity significance.

Despite its ecological value, the area faces increasing environmental pressures. Key challenges include urban encroachment, solid and liquid waste disposal, unregulated fishing, dredging, and the degradation of tidal connectivity due to disrupted water flows. These threats have reduced habitat quality, altered species dynamics, and diminished the lagoon's ecosystem services.

Conservation priorities for the Aden Lagoons include the restoration of tidal flows through the rehabilitation of feeding channels, strengthening enforcement against pollution and illegal fishing, and re-establishing community-based monitoring systems. Sustainable ecosystem use strategies should prioritize the protection of bird habitats, the maintenance of fish breeding grounds, and the promotion of environmental education and eco-tourism, with the latter defined as an important ecosystem service supporting local recreation and environmental education.

ANNEX F: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING

Attach agency safeguard datasheet/assessment report(s), including ratings of risk types and overall project/program risk classification as well as any management plans or measures to address identified risks and impacts (as applicable).

Title
SRIF 20 Aug

ANNEX G: BUDGET TABLE

Please upload the budget table here.

Annex G: Budget Tables

Attachment 4a: Project Budget Table

Project title: Integrated Conservation and Sustainable Development in Socotra Archipelago and Aden Wetlands, Yemen

Project number: GEF ID 11408

Project executing partner: The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN)

Project implementation period: 2026-2031

Project duration: 60 months From: Jan-26 To: Dec-31

Expenditure Category	Dertailed Description	Budget Distribution by project component/outcome							*Project Total*	Responsible Entity
		Comp. 1 Policy	Comp. 2 Conservation		Comp. 3 KM & Aw./Comms	*Sub-Total components 1-3*	Comp. 4 M&E	Comp. 5 PMC		
		Outcome 1.1	Outcome 2.1	Outcome 2.2	Outcome 3.1					
Salary and benefits / Staff costs: Project personnel	**Project Personnel**									
	International Project Manager (IPM) - part-time (Jordan/Yemen)	80,000	47,500	47,500	80,000	*240,000*	30,000	15,000	*300,000*	RSCN
	sub-total	***80,000***	***47,500***	***47,500***	***80,000***	***240,000***	***30,000***	***15,000***	***300,000***	
National Consultants	**National Experts**									
	Site Manager - Socotra	35,000		40,000	35,000	*105,000*	30,000	10,000	*150,000*	RSCN
	Site Manager - Aden	35,000	40,000		35,000	*105,000*	30,000	10,000	*150,000*	RSCN
	Technical Officer - Aden	10,000	10,000		10,000	*30,000*			*30,000*	RSCN
	Technical Officer - Socotra	10,000		10,000	10,000	*30,000*			*30,000*	RSCN

	Communications specialist - Aden/Socotra	12,000	6,000	6,000	12,000	*36,000*			*36,000*	RSCN
	National EPA-MOWE Liaison Officer - Aden and Socotra	12,000	6,000	6,000	12,000	*36,000*			*36,000*	RSCN
	Junior trainees	48,000	12,000	36,000	48,000	*144,000*			*144,000*	RSCN
	Admin and Logistics Officer - Amman - part time					-		58,000	*58,000*	RSCN
	Admin and Logistics Officer - Aden - full time					-		42,000	*42,000*	RSCN
	Admin and Logistics Officer - Socotra - full time					-		42,000	*42,000*	RSCN
	sub-total	***162,000***	***74,000***	***98,000***	***162,000***	***496,000***	***60,000***	***162,000***	***718,000***	
	International Experts									
	Tecnhnical Officer - part-time (Jordan/Yemen)	32,000	16,000	16,000	32,000	*96,000*			*96,000*	RSCN
International consultants	Safeguards and Gender Advisor	40,000	20,000	20,000	30,000	*110,000*			*110,000*	RSCN
	Evaluation									
	MTE/MTR consultant					-	40,000		*40,000*	UNEP
	TE consultant					-	40,000		*40,000*	UNEP
	sub-total	***72,000***	***36,000***	***36,000***	***62,000***	***206,000***	***80,000***	***-***	***286,000***	
	Travel on official business									
	Travel costs	35,000	25,000	60,000	30,000	*150,000*		8,295	*158,295*	RSCN
Travel	Boat rental for Socotra outer islands survey			10,000		*10,000*			*10,000*	RSCN
	sub-total	***35,000***	***25,000***	***70,000***	***30,000***	***160,000***	***-***	***8,295***	***168,295***	

	Sub-contracts (MOUs/LOAs for cooperating agencies)									
Sub-contracts to executing partner/ entity	Support for CBOs Micro-Grants (Aden 2.1.4 and Socotra 2.2.3)	20,000	30,000			*50,000*			*50,000*	RSCN
	Grants to local communities - Aden (2.1.4)	50,000	50,000			*100,000*			*100,000*	RSCN
	Grants to local communities - Socotra (2.2.5)	100,000		250,000		*350,000*			*350,000*	RSCN
	Wetland Conservation (Aden - 1.1.2.,1.1.4, 2.1.2, and 2.1.3)	130,000				*130,000*			*130,000*	RSCN
	Socotra CZP upgrading (Socotra - 1.1.6)			30,000		*30,000*			*30,000*	RSCN
	Awareness and Outreach (3.1 and all components)				80,000	*80,000*			*80,000*	RSCN
	Monitoring and Evaluation plan (4.1)	30,000	10,000	15,200	25,200	*80,400*	30,000		*110,400*	RSCN
	sub-total	***330,000***	***90,000***	***295,200***	***105,200***	***820,400***	***30,000***	***-***	***850,400***	
	Sub-contracts (MOUs/LOAs for supporting organizations)					**-**				
	Support Tree regeneration programme (Socotra 2.2.4)			210,000		*210,000*			*210,000*	RSCN
	support Sea Turtles programme (Socotra 2.2.5)			100,000	80,000	*180,000*			*180,000*	RSCN
	Support to IAS programme (Socotra 2.2.6)			160,000	80,000	*240,000*			*240,000*	RSCN
	Support CBO-based PA Management (Socotra - 1.1.5)			100,000	70,000	*170,000*			*170,000*	RSCN

