Part I: Project Information

GEF ID
10695

Project Type
FSP

Type of Trust Fund
GET

CBIT/NGI
CBIT **No**
NGI **No**

Project Title
Restoration of ecosystems, integrated natural resource management and promotion of SLM in Mbuluzi River Basin of Eswatini

Countries
Eswatini

Agency(ies)
UNEP

Other Executing Partner(s)
Eswatini National Trust Commission (ENTC), Min of Agriculture, Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development

Executing Partner Type
Government

GEF Focal Area
Multi Focal Area

Sector
Mixed & Others

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Influencing models, Stakeholders, Gender Equality, Capacity, Knowledge and Research

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation

No Contribution 0

Climate Change Adaptation

No Contribution 0

Biodiversity

Significant Objective 1

Land Degradation

Significant Objective 1

Submission Date

3/17/2021

Expected Implementation Start

1/1/2023

Expected Completion Date

12/31/2026

Duration

48In Months

Agency Fee($)

372,063.00

A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS

Objectives/Programs	Focal Area Outcomes	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
BD-2-7	Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and Improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate	GET	2,000,000.00	11,346,033.00
LD-1-1	Maintain or improve flow of agro-ecosystem services to sustain food production and livelihoods through Sustainable Land Management (SLM)	GET	1,000,000.00	13,017,402.00
LD-1-4	Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses and increase resilience in the wider landscape	GET	916,950.00	7,396,965.00
		Total Project Cost($)	**3,916,950.00**	**31,760,400.00**

B. Project description summary

Project Objective

To promote ecosystem restoration for a productive Mbuluzi River landscape and effectively managed protected areas providing critical ecosystem goods and services

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
1. Strengthening Policy, Legislative and Institutional Frameworks for Integrated Natural Resources Management (INRM	Technical Assistance	Outcome 1: The Government of Eswatini adopts and starts enforcing an updated, gender-inclusive policy, institutional and legislative framework for SLM and ecosystem restoration.	1.1 Institutional and legislative frameworks for SLM and ecosystem restoration in the Mbuluzi landscape revised, enacted, implemented and enforced, and monitored to ascertain their effectiveness 1.2 An Integrated Land Management Strategy and Action Plan for the Mbuluzi landscape developed in a participatory and gender-responsive manner and implemented. 1.3 SLM and ecosystem restoration mainstreamed into Chiefdom Sustainable Development Plans and implemented to scale up their adoption in the basin,	GET	447,500.00	2,700,351.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
			using participatory approaches.			

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
Component 2. Ecosystem restoration through capacity strengthening for Promotion of sustainable land management (SLM) practices	Technical Assistance	Outcome 2: Land degradation reduced by implementation of innovative SLM technologies in productive landscapes in the Mbuluzi River Basin	2.1 Landscape-scale ecosystem and land use assessment conducted for Mbuluzi Basin to inform output 1.1.2 below 2.2 Capacity of agriculture extension workers in SLM and all staff in relevant ministries and departments strengthened 2.3. Training of trainers at local community levels including chiefdoms conducted 2.4 Famer Field Schools (FFS) and SLM demonstration sites established for farmer groups and farmer open field-days organized	GET	1,550,949.00	13,017,402.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
			2.5 SLM practices targeting maize and legumes for crops and livestock piloted in communities to improve soil fertility and reduce land degradation 2.6 Tree planting in degraded communal lands and along riverine areas promoted to reduce land degradation. 2.7 Capacity building of Community Forest Associations (CFAs) for community biodiversity conservation enhancement			

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
3. Effective management of protected areas		Outcome 3: Effective PA management and governance models for PAs implemented by government agencies and local stakeholders in selected locations	3.1. A protected Area network (PAN) Conservation Strategy for the Mbuluzi landscape developed and implemented 3.2. Management frameworks and governance models for PAs including Management plans revised and aligned with the PAN developed in 3.1 above and implemented 3.3 Capacity of PA Management staff strengthened to implement actions of the PAN in 3.1 and to implement and enforce provisions and obligations of Management frameworks and governance models on good	GET	1,270,999.00	11,346,033.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
			governance systems for PA Management in output 3.2			
			3.4. Protected Area Integrated fire management systems that include participation of local communities, developed and implemented for Biodiversity and ecological infrastructure enhancement in Mbuluzi landscape.			
			3.5 Management Effectiveness of Mbuluzi landscape PAs monitored and tracked			

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
4. Knowledge Management, Gender and Youth mainstreaming and M&E	Technical Assistance	Outcome 4. Women and youth engagement strategy on biodiversity and land degradation developed and implemented.	4.1 Systems established for monitoring progress and outcomes of the project. 4.2 Documentation, publication and dissemination of best practices and lessons learnt. 4.3: Multi-stakeholder platforms (AFR 100) to champion INRM practices in the country established. 4.4 Women and youth engagement protocol developed for adoption by the project.	GET	250,851.00	574,880.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Costs	Technical Assistance	Outcome 1: Project deliverables and results meet accountability requirements, and promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing	Project scope, objectives, approach, outputs and roles clarified to staff and stakeholders Project milestones and targets achieved	GET	210,651.00	2,077,342.00
		Outcome 2: Project results are relevant; performance is effective and efficient and provides evidence for impact and sustainability	Project mid-term progress towards planned outputs documented Final project evaluation conducted to ascertain performance and degree of achievement of outcomes, impacts and their sustainability documented according to plan			
				Sub Total ($)	**3,730,950.00**	**29,716,008.00**
Project Management Cost (PMC)						
				GET	186,000.00	2,044,392.00

Project Management Cost (PMC)		
Sub Total($)	**186,000.00**	**2,044,392.00**
Total Project Cost($)	**3,916,950.00**	**31,760,400.00**

Please provide justification

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

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount($)
Recipient Country Government	Eswatini National Trust Commission	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	7,150,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Eswatini National Trust Commission	Grant	Investment mobilized	2,500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Eswatini Environment Authority	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	4,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Eswatini Environment Authority	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Eswatini Tourism Authority	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Eswatini Tourism Authority	Grant	Investment mobilized	500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Forest Department, Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	3,500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Forest Department, Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,668,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Climate Change Unit, Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Climate Change Unit, Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,000,000.00

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount($)
Recipient Country Government	National Disaster Management Agency	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	4,500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	National Disaster Management Agency	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Agriculture	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	865,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Agriculture	Grant	Investment mobilized	27,400.00
Civil Society Organization	World Vision	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500,000.00
Civil Society Organization	World Vision	Grant	Investment mobilized	50,000.00
			Total Co-Financing($)	**31,760,400.00**

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

Where 'investment mobilized' has been indicated, it refers to co-financing that excludes recurrent expenditures, as defined in the guidelines. Eswatini Government investments mobilized for activities being carried out in the Mbuluzi River basin by contributing agencies and ministries are extrapolated in the MTEF project/programme-based budget allocations. Also, Funds that need to be budgeted for annually or grants received from donors are considered as investment mobilized. Investment mobilized was defined based on amount of in-kind and grant contribution from the executing ministry, other contributing government institutions, civil society, private sector and other stakeholders active in sustainable land management and conservation initiatives. The different stakeholders were consulted on the monetary value of their contribution using market-value prices for the services they will provide.

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

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount($)	Fee($)	Total($)
UNEP	GET	Eswatini	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	2,000,000	135,000	2,135,000.00
UNEP	GET	Eswatini	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	1,916,950	237,063	2,154,013.00
			Total Grant Resources($)		**3,916,950.00**	**372,063.00**	**4,289,013.00**

E. Non Grant Instrument

NON-GRANT INSTRUMENT at CEO Endorsement

Includes Non grant instruments? **No**

Includes reflow to GEF? **No**

F. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required **true**

PPG Amount ($)

150,000

PPG Agency Fee ($)

14,250

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount($)	Fee($)	Total($)
UNEP	GET	Eswatini	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	100,000	9,500	**109,500.00**
UNEP	GET	Eswatini	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	50,000	4,750	**54,750.00**
				Total Project Costs($)	**150,000.00**	**14,250.00**	**164,250.00**

Core Indicators

Indicator 1 Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
35,000.00	32,676.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

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

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

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)
35,000.00	32,676.00	0.00	0.00

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

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)
Hawane Nature Reserve and Dam	555592555	Natural Monument or Feature		232.00			51.00		
Malolotje Nature Reserve	7445	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	35,000.00	16,292.00			62.00		
Mlawula Nature Reserve	7451	National Park		16,152.00			53.00		

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)
700.00	20700.00	0.00	0.00

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)
Cropland	700.00	20,000.00		

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)
	700.00		

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)

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)
60000.00	30000.00	0.00	0.00

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

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

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)
60,000.00	30,000.00		

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 (Please upload document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title	Submitted

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)

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)
0	0	0	0

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?e (direct)	827477	0	0	0
Expected metric tons of CO?e (indirect)	0	5469132	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?e (direct)	827,477			
Expected metric tons of CO?e (indirect)		5,469,132		
Anticipated start year of accounting	2025	2023		
Duration of accounting	20	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?e (direct)				
Expected metric tons of CO?e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting				
Duration of accounting				

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

Total Target Benefit	Energy (MJ) (At PIF)	Energy (MJ) (At CEO Endorsement)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at MTR)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at TE)
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	50,000	50,000		
Male	50,000	50,000		
Total	100000	100000	0	0

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

The project will contribute to the country?s National Biodiversity targets under the Aichi Biodiversity target as follows: ABT 1: The capacity building initiatives proposed under the project will contribute towards increasing knowledge and awareness of biodiversity conservation for communities around the project area; ABT 2: The project will undertake a Landscape-scale ecosystem and land use assessment which will contribute towards ecosystem evaluation to inform decision-making; ABT 3: The conservation aspect of the funding mechanism for community-based sustainable land management will incentivise private landowners and communities to conserve their natural resources; ABT 6: The proposed activities in the project will ensure that Eswatini?s natural resources are sustainably managed; ABT 7: The project will utilise climate-smart agricultural practises which are eco-friendly to improve food security in a sustainable manner; ABT 9: The project will implore measures to effectively manage and control Alien Invasive Species along the Mbuluzi catchment to restore the catchment?s natural vegetation; ABT 14: The intervention that will be undertaken under the project will contribute towards providing essential services related to water and livelihoods. Such services will be restored taking into account the needs of local women and community members along the catchment. The project comes at an