	Impact monitoring in PAs (ecotourism, climate, waste - Socotra 2.2.1, 2.2.2)	-		50,000		*50,000*			*50,000*	RSCN
	Scholarship programme for Yemeni students		10,000	40,000		*50,000*			*50,000*	RSCN
	sub-total	***-***	***10,000***	***660,000***	***230,000***	***900,000***	***-***	***-***	***900,000***	
	Sub-contracts (for commercial purposes)									
	website / database management				120,000	*120,000*			*120,000*	RSCN
	translations				30,000	*30,000*			*30,000*	RSCN
	lay-out and printing				40,000	*40,000*			*40,000*	RSCN
	sub-total	***-***	***-***	***-***	***190,000***	***190,000***	***-***	***-***	***190,000***	
	Group Training									
	Protected Areas Management (Socotra 1.1.5, 2.2.1 and 2.2.2)			150,000		*150,000*			*150,000*	RSCN
	IAS Management (Socotra 2.2.6)			30,000		*30,000*			*30,000*	RSCN
Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	Wetlands Management (Aden 1.1.3)	40,000	-			*40,000*			*40,000*	RSCN
	Sea Turtles (Socotra 2.2.5)			30,000		*30,000*			*30,000*	RSCN
	Tree Regeneration (Socotra 2.2.4)			30,000		*30,000*			*30,000*	RSCN
	sub-total	***40,000***	***-***	***240,000***	***-***	***280,000***	***-***	***-***	***280,000***	
	Meetings/Conferences									
	PSC Meetings	15,000	7,500	7,500	15,000	*45,000*			*45,000*	RSCN
	Advisory Group Meetings	22,000	11,000	11,000	22,000	*66,000*			*66,000*	RSCN
	Presenting Project Outcomes in				20,000	*20,000*			*20,000*	RSCN

	international fora									
	sub-total	***37,000***	***18,500***	***18,500***	***57,000***	***131,000***	***-***	***-***	***131,000***	
	Non-expendable equipment									
	computers	5,000	2,000	3,000	5,000	*15,000*			*15,000*	RSCN
	communication equipment	5,000	1,000	4,000	5,000	*15,000*			*15,000*	RSCN
	turtle monitoring equipment (Socotra 2.2.5)			16,115		*16,115*			*16,115*	RSCN
	tree nurseries equipment (Socotra 2.2.4)			43,000		*43,000*			*43,000*	RSCN
	PA climate impact monitoring equipment (Socotra 2.2.1)			15,400		*15,400*			*15,400*	RSCN
Goods	Upgrading of IAS quantine facilities in Socotra (Socotra 2.2.6)			60,000		*60,000*			*60,000*	RSCN
	Office equipment and funiture	-		-		-		20,000	*20,000*	RSCN
	Vehicles									
	vehicles (1) - Socotra (contribution to purchase or long-term rental)			40,000		*40,000*			*40,000*	RSCN
	Motorbikes (2) for sea turtle nesting monitoring (Socotra 2.2.5)			10,000		*10,000*			*10,000*	RSCN
	sub-total	***10,000***	***3,000***	***191,515***	***10,000***	***214,515***	***-***	***20,000***	***234,515***	
	Expendable equipment									
Office Supplies	office supplies	-	-	-		-		5,000	*5,000*	RSCN
	sub-total	***-***	***-***	***-***	***-***	***-***	***-***	***5,000***	***5,000***	
	Operation and maintenance of equipment									
Other operating costs	vehicle operations and maint.- Aden	30,000	15,000		16,000	*61,000*			*61,000*	RSCN

	vehicle operations and maint.- Socotra	32,000		55,000	16,000	*103,000*			*103,000*	RSCN
	repairs for EPA socotra labs & facilities			20,000		*20,000*			*20,000*	RSCN
	motorbikes for turtle nesting monitoring - Socotra			10,000		*10,000*			*10,000*	RSCN
	sub-total	***62,000***	***15,000***	***85,000***	***32,000***	***194,000***	***-***	***-***	***194,000***	
	Reporting costs									
	Project publications - development				39,400	*39,400*			*39,400*	RSCN
	awareness materials development, layout and printing				50,000	*50,000*			*50,000*	RSCN
	Other M&E costs	19,867	7,000	12,867	19,867	*59,601*	10,000		*69,601*	RSCN
	Sub-total	**19,867**	**7,000**	**12,867**	**109,267**	**149,001**	**10,000**	**-**	**159,001**	
GRAND TOTAL		**847,867**	**326,000**	**1,754,582**	**1,067,467**	**3,995,916**	**210,000**	**210,295**	**4,416,211**	

4a bis: Budget Notes

Detailed Description	Budget Notes
Project Personnel	
International Project Manager (IPM) - part-time (Jordan/Yemen)	International - part-time Senior position. Based at RSCN in Jordan with frequent travel to Yemen. Project Management and Oversight; Technical Leadership for all components; reporting and communication with donors and stakeholders: management of all sub-contracts and MOUs with partners and commercial companies; supporting project advisory bodies (PSC and TAG); ensuring adequate M&E; support to MTE and TE etc.
National Experts	
Site Manager - Socotra	National - full time. Based at the EPA in Socotra. Management of all project activities in Socotra and provision of technical support to all components
Site Manager - Aden	National - full time. Based at the EPA in Aden. Management of all project activities in Aden and provision of technical support to all components