opportune time when Eswatini is in the process of domesticating the SDGs into its umbrella development frameworks and sectorial policies, under the leadership of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. The centrality of SDG 15 creates direct linkages between LDN and other SDGs in the areas of poverty, food security, water and sanitation, environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources. Implementing LDN therefore offers Eswatini a chance to realize her potential of creating multiple benefits that will make a direct contribution to achieving these and other SDGs. In this regard, the National Development Strategy offers an effective policy framework for LDN integration into the national development agenda in Eswatini. In addition, the project will directly contribute to the fulfilment of UNCCD 10-year strategy objectives 1,2, 3 and 4, particularly Expected Impacts 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2 and 4.2. The project will directly contribute to the fulfilment of Aichi Targets and will directly or indirectly contribute to all 17 SDGs but in particular to: - SDG 12 (Ensure sustainable production and consumption patterns); SDG15 (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse LD and halt BD loss) by incorporating SLM into decision making and by conserving / restoring BD in terrestrial production landscapes. Importantly, the project has been designed to contribute to SDG target 15.3 on Land Degradation Neutrality and the integrated landscape approach being proposed by this project is considered essential to achieve this (and other multiple goals and targets) at the required scale. - The project will also contribute to SDG13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts). Using the EX-ACT tool, it has been calculated that the project will result in considerable carbon sequestration, due to restoration tree planting, agroforestry and SLM.

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

The final project design is aligned to the original PIF; it preserves its main objective, strategy and structure. However, some adjustments were made to the targets for outcomes and outputs based on discussions with expert reviewers, project partners, experts and key stakeholders during the project design stage (see Table 2 below). This improved the precision in outputs and indicators so as to best achieve the outcomes and the overall objective. While the original target for outcome 2 in the PIF was to reduce land degradation in an area of 60,700 ha over the landscape, it was confirmed during project design that: (a) the area of the targeted three protected areas was actually 32,676 ha (according to the World Database of Protected Areas) ? this had been estimated at 35,000 ha in the PIF, (b) using remote sensing techniques, it was discovered that three Tikhundla were the most exposed to the problem of land degradation and six sites from these were selected as the project intervention areas. The area coverage of the project sites were discerned as 50,700 ha (out of which 700 ha will be restored through reforestation, 20,000 ha will be restored through integrated land management techniques, and agricultural productivity on another 30,000 ha will be improved through sustainable land management). The GHG mitigation potential of the project was therefore computed to be -5,469,132 tCO2-eq (which is different from the first estimate of 827,477 tCO2-eq in the PIF). The project focus and thrust during the PIF has, however, been maintained during PPG.

Table 2. Changes in alignment with the project design with the original PIF

PIF	CEO ER	Comments on changes
Outcome 1 was comprised of four (4) outputs, including Output 1.1 - Landscape-scale ecosystem and land use assessment conducted for Mbuluzi Basin.	Outcome 1 is comprised of three (3) outputs, excluding Output 1.1 - Landscape-scale ecosystem and land use assessment conducted for Mbuluzi Basin.	- Outcome 1 is expected to contribute to the achievement of Component 1 - Strengthening Policy, Legislative and Institutional Frameworks for Integrated Natural Resources Management (INRM). All the outputs in Outcome 1 as outlined in the PIF (except output 1.1) are expected to provide frameworks, strategies or plans to build an updated policy, institutional and legislative framework for SLM and ecosystem restoration. - During stakeholder consultations (inception meeting at the start of the PDD stage), it was agreed that Output 1.1 on Landscape-scale ecosystem and land use assessment be transferred to Component 2 on ecosystem restoration. It is now reflected as Output 2.1.
Outcome 1: The Government of Eswatini adopts and starts enforcing an updated policy, institutional and legislative framework for SLM and ecosystem restoration	Outcome 1: The Government of Eswatini adopts and starts enforcing an updated, gender-inclusive policy, institutional and legislative framework for SLM and ecosystem restoration	- The import of including ?gender inclusive? was to ensure that the policy, institutional and legislative frameworks that will be developed by the project take due consideration to gender equity and mainstream gender from the very outset through to implementation.

Outcome 2: Reduced Land degradation through capacity strengthening for innovative SLM technologies in productive landscapes across 50,700 ha of the Mbuluzi River Basin	Outcome 2: Land degradation reduced by implementation of innovative SLM technologies in productive landscapes in the Mbuluzi River Basin	- The original outcome statement was a bit unclear and while the focus was on reduced land degradation, it was combined with a target that was more suitable for output. The revised statement reflects what will be achieved through implementation of SLM technologies and is therefore clearer. The focus and main thrust of the outcome has therefore not been changed from what was aimed at in the PIF
Outcome 2 was comprised of six (6) outputs	Outcome 2 is now comprised of seven (7) outputs.	- Outcome 2 is expected to contribute to reduced land degradation through SLM technologies. During project design, stakeholders felt rightly so that the Output on ?Landscape-scale ecosystem and land use assessment conducted for Mbuluzi Basin? would be appropriate to precede the various interventions planned, as it directly contributes to unravelling the extent of land degradation in the basin. This Output is now listed as 2.1 in Component 2.
Output 2.5 SLM practices implemented in communities to improve soil fertility and reduce land degradation for improved food security and livelihoods targeting maize and legumes for crops and livestock	Output 2.5 SLM practices targeting maize and legumes for crops and livestock piloted in communities to improve soil fertility and reduce land degradation	- This output statement was rewritten to make it more focussed on maize, legume and livestock production systems. This retains the original intent in the PIF and only makes the statement more clear.
Outcome 3. Capacity strengthening for Effective management of the three nature reserves of (Malolotja Nature Reserve, Mlawula nature reserve and Hawane Dam (Ramsar site) in the basin is undertaken	Outcome 3: Effective PA management and governance models for PAs implemented by government agencies and local stakeholders in selected locations	- The original outcome statement focuses on the strengthening of capacity for effective management of PAs. While this is the intention, immediate capacity strengthening is more of an output than an outcome. The outcome statement has therefore been re-written to reflect the outcome of capacity strengthening, viz. that there will be effective PA management and government models under implementation by government agencies and local stakeholders. This retains the thrust of the original outcome, as all measures to ensure capacity strengthening will be carried out in the attendant outputs.

Core Indicator 4: Area of landscapes under improved practices = 60,000 ha	Core Indicator 4 (sub-indicator 4.3): Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas) = 30,000 ha	- During project design, it was agreed that the project will be implemented at six sites in three tinkhundla (see Annex E), in addition to the three protected area of Malolotj, Mlawula and Hawane Dam. - Using GIS techniques, the areas of proposed project implementation sites (in the three tinkhundla) was computed to be approximately 50,000 ha. This included approximately 20,000 ha of communal grazing land. - Based on the above, it was agreed that the target for Core Indicator 4.3: Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems i.e. the area that will be improved for sustainable production of maize and legume production systems as per planned Output 2.4 will be 30,000 ha.
Core Indicator 3: Area of land restored = 700 ha	Core Indicator 3: Area of land restored (sub-indicator 3.1+3.2) = 20,700 ha - Indicator 3.1: Area of degraded agricultural land restored = 20,000 ha. - Indicator 3.2: Area of forest and forest land restored = 700 ha.	- As already explained above, the degraded communal grazing areas were estimated through GIS techniques to be approximately 20,000 ha. Restoration of these areas to provide for improved livestock production as per proposed Output 2.4 will therefore be monitored under Core Indicator 3.1 as per the GEF Guidelines on Core Indicators and Sub-indicators (updated results architecture for GEF-7 contained in GEF/C.54/11/Rev.02 of 2018 and Guidelines: ME/GN/02 of 2018 as updated in 2019). - The PIF already mentioned the area of forest land (indigenous forests and woodlands of social and cultural significance) targeted for restoration as 700 ha of. This has been maintained and will monitored under Indicator 3.2.

Core Indicator 1: Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use = 35,000 ha	Core Indicator 1: Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (sub-indicator 1.2) = 32,676 ha. - Indicator 1.2: Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness = 32,676 ha.	- The target for the area of protected areas under improved management was estimated at 35,000 ha at PIF stage. However, at project design stage, the exact extent of the three protected areas proposed for improved management was based on data from the World Database of Protected Areas - https://www.protectedplanet.net/. The total areas (hectares) of the three protected areas was therefore established to be: Malolotja Nature Reserve ? 16,292 ha, Mlawula Nature ? 16,152 ha, Hawane Nature Reserve and Dam ? 232 = Total: 32,676 ha.
Anticipated Co-financing was USD 25,768,500	Anticipated co-financing is USD 41,068,000	- Although some anticipated co-financing partners such as Peak Timbers were not able to commit themselves and were therefore subsequently not listed at CEO ER stage, the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs was able to commit an additional USD10,000,000 (on top of the previous USD 14,818,000 in the PIF) from its commissions and agencies. The National Disaster Management Agency was also able to commit a further USD 5,500,000 as co-financing. The anticipated co-financing support has therefore risen to USD 41,068,000.

1a. Project Description.

1.1 Global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed

1.1.1 Background

Eswatini is a landlocked country located in Southern Africa. The country is mostly bordered by the Republic of South Africa on the north, west and partly southeast. Towards the east, the country borders the Republic of Mozambique. Its approximate land area is 17,364 km2, lying between latitudes 25? 43' S and 27? 19' S and longitudes 30? 47' E and 32? 08' E.[1]1 Eswatini lies at a mean altitude of 1,200 m above sea level with a sub-tropical climate consisting of dry winters and wet summers, with the annual rainfall highest being 1,000 - 2,000 mm and lowest being 500 ? 900 mm. The country has four administrative regions, namely: Hhohho in the north, Manzini in the center, Shiselweni in the south and Lubombo in the east of the country. At the sub-national level, the country is administered through a traditional leadership system which is represented by 55 *tinkhundla* (equivalent of counties) and 385

chiefdoms (equivalent of sub-counties). Politically, the country is headed by a constitutional monarchy, assisted by a parliamentary system responsible to the King. The King, as the Head of State, holds supreme executive, legislative, and judicial powers.