Technical Officer - Aden	National - full time. Based at the EPA in Aden. Support the Site Manager in the technical aspects of all project activities under technical components in Aden and provision of technical support to the team in Aden on technical components 1,2 and 3 such as on wetlands management and related technical and feasibility studies, wetlands zoning plan, national wetlands conservation plan, and the Ramsar nomination process.	
Technical Officer - Socotra	National - full time. Based at the EPA in Socotra. Support the Site Manager in the technical aspects of all project activities under technical components in Socotra and provision of technical support to the team in Socotra on technical components 1,2 and 3 such as on IAS management, community-based PA management, ecosystem restoration, sea turtle conservation, ecotourism development, environmental impact monitoring etc.	
Communications specialist - Aden/Socotra	National - full time. Based at the EPA in Aden with frequent travel to Socotra (or vice versa). Leads the design and implementation of communication and outreach activities under component 3 and all other project components	
National EPA-MOWE Liaison Officer - Aden and Socotra	National, senior, part-time. Based in Aden. Ensures consistent liaison between the project management team and the higher levels of EPA and MOWE based in Aden. Ensures frequent exchange of information on technical aspects of the project and liaison with high-level national government representatives and stakeholders, such as the offices of the Regional Governors in Aden and Socotra, and national PSC members based in Aden and Socotra.	
Junior trainees	Eight junior trainees (2 in Aden and 6 in Socotra) to join on-the-job training program, engaged in various technical components	
Admin and Logistics Officer - Amman - part time	Fund management and accounting, administration, logistics, financial reporting, financial management of all RSCN sub-contracts and MOUs with cooperating organizations and commercial companies. Consolidate financial records from Amman, Aden, Socotra for financial reports to UNEP and the GEF	
Admin and Logistics Officer - Aden - full time	Fund management and accounting, administration, logistics, financial reporting for project activities in Aden. Providing inputs to Amman for financial reports to UNEP and the GEF	
Admin and Logistics Officer - Socotra - full time	Fund management and accounting, administration, logistics, financial reporting. For all activities in Socotra. Providing inputs to Amman for financial reports to UNEP and the GEF	
International Experts		
Technical Officer - part-time (Jordan/Yemen)	International - part-time Junior Position. Based at RSCN in Jordan with frequent travel to Yemen. Supports IPM in all tasks and acts as deputy in IPM absence. Contributes with specialised expertise in one or more technical aspects of the project. Leads the set-up and oversight of the M&E programme, including the preparation of regular technical progress reports and KM materials. Travels frequently to Yemen and liaises with technical officers and project managers in Aden and Socotra to collect and consolidate inputs for M&E and progress reporting.	
Safeguards and Gender Advisor	Part-time international consultant to support and oversee the implementation of gender and stakeholders' engagement plan, safeguards measures and related Monitoring and Evaluation tasks	
Evaluation		
MTE/MTR consultant	budgeting higher costs that for a normal evaluation due to the project having three different and very distant locations with regional travel being irregular, unreliable and expensive thus likely requiring longer travel periods than would normally be required	
TE consultant	budgeting higher costs that for a normal evaluation due to the project having three different and very distant locations with regional travel being irregular, unreliable and expensive thus likely requiring longer travel periods than would normally be required	
Travel on official business		

Travel and per diem costs	Travel and per diem costs for project team and consultants between Amman, Aden and Socotra, including travel and per diems. The estimation of local and international travel costs is based on the project having activities in three very distinct and separate locations that are thousands of miles apart: Aden, Socotra and Amman. The extensive experience gained during the successful implementation of prior GEF projects in the same areas shows how travel costs are generally high for several reasons (a) they imply frequent air travel on the limited national and regional flights that are few and far between, having often high costs with no alternative options available, (b) flights can be unpredictable and are frequently cancelled or re-scheduled without prior notice, sometimes requiring adjustment to travel costs for the project team who can get unwillingly 'stuck' for several days out of their duty station, and (c) project meetings such as the PSC or TAG or technical training workshops often have to be arranged and hosted by the RSCN in Jordan, as international consultants are often not allowed to travel into Yemen due to security reasons.	
Boat rental for Socotra outer islands survey	local rental in Socotra of seafaring vessel for 8-10 days to conduct rapid field surveys in the remote islands of the Socotra Archipelago: Samha, Darsa and Abd Al Khoury (output 1.1.6)	
Sub-contracts (MOUs/LOAs for cooperating agencies)		
Support for CBOs Micro-Grants (Aden 2.1.4 and Socotra 2.2.3)	MOU with cooperating agencie(s) to provide technical support to the EPA and to local community groups (applicants) for the establishment and management of the CBOs Micro-Grants programme in Aden (output 2.1.4) and Socotra (output 2.2.3)	
Grants to local communities - Aden (2.1.4)	Amount set aside for issuing grants to community groups under the MOU with cooperating agencie(s) to provide technical support to the EPA and to local community groups (applicants) for the establishment and management of the CBOs Micro-Grants programme in Aden (output 2.1.4)	
Grants to local communities - Socotra (2.2.5)	Amount set aside for issuing grants to community groups under the MOU with cooperating agencie(s) to provide technical support to the EPA and to local community groups (applicants) for the establishment and management of the CBOs Micro-Grants programme in Socotra (output 2.2.3)	
Wetland Conservation (Aden - 1.1.2.,1.1.4, 2.1.2, and 2.1.3)	MOU with cooperating agencie(s) to provide technical support to the EPA in Aden on (a) the development of a National Wetland Policy development (output 1.1.2); Institutional capacity in the wise use of wetlands and sustainable landscape management will be assessed then developed through a participatory approach (Output 1.1.3); completing Ramsar Site Nomination process (output 1.1.4); conducting the Assessment of Ecosystem Services and the Feasibility study for NbS in Al Hiswa (output - 2.1.2); and preparing the Aden wetlands Management Plan (output 2.1.3)	
Socotra CZP upgrading (Socotra - 1.1.6)	MOU with cooperating agency to provide technical support to the EPA on the review and updating of the Socotra Conservation Zoning and Land Use Plan (output 1.1.6)	
Awareness and Outreach (3.1 and all components)	MOU with local cooperating agencies to support the EPA's ongoing environmental outreach and awareness campaigns (output 3.1 and all components)	
Monitoring and Evaluation plan (4.1)	MOU with cooperating agency(ies) to support the implementation of the project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (outputs in 4.1 and all components)	
Sub-contracts (MOUs/LOAs for supporting organizations)		
Support Tree regeneration programme (Socotra 2.2.4)	Socotra (output 2.2.4) MOU with supporting organization(s) providing Technical Advice to EPA on the indigenous Trees Regeneration programme	
support Sea Turtles programme (Socotra 2.2.5)	Socotra (output 2.2.5) MOU with supporting organization(s) providing Technical Advice to EPA on the Sea Turtles Conservation programme	