The country is divided into four distinct agro-ecological zones, based on elevation, landforms, geology, soils, and vegetation, as shown in Figure **1**, namely: Highveld, Middleveld, Lowveld and Lubombo Plateau. Each of the three regions, the Highveld, the Middleveld, and the Lowveld, occupy about one-third of the country, whilst the Lubombo Plateau occupies less than one-tenth of the country. The Highveld and Upper Middleveld are inherently grasslands, while mixed savanna of broad-leaved trees, Acacia spp. and mixed bush are the inherent vegetation types in the Lower Middleveld, Lowveld and Lubombo.[2][2]

? The Highveld with its cool temperatures is characterized by steep and rocky topography with dissected slopes. It is a mountainous region with altitudes of 1,200 m above sea level. It has an estimated 13% of good arable soils with limited use while the remainder is suitable for grazing, pastures, and plantation forestry. This region receives the most rain in the country compared to other regions, but soil deficiencies and low winter temperatures limit agriculture. The Highveld accounts for 31% of the total land space of the country.[3][3]

? The Middleveld, which lies east of the Highveld, has an average elevation of 800 m. The region has temperate conditions characterized by more gently rolling topography, extensive grazing areas and good cultivable soils, most suited to mixed cattle and arable farming and producing a variety of crops and undertaking plantation enterprises. The Middleveld accounts for 24% of the land area.

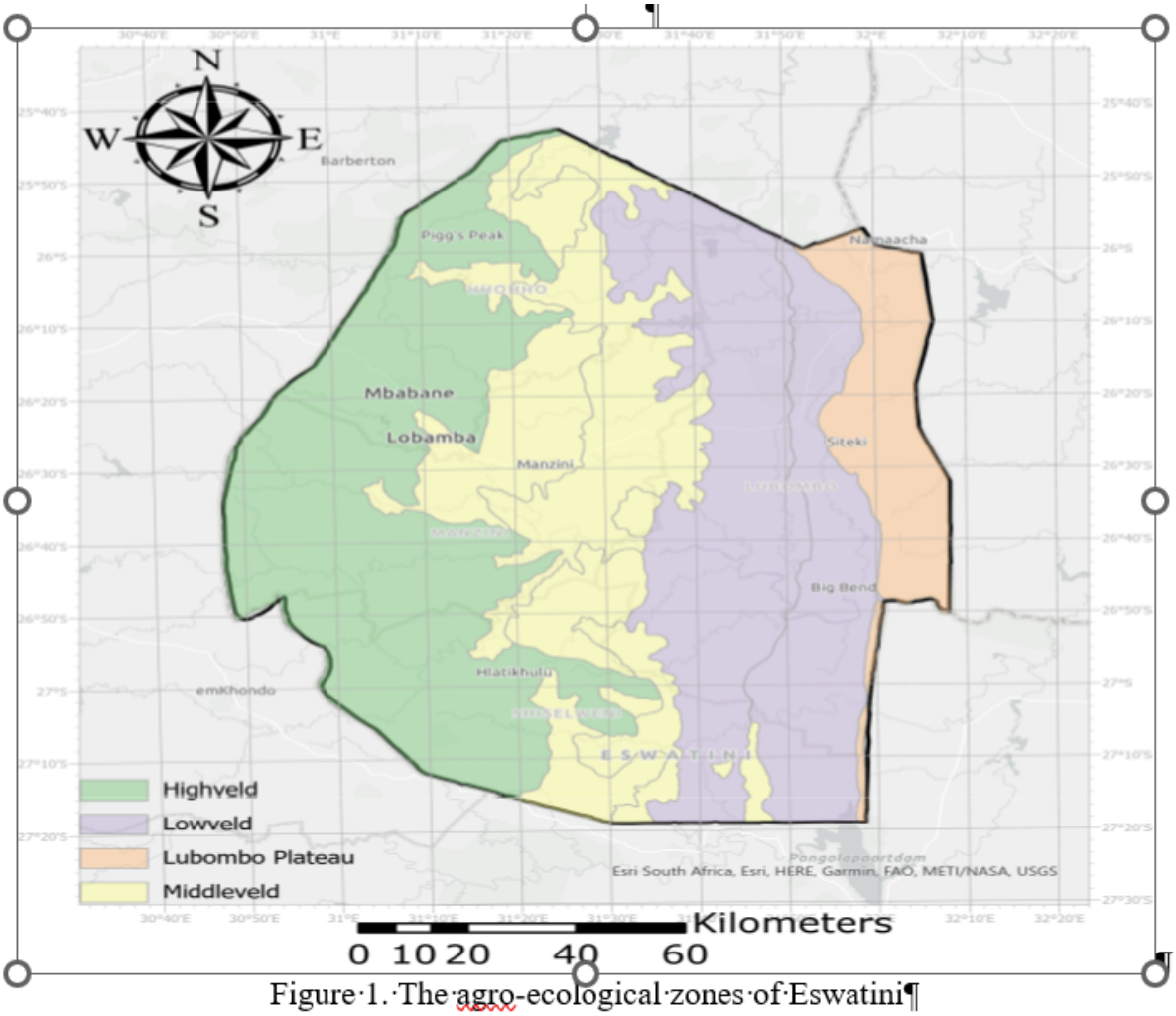
? The Lowveld is the most extensive of all the regions and has warm conditions. It has an average elevation of 200 m above sea level. It is gently undulating and characterized by high summer temperatures, winter frosts and a highly variable rainfall, which is marginal for rain fed production. Rain fed agriculture is risky because of the frequency of drought conditions. Its soils are generally the most fertile in the country and are under irrigated agriculture. Production of crops and livestock has the potential to be maximized. About 90% of the irrigated land amounting to 49,000 ha in the whole country is in the Lowveld where plantation of sugarcane and citrus are dominant. The region accounts for 37% of the total land area.