Support to IAS programme (Socotra 2.2.6)	Socotra (output 2.2.6) MOU with supporting organization(s) providing Technical Advice to EPA in IAS Management, IAS App development and stakeholder engagement in IAS plan implementation	
Support CBO-based PA Management (Socotra - 1.1.5)	Socotra (output 1.1.5) MOU with supporting organization(s) providing Technical Advice to EPA on the review of the CBO-based Protected Areas Management programme	
Impact monitoring in PAs (ecotourism, climate, waste - Socotra 2.2.1, 2.2.2)	MOU with supporting organization(s) for Impact monitoring in PAs: training on Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in World Heritage Context (ecotourism, climate, waste - Socotra 2.2.1, 2.2.2)	
Scholarship programme for Yemeni students	Cross-cutting: MOU with partner academic institutions hosting young Yemeni fellows from Aden and Socotra focusing on project-related academic studies	
Sub-contracts (for commercial purposes)		
website / database management	Contract with commercial company(ies) or partner organization(s) to (a) establish and manage the new project website pages within the EPA site (output 3.1), (b) design and host the new Aden Wetlands Database (output 2.1.1) and (c) Maintain and host the existing Socotra Biodiversity and Land use database (output 1.1.6).	
translations	contract with commercial company(ies) to provide translation services ensuring that all project products and services are available in Arabic with at least a Summary in English	
lay-out and printing	contract with commercial company(ies) to provide design, lay-out and printing services for project awareness and outreach materials in design, lay-out and printing services for project awareness and outreach materials in areas where internet is not widely available or not used by target stakeholders	
Group Training		
national policy and law (only in co-fin budget)	training to be provided by the EPA as part of co-financing	
Protected Areas Management (Socotra 1.1.5, 2.2.1 and 2.2.2)	Costs of specialised regional / international trainers and organisation of field training programs to support PA management Programme (Socotra, output 1.1.5 - 50k); Ecotourism, nature guiding, waste manag. in PAs (Socotra 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 30k); Diving operations - eco-management of marine tourism in PAs (Socotra 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 45k); Heritage Impact Assessment Training (Socotra 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 25k)	
IAS Management (Socotra 2.2.6)	Costs of specialised regional / international trainers and organisation of field training programs to support IAS management training programs for EPA, its partner government organizations and other local stakeholders including local community groups (Socotra 2.2.6)	
Wetlands Management (Aden 1.1.3)	Training Needs Assessment and tailored training program to strengthen Institutional capacity of EPA and key government partners in the wise use of wetlands and sustainable landscape management (includes TNA, KAP, CDSC and training) - (Aden 1.1.3)	
Sea Turtles (Socotra 2.2.5)	Costs of specialised regional / international trainers and organisation of field training programs to support training programs on Sea Turtles surveys and conservation management for EPA, its partner government organizations and other local stakeholders including local community groups (Socotra 2.2.5)	
Tree Regeneration (Socotra 2.2.4)	Costs of specialised regional / international trainers and organisation of field training programs to support training programs on the conservation and regeneration of indigenous trees for EPA, its partner government organizations and other local stakeholders including local community groups (Socotra 2.2.4)	
Meetings/Conferences		

PSC Meetings	Annual PSC meetings to bel held in Jordan or Yemen, including travel, per diems and venue costs	
Advisory Group Meetings	Annual TAG meetings to bel held in Jordan or Yemen, including travel, per diems and venue costs	
Presenting Project Outcomes in international fora	Presentation and discussion of project progress and exchange of know-how at regional and global for a. This activity builds on the extensive experience generated at project sites not only though the present project but also from the past over 35 years of UN-EPA and Local Communities' collaboration and GEF support to BD conservation efforts in Socotra and Aden. Costs including travel, per diems and -if applicable- venue costs	
Non-expendable equipment		
computers	essential equipment to support project operations including laptops and printers purchased in Jordan or locally in Yemen at market price	
communication equipment	hand-held radios, mobile phones to support field teams' operations	
4WD vehicle (1) - Socotra (contribution to purchase or long-term rental)	project contribution to EPA for one 4WD vehicle (purchase or long-term rental) to support project operations in Socotra (ref. detailed justification provided in the project procurement plan)	
Motorbikes (2) for sea turtle nesting monitoring (Socotra 2.2.5)	Two motorbikes to support field officers engaged in the sea turtle nesting monitoring along the coastline in Socotra (Socotra 2.2.5)	
turtle monitoring equipment (Socotra 2.2.5)	tapes, field weighing balances, turtle marking equipment, cameras/phones (Socotra 2.2.5)	
tree nurseries equipment (Socotra 2.2.4)	Fencing material, essential agricultural tools for nursery management (Socotra 2.2.4)	
PA climate impact monitoring equipment (Socotra 2.2.1)	Essential Equipment to set-up field Weather Monitoring stations in target PAs (Socotra 2.2.1)	
Upgrading of IAS quarantine facilities in Socotra (Socotra 2.2.6)	Costs of finalising and rendering operational the existing skeleton construction in Socotra to be used as IAS quarantine facility	
Office equipment and furniture	Socotra EPA offices: essential office furniture to be repaired or purchased to bring facilities up to a minimum acceptable status of repair, after the EPA offices were severely damaged during the army occupation	
Expendable equipment		
office supplies	miscellaneous office supplies to support project operations	
Operation and maintenance of equipment		
vehicle operations and maint.- Aden	recurring costs of vehicle rental, operation maintenance to support project operations in Aden	
vehicles operations and maint.- Socotra	recurring costs of vehicle rental, operation maintenance to support project operations in Socotra	
repairs for EPA Socotra labs & facilities	Socotra EPA offices: essential maintenance and repairs after the EPA offices were severely damaged duing the army occupation	
motorbikes for turtle nesting monitoring - Socotra	recurring costs of motorbikes operation maintenance to support project operations	
Reporting costs		