? The Lubombo Plateau located on the eastern border of Eswatini consists of rolling topography with deeply incised gorges. It has an average elevation of approximately 750 m above sea level. Where topography permits its soils are deep and cultivable. The Plateau accounts for 8% of the land.

[1]Simelane SP, Hansen C, Munghemezulu C (2021). The use of remote sensing and GIS for land use and land cover mapping in Eswatini: A review. South African Journal of Geomatics, 10(2): 181-206. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/sajg.v10i2.13

[2]Gustafsson, A., & Johansson, M. (2006). An investigation of nutrient levels along the Mbuluzi River - A background for sustainable water resources management.

[3]Dlamini, 2006. Integrated water management studies in the Mbuluzi catchment, Swaziland, Pietermeritzburg, South Africa.



Figure·1.·The·agro-ecological·zones·of·Eswatini¶

There are four ecosystems in Eswatini: (1) montane grasslands, (2) savanna-woodland mosaic, (3) forests and (4) aquatic systems. The savanna-woodlands are the dominant ecosystem, covering the central and lower parts of the country, followed by the montane grasslands predominantly in the Highveld. Dry lands cover 944,000 hectares (ha) or 54% of the country and encompass all of the Lower Middleveld, Eastern and Western Lowveld, as well as parts of the Lubombo Plateau and Upper Middleveld. The driest zone in Eswatini is the moist semi-arid zone, found in the southern Lowveld. The intermediate dry sub-humid zone occurs mainly in the northern Lowveld. The most humid part of the dry lands covers the Lower Middleveld, most of the Lubombo and a small part of the Upper Middleveld. Considering its small size, Eswatini is very rich in biodiversity, and species composition varies greatly between ecosystems. To date, over 820 species of vertebrates and 2,414 species of plants have been recorded, including 18 endemic species of plants and one endemic vertebrate.

A great proportion of the Southern Africa?s plant and animal species are found in the country. A proportion of the eastern part of Eswatini forms part of the Maputaland Centre of Plant Diversity which is one of the World?s ?hotspots? of floral, as well as faunal species richness and endemism. The western part of the country is part of the Drakensberg Escarpment Endemic Bird Area, as well as the Barberton Centre of Plant Diversity. Surveys conducted in the country have recorded 14 phyla to date. About 265 families and about 1,300 genera of arthropods and 813 species (445 genera in 144 families) of vertebrates have been recorded. In the plant taxa, there are 3,678 plants that have been recorded in

the country and of these 12 species are endemic. Eswatini?s biodiversity has been markedly and categorically been threatened by anthropogenic and climate change incidents. Considering that there are 89 species of vertebrates and 305 species of plants that are listed in national Red Data Lists, there is a need to mitigate the threats and impacts of biodiversity loss and to ensure that the country?s biodiversity, ecosystems, and habitats are properly managed.

According to the World Bank collection of development indicators, Eswatini is estimated to be home to 1,160,164 people (2020 data), mostly rural and young persons in the 15-24 years old age bracket, who make up around 20.6% of the total population. Eswatini?s annual population growth rate is 1.0% (2020) with a population density of 67 persons per square kilometer (2020). The rural population in Eswatini was reported at 75.8% in 2020. The country?s GDP per capita (2020) was US$ 3,424.28 with an annual growth rate of -1.85% (2020) and a human capital development index of 0.4 (2020). Eswatini's economy is predominantly agriculture-based with the population, especially those residing in rural areas, deriving their livelihoods through rain-fed subsistence agriculture. Poverty levels are estimated at 63% with high income inequality. Unemployment stood at 47.1% for the overall population in 2013 with the majority of the unemployed being women and the youth. Poverty in rural Eswatini is closely correlated to the extent of food insecurity, which is caused by unsustainable farming techniques, low rainfall and limited access to good arable land. Biodiversity loss, land and habitat degradation, unsustainable land use and management are critical issues affecting the agricultural and land productivity in Eswatini.
One of Eswatini?s critical landscapes faced with vast land management challenges is the Mbuluzi River Basin (Figure 2). This is one of the five major river basins in Eswatini, covering a total land area of 3,200 square kilometers or 18% of the country land area. It is a trans-boundary ecosystem that straddles the border between Mozambique and Eswatini. In Eswatini, it forms the third largest basin after the Komati-Lomati and the Usutu (locally known as Lusutfu) basins. The Mbuluzi catchment is an important watershed that nourishes the Mbuluzi River (also known as the iMbuluzi or Umbeluzi), one of the main rivers of Eswatini. The river has two sources, one in the Highveld north of Mbabane, which is known as the Black Mbuluzi, and a second in the Middleveld near Manzini, which is known as the White Mbuluzi, or Mbuluzane. The Mbuluzi river basin runs through all four agroecological zones in Eswatini. Altitude ranges from 125 m in the Lowveld to more than 1500 m in the Highveld. (Figure 3).