Project publications - development	costs of design, publication and dissemination of project progress and final reports as well as specific technical reports ro project deliverables such as: National Wetland Management Polan, Aden Wetland Management Plan, Socotra Conservation Zoning Plan, Protected Areas Management Plans, IAAS Management directives etc.	
awareness materials development, layout and printing	development and printing of a wide range of awareness and educational material in Arabic such as banners, roll-up stands, information leaflets, posters, etc.	
Other M&E costs	includes (a) cost of completing selected baseline surveys that were not possible during the PPG phase, as explained in the project results framework and M&E plan, and (b) costs of repeating surveys at project mid-term and conclusion, to support MTE and TE and project impact monitoring	

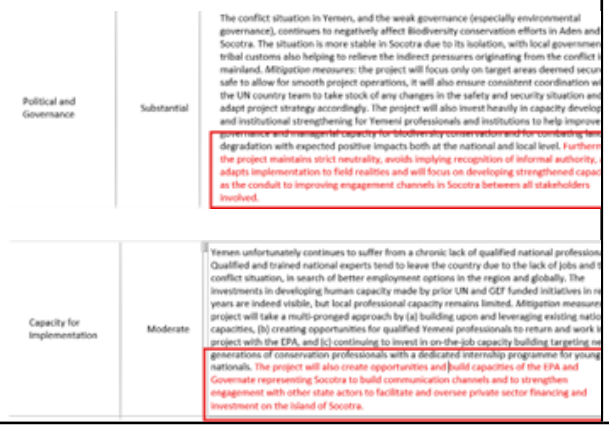
Please explain any aspects of the budget as needed here

ap

ANNEX I: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS

From GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF.

COMMENTS FROM THE UK AND GERMANY

Comments	Responses	Reference
Comment by Theepan Selvaratnam, Climate Funds and Institutions Team, Energy, Climate & Environment Directora KINGDOM , Council, made on 7/4/2024 Comment: - The UK welcomes this project. - The RSCN (Jordan Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature) is a well-known non-governmental organisation that is considered a for nature protection and protected area management in Jordan. It is overseeing Azraq Wetland in Jordan that has strong eco-tourism and development pillars. RSCN has worked in Yemen before and enjoys good regional (including GCC) relationships that cover training and cap protected areas establishment and management. - The UK recommends that the role of the private sector is elaborated and specified, especially in light of investments put forward (by t infrastructure, security and tourism. Such investments would carry significant implications on nature and would require special handling by	The project's governance context in the target geography remains institutionally complex and requires careful handling, vis a vis the **UAE**. While, "de jure", environmental management and protected area oversight, as well as oversight of **private sector** investment in Socotra fall under the mandate of the national Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and the respective Governorate authorities, the "de facto" exercise of authority on the ground is influenced by the UAE whose operational control does not formally derive from national legislation. These dynamics shape access, coordination, and the practical modalities of implementation. Given the political sensitivity and potential implications for national ownership, sovereignty, and future cooperation, this information cannot be reflected in the CEO Endorsement Request or its Annexes, nor referenced in a manner that could be construed as attributing formal recognition, legitimacy, or endorsement of any parallel governance arrangements. Instead, the project design incorporates flexible engagement pathways and risk-responsive implementation modalities that ensure compliance with GEF fiduciary standards, while enabling effective operations in the prevailing context. The involvement and role of **private sector** (e.g, industry, tourism, fisheries, airline carriers, etc.) in the project is described sections A and B of the main CEO Endorsement document as well as in Appendix 5. Please see the following references to the private sector on pp. 12, 16, 30 of the CEO Endorsement document; as well as Appendix 5. Please see the following **mitigations added to the risks section** of the CEO ER regarding capacities to better engage with other state actors to facilitate private sector investment:  Political and Governance — Substantial The conflict situation in Yemen, and the weak governance (especially environmental governance), continues to negatively affect Biodiversity conservation efforts in Aden and Socotra. The situation is more stable in Socotra due to its isolation, with local governmen tribal customs also helping to relieve the indirect pressures originating from the conflict i mainland. *Mitigation measures*: the project will focus only on target areas deemed secur safe to allow for smooth project operations, it will also ensure consistent coordination w the UN country team to take stock of any changes in the safety and security situation an adapt project strategy accordingly. The project will also invest heavily in capacity develop and institutional strengthening for Yemeni professionals and institutions to help improve governance and managerial capacity for biodiversity conservation and for combating land degradation with expected positive impacts both at the national and local level. Further the project maintains strict neutrality, avoids implying recognition of informal authority, adapts implementation to field realities and will focus on developing strengthened capac as the conduit to improving engagement channels in Socotra between all stakeholders involved. Capacity for Implementation — Moderate Yemen unfortunately continues to suffer from a chronic lack of qualified national profession Qualified and trained national experts tend to leave the country due to the lack of jobs and t conflict situation, in search of better employment options in the region and globally. The investments in developing human capacity made by prior UN and GEF funded initiatives in r years are indeed visible, but local professional capacity remains limited. Mitigation measure project will take a multi-pronged approach by (a) building upon and leveraging existing natio capacities, (b) creating opportunities for qualified Yemeni professionals to return and work i project with the EPA, and (c) continuing to invest in on-the-job capacity building targeting ne generations of conservation professionals with a dedicated internship programme for young nationals. The project will also create opportunities and build capacities of the EPA and Governate representing Socotra to build communication channels and to strengthen engagement with other state actors to facilitate and oversee private sector financing and investment on the island of Socotra.	pp. 12, 16, 30 of the CEO Endorsement document; Appendix 5.