The geology and soils of the basin varies significantly which can be attributed to the different ecological zones within. The upper part of the basin (Highveld) is dominated by granites, Precambrian sediments, and volcanic outcrops. Some granite and granitic gneisses with outcrops of dolerite and gabbro are found in the Middleveld (Figure 4). The Lowveld area constitute sedimentary and volcanic rocks of the Karoo super group.[1] The soils (3) in the Highveld and Middleveld are deep, acidic, and well-drained, often with stone lines suggesting old soil erosion on the surfaces. Further down in Middleveld, the soils become shallow. In the Lowveld soils vary significantly in size and thickness. Dominant soils are clay, duplex soils (which are highly sodic and easily erodible). Other soils are alluvial soils, poorly drained and sandy soils.

Figure 2. Location of mbuluzi and other major basins in Eswatini

[1]Eswatini demographic and poverty statistics have been drawn from:

- Central Statistics Office Eswatini (2019) Population and Housing Census 2017, Volume 2

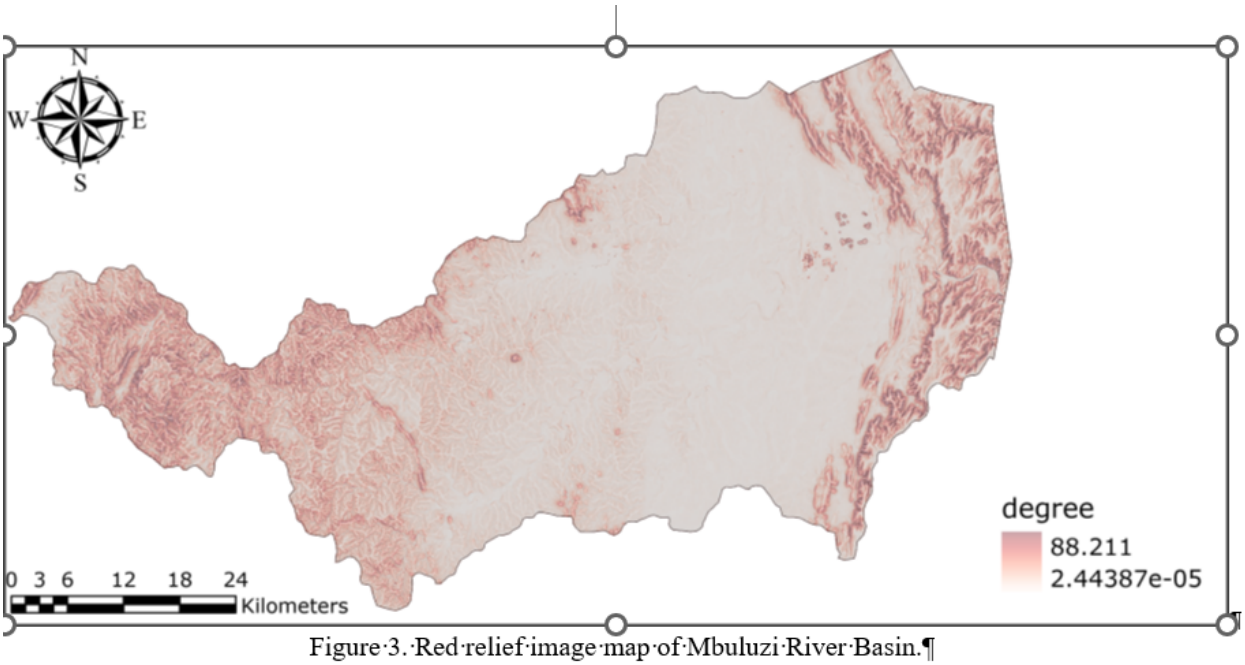
- Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (2019) The Kingdom of Eswatini Voluntary National Review

- BTI 2022 Country Report ? Eswatini https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report/SWZ

[1]Ministry of Agriculture (2020) Eswatini National Drought Plan, the Kingdom of Eswatini. Drought Initiative, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