Comment by Annette Windmeisser, GEF Council Member, Head of Division on Climate Finance, BMZ (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development), GERMANY, Council, made on 6/28/2024 Comment: Germany approves the PIF in the work program but requests that the following comments are taken into account: Germany requests that the following requirements are taken into account during the design of the final project proposal: · Germany would like to request that the full proposal adds further details on the (economic) valuation of the Aden wetlands as indicated under 2.1.2 and that resulting data from the valuation is included in other project processes, including the estimate of cost-effectiveness of interventions as well as outreach and awareness activities (3.1.1 and 3.1.4). · Germany recommends that further elaboration is provided on the activities of the UAE on Socotra Archipelago (under *Project Description* as w under *Risks to Project Preparation and Implementation*) and how their current role will be taken into account when implementing the planned activi the archipelago. · The project covers a wide range of project activities in its components and different groups of stakeholders, where coordination mechanisms crucial for the achievement of the overall project objectives and its success. Germany suggests that the full proposal identifies areas of coordinatio between the project components and stakeholders involved. · While Germany welcomes the project´s participatory, community-based and gender-sensitive approach, we emphasize the need for constant community participation across all project stages. Participation strengthens social accountability mechanisms and is thus a powerful tool against corruption. · Germany recommends that corruption risks and mitigation measures are considered in the project risk section due to the widespread endem corruption in Yemen, which affects both state institutions and the private sector. Considering previously occurred corruption issues during the implementation of international organizations-funded projects in the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), the limited freedom of press, the U involvement in the area, alleged smuggling of the Socotra Island's endemic dragon tree, parallel governance structures and the decrease of the stat resilience to corruption, as well as Yemen's low rank of 176 out of 180 countries in the 2023 Corruption Perception Index (CPI), Germany recommen including anti-corruption as a module into the capacity-building in all project-related activities.	Please note that for all comments the project description and the risk table have been revisited and improved, where applicable. Specific responses to each of the Government of Germany's bulleted comments include: The outputs under Outcome 2.1. have been revisited to accommodate the comments. **Output 2.1.2** has been further strengthened to plan an economic valuation assessment, cost-benefit analysis and feasibility assessment (see Appendix 8). **Output 2.1.4** contains cost-effective interventions (previously presented under output 2.1.5) and provides explanations (see Appendix 8). **Outcome 3.1** and Output 3.1.1. will summarize and visualize the key findings and messages (including on economic valuation) for public awareness purposes. Please also note that the CEO ER incorporates an **economic valuation** of the Aden wetlands using established methodologies to be identified during the initiation and planning phase of the project, and the resulting data will be systematically integrated into cost–effectiveness analysis, prioritization of interventions, and awareness-raising activities under relevant outputs. The following sentence has been added to the narrative description "This valuation using accepted and established methodologies, will directly inform prioritization under the management plan and contribute to cost-effective decision-making by quantifying trade-offs and benefits of restoration and protection options, as inputs to inform Outputs 2.1.5, 3.1.1, and 3.1.4 during project implementation." Please see response above to the Government of the UK regarding the UAE. To summarize above, it is noted that "de jure" authority lies with EPA and Governorate institutions; while "de facto" implementation requires neutral, conflict-sensitive engagement due to complex on-the-ground dynamics. These realities cannot be explicitly referenced in formal GEF documents for political and sovereignty reasons. Please see the following addition to **the risks under political and governance risks**: governance and managerial capacity for biodiversity conservation and for combating lan degradation with expected positive impacts both at the national and local level. Further the project maintains strict neutrality, avoids implying recognition of informal authority, adapts implementation to field realities and will focus on developing strengthened capa as the conduit to improving engagement channels in Socotra between all stakeholders involved. • Reference is made to Section B 'Institutional Arrangement and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Projects' as well as Appendix 7. Please also refer to the detailed coordination diagram in Attachment 5e: TOR for key project staff, consultancies, project steering and advisory bodies, etc. Together, this provides the necessary articulation of the coordination protocol that has been approved by government to ensure regular alignment between policy, site-level implementation, knowledge management, and M&E activities, reducing duplication and reinforcing cross-component synergies. No further changes are warranted in this regard. The coordination, roles and involvement of **stakeholders** are described in the Institutional Arrangement and Coordination	Appendix 8. Pp.27-30, Table 5, pp. 34-36., Appendix 8

	section (pp. 30, 32). The Local Stakeholders Consultative Groups will engage local partners and ensure regular consultations with key stakeholders. The stakeholder engagement strategy is presented in Appendix 5c. The project's design was grounded in participatory and gender-responsive approach that has been purpose-built to ensure that local communities, including women and marginalized groups, are meaningfully engaged in planning, implementation, and monitoring, thereby reinforcing social accountability, transparency, and equitable benefit-sharing. Reference is made to Section B, Institutional also made to Appendix 7, which provides the corresponding operational detail and engagement modalities. Together, these sections set out a government-endorsed framework that ensures structured collaboration between national institutions, subnational authorities, and community-based actors, while also integrating gender-responsive measures into decision-making processes. The project design already reflects extensive consultations undertaken with local communities, including women's groups and other stakeholders, whose perspectives have shaped site selection, priority interventions, and benefit-sharing approaches. Moreover, this framework provides not only for the continuation of such consultations during implementation but also for their progressive institutionalization through clear reporting lines, participation mechanisms, and M&E feedback loops. This ensures that community voices and gender considerations remain integral to adaptive management, knowledge generation, and policy alignment throughout the project cycle, thereby reducing duplication of effort and reinforcing synergies across components. In light of this comprehensive and government-approved architecture—which already embeds meaningful community participation and gender responsiveness into both the governance and implementation modalities—no further changes are required or warranted.	
	The risks assessment and mitigation measures in Table 5 describe the background situation and measures under several risk categories, i.e. political and governance, financial and business model, capacity and implementation, fiduciary, political and security issues. The EA (RSCN) passed the UNEP due diligence process to be a reliable partner for the project implementation, bearing the responsibility for the budget allocation and use. The concern raised by the Government of Germany regarding corruption risks is duly noted. The project design already acknowledges that fiduciary risks are inherent in the Yemeni operating environment and therefore embeds mitigation measures consistent with UNDP and GEF standards. These provisions are articulated in Section D and further operationalized through the project's financial management and oversight arrangements, which ensure that disbursement, procurement, and reporting processes remain transparent, accountable, and subject to independent monitoring. To further strengthen this aspect and provide additional assurance, a clarifying enhancement has been incorporated into the Risk and Mitigation Table, explicitly stating that: "Mitigation will include transparent procurement oversight, third-party verification when feasible, and grievance redress mechanisms accessible to communities and stakeholders." This formulation reinforces the project's commitment to	Appendix 5c, pp. 30, 32, 35; Table 5, pp.34-36; Appendix 7