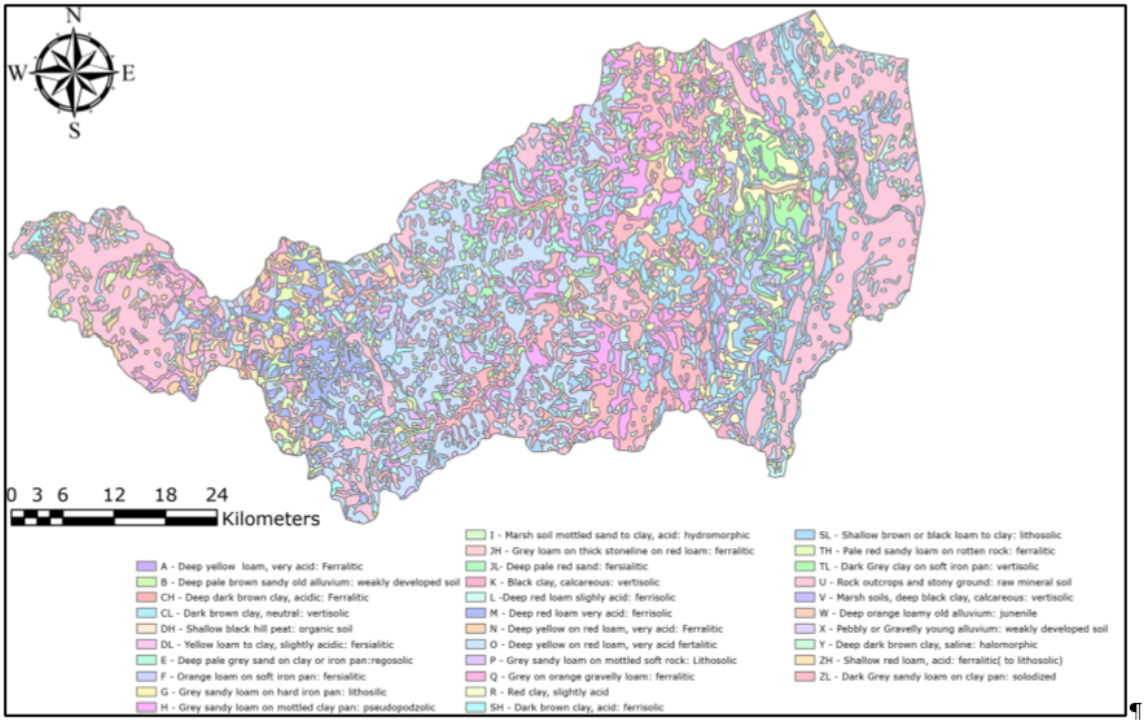
[1]Sidorchuk, A., Maerker, M., Moretti, S., & Rodolfi, G. (2003). Gully erosion modelling and landscape response in the Mbuluzi River catchment of Swaziland. *Catena*, *50*, 507-525. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0341-8162(02)00123-6

[1]Gustafsson, A., & Johansson, M. (2006). An investigation of nutrient levels along the Mbuluzi River - A background for sustainable water resources management.



Figure·3.·Red·relief·image·map·of·Mbuluzi·River·Basin.¶

The Mbuluzi catchment is exposed to various forms of environmental hazards. These limit the provision of ecosystem goods and services from the landscape. Nevertheless, the Mbuluzi river basin is a major source of water for agricultural activities, as well as rural and urban water supplies. The Mbuluzi catchment receives large amounts of rainfall, which is of critical importance for its vegetation and the surrounding farming communities. The average mean annual rainfall ranges from 1200 mm in the Highveld to about 800 mm in the Lowveld. The Hawane dam, located along the Mbuluzi River, supplies water to Mbabane city. Water from the river is also used in various ways by communities along its course. It is also a source of water supply to Ngomane, Tambankulu and Simunye sugar cane irrigation schemes through the Mnjoli dam.



Figure·4.·The·soils·within·Mbuluzi·River·Landscape.¶

[1]Sidorchuk, A., Maerker, M., Moretti, S., & Rodolfi, G. (2003). Gully erosion modelling and landscape response in the Mbuluzi River catchment of Swaziland. *Catena*, *50*, 507-525. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0341-8162(02)00123-6

[2]Gustafsson, A., & Johansson, M. (2006). An investigation of nutrient levels along the Mbuluzi River - A background for sustainable water resources management.

Climate has a significant bearing on the natural processes as well as the manner in which humans interact with the environment and access ecosystem services. Except for the semi-arid Lowveld, the climate of the Mbuluzi landscape is highly variable and can be described as humid subtropical with warm wet summers and cool dry winters. The year can be divided into two distinct seasons, hot and rainy (Nov-Apr) and dry and cool (May-Oct). In general, the climate gets warmer and drier with eastwards direction. The catchment receives most of its rainfall during the summer season from October to March. Mean rainfall figures vary from 500 mm/year in the lower parts of the catchment up to 1500 mm/year in the mountainous areas. The Mean Annual Precipitation (MAP) rarely exceeds 700 mm in the Lowveld. Temperatures vary by altitude. The Lowveld is the hottest region in the catchment and the Highveld the coolest part. The mean annual temperatures generally decrease in a westerly direction from approximately 26? C on the coast to 19 ?C on the Swazi Highveld (which is occasionally struck by frost). Figure 5 shows average rainfall as well as deviation from long-term mean annual precipitation.

Eswatini is topographically and climatically very diverse, a condition that enhances biological diversity. The country is characterized by a very rich diversity of natural ecosystems including vegetation, water, soils, and genetic diversity. A survey conducted by MTEA (2001) indicated that a large portion of southern Africa?s plant and animal species occur in Eswatini. Moreover, these ecosystems are increasingly under threat due to the unsustainable use of natural resources, population increase, decline of land productivity etc. In addition, the effects of increased natural disasters and climate change are already felt. Recently (January 2021), Eswatini was hit by tropical cyclone Eloise (NDMA, 2021) causing

enormous degradation (through soil erosion, nutrient losses, etc