	transparency and accountability, while also ensuring that affected communities and partners have clear, accessible channels through which to report irregularities or concerns. These measures will be complemented by capacity development on fiduciary standards and compliance procedures for implementing partners and local actors, thereby reducing exposure to systemic corruption risks over time.	Table 5, pp.34-36.

COMMENTS FROM STAP

Comments	Responses	Reference
Project rationale, and project description – are they sound? The proposal presents a reasonable argument for funding work in support of improved conservation and sustainable management in two areas of Yemen (i.e. the Aden wetlands and the Socotra Archipelago), which are currently not adequately protected and face numerous threats. The **project summary** provided a broad overview of the needs that the project is proposing to satisfy and the main areas of intervention but did not provide any indication as to whether the project is intended to be transformative. The **project rationale** provides several facts and background information required and expected butis poorly written, which in several places confuses the	The **project summary** describes the transformative character of the project, i.e. "Strengthening Policy and Governance Frameworks: enhancing conservation policy and governance, establishing a National Wetlands Platform in Aden, and reviewing the governance of protected areas in Socotra. This makes the project transformative, showing the way toward introduction of the protected areas concept. Strengthening institutional capacity, aligning the National Wetland Management Plan with Yemen's NBSAP, and supporting the nomination of the Aden Wetlands as a Ramsar Site." The **project rationale** has been revised to verify facts, avoid confusion, and provide clear explanations.	Summary, pp.3-4.

narrative and lacks enough clarity to explain the issues that need addressing.		Project rational, pp. 7-14.
The description of the **barriers** covers all the main aspects that were identified elsewhere in the proposal. The analysis of underlying issues also reflects the reality of the context/situation in Yemen. It was also good to see the description of how various components will address different barriers.		
The **project objective** was concise and clear. The description of **social and gender-related issues** was not specific enough and was limited with reference to generic stereotypes about roles and activities covered by men and women in Yemeni society, which could be applied to any number of countries across different continents.	**Social and gender-related issues** have been clearly described in several chapters and appendices, i.e a new paragraph on gender in Sections A, pp. 10-11, and in Section B; Appendix 5: Appendix 5a (Gender Action Plan), Appendix 5b (Gender Analysis), Appendix 5e; Appendix 8 (2.1.4, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3).	Sections A, pp. 10-11, and in Section b; Appendix 5: Appendix 5a (Gender Action Plan), Appendix 5b (Gender Analysis), Appendix 5e; Appendix 8.
The project **intervention logic** is adequate and presents a reasonable set of proposed objectives but is based on thin evidence that is also somewhat outdated (i.e. only one source was quoted, dating back to 2003).	The project **intervention logic** section has been revised to ensure the use of reliable sources of information and integrate local knowledge. The bibliography (list of references) is presented in the Appendices and Attachments document.	
The project's **Theory of Change (ToC)** provides a reasonable explanation of the logical pathways to impact that the project is proposing to follow. The ToC diagram covers the expected elements. The proposal identifies critical assumptions although some are quite generalized (e.g. assumption A and B). These critical assumptions will need further refining and the proponents will need to determine how to test some of them during the next phase of project development.		Appendix 8.
The description of the **project components** varied in the level of detail and information it provided: • Component 1 did not include a clear set of outputs or an explanation of how they will be achieved. • Component 2 provided a much more comprehensive list and detailed description of outputs, which provided a clearer idea of what the project will do and how. Nevertheless, STAP noted that it includes many substantive activities (ecosystem assessment and valuation, spatial planning, restoration, improved agricultural production, protected area management plans, and alternative livelihoods), which could all be projects in their own right. It is therefore necessary to define the scope of each of these	The **project components** have been revised and balanced: a short description of the components is provided in the Section B (pp.27-29), and in detail, they are described in Appendix 8 (pp. 202-228). The budget and resources were reviewed for Component 2. Output 3.1. of Component 3 is described in Appendix 8. Please refer to Appendix 5 to of the project document and especially Appendix 5a (**Gender Action Plan**) and Appendix 5b (**Gender Analysis**), addressing these important aspects.	Appendix 5a and 5b.

activities and to ensure they are adequately resourced to deliver the necessary outputs. • Component 3 was very brief and provided only a few overly generic details of what outputs it will deliver (e.g. gender sensitive knowledge products developed), or how they will be achieved (e.g. Knowledge Management System developed and in operation). There is a misalignment between the outputs and outcome for Outcome 3.1 where the outputs focus on capacity building and knowledge management systems. This component also listed an indicator (i.e. core indicator 11), which does not match the scope of the component, and provided no explanation of how the numerical target of 5000 people benefiting from GEF-financed investments was arrived at. The proposal provided a broad list of proposed **stakeholders** grouped by category, which included a reasonable description of how different stakeholder groups will participate in or interact with the project. The **gender analysis** section was very brief, generic and simplistic.	Please refer to section A, a paragraph starting with '**Gender inequality in Yemen**..' (pp.10-11) outlining existing barriers for women engagement. As well as the new paragraphs in Section B right after component 4, starting with: 'Gender considerations:...' Also, the detailed description of project activities under each component, provided in Appendix 8, offers additional details on the role of women in each project activity, and particularly on how women are specifically targeted engaged in the community management of natural areas though their inclusion in PA governance, in line with local customs and traditions (see activities' description in Appendix 8, and specifically under activities 2.1.4, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3).	

The **risk** section does not provide any idea or indication of any potential measures that project is planning to apply to minimize and mitigate any of the risks identified.	Please refer to Appendix 5e (TORs) and specifically to the TORs for the Project Advisory Bodies that include **gender** balance and inclusion considerations for the project Steering Commitee, Technical Advisory Group and the National Wetland Platform. Table 5 (pp.34-36) provides **assessment and mitigation measures on several risk categories** (i.e. climate, Environment and Social, Political and Governance, Institutional and Policy, Technological, Financial and Business Model, Capacity for Implementation, Fiduciary, Stakeholder, Political and Security issues).	Table 5, pp. 34-36.
Specific points to be addressed, and suggestions STAP identified a number of areas that should be revised and/or improved. The following recommendations suggest a number of remedial actions: 1. The project rationale section should be revised to ensure a consistent level of clarity throughout. The text should also be revised to ensure that all information provided is accurate and factual (i.e. based on hard data and evidence). It would also be advisable to provide sub-headers for this section, which at 3 the moment transitions from global issues to project structure and governance, barriers and stakeholders without any clear demarcations. 2. The analysis underpinning the project intervention logic section should be revised to ensure it is based on recent evidence from reputable sources. 3. The description of the assumptions should be refined to identify critical issues that can affect project delivery if the assumptions do not hold true. They should also be connected to the potential risks, since all of the issues identified in the assumptions pose risks to the implementation of project activities. The proponents should aim to test some of the assumptions during further project development or include forms of testing in the design of the project. 4. The description for component 1 should include a clearer set of outputs explaining what activities will be implemented and what outputs will be achieved. 5. Component 2 should include a clearer description of the scope of all the activities and outputs with an assessment of what is achievable to ensure these activities are adequately resourced. 6. Under component 2, the description for output 2.1.5 should provide a more detailed explanation of what is intended by “gender-based solutions”.	1. The project rationale has been revised to verify facts, avoid confusion, and provide clear explanations. The project rationale texts flow logically from describing the administrative and political situation, environmental problems, efforts on protected areas, globally significant biodiversity, risks, barriers, stakeholders, gender contributions, policy interventions. 2. The project intervention logic section has been revised to ensure the use reliable sources of information and integrate local knowledge. The bibliography (list of references) is presented in the Appendices and Attachments document. 3. Core Assumptions have been revised under the ToC section and are fuller elaborated in Appendix 13. 4. Component 1 has been revised and further described in Appendix 8. 5. Component 2 has been revised and further described in Appendix 8. 6. The output of Component 2 was revisited to address the comment on “Gender-based solutions”. Please refer to output 2.1.4., also see the Appendix. 7. Output 2.2. was revised as suggested. 8. The description of output 2.2.6. is provided in Appendix 8. 9. The description of Component 3 was improved, please see Appendix 8. 10. To reach the Core Indicator 11 (5,035 people: 2,502 M and 2,533 F), the project will target relevant stakeholders, including institutional partners, local communities, local schools, women’s groups as well as the elderly and disadvantaged groups. The implementation of other project activities (i.e. 1.1.4, 2.1.1) will also contribute to the public awareness objective.	1. pp. 7-13. 2. pp. 260-265 of the Appendices and Attachments. 3. p.245 of the Appendices and Attachments. 4. p. 27 of the CEO Endorsement document; pp. 202-228 0f the Appendices and Attachments. 5. p. 27-28 of the CEO Endorsement document; pp. 202-228 0f the Appendices and Attachments. 6. Appendix 8. 7. Appendix 8. 8. Appendix 8. 9. Appendix 8. 10. Appendix 8. 11. pp.10-11, Appendix 5, Appendix 8. 12. pp.34-36.

7. Outcome 2.2. should be phrased as an outcome not an objective. 8. The description for output 2.2.6 should provide a clearer explanation of what is intended by "up-scaling lessons learned" and how this will be accomplished. 9. Under component 3, the description of outputs should revised and expanded to provide more details about what the project will deliver and how. 10. Under output 3.1, core indicator 11 should be revised to match the scope of the component and the output it refers to, and to indicate how the proposed target of 5000 people benefiting from GEFfinanced investments was calculated. 11.The gender analysis section should be revised to ensure it provides a more accurate and detailed description of the issues and challenges affecting women and other socially vulnerable groups (especially for issues such as conflict) in Yemeni society and how these may affect the implementation of project activities. The proposal should also aim to include a gender action plan or similar section that explains how the project will aim to address any issues identified, describing proposed measures, activities and outputs. 12. The risk section should be revised to include a set of proposed measures to mitigate and/or minimize the risks that have been identified.	11. Gender-related issues have been clearly revised in several chapters and appendices, i.e. a new paragraph on gender in Sections A, pp. 10-11, and in Section b; Appendix 5: Appendix 5a (Gender Action Plan), Appendix 5b (Gender Analysis), Appendix 5e; Appendix 8 (2.1.4, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3). 12. Table 5 (pp.34-36) provides assessment and mitigation measures on several risk categories (i.e. climate, Environment and Social, Political and Governance, Institutional and Policy, Technological, Financial and Business Model, Capacity for Implementation, Fiduciary, Stakeholder, Political and Security issues).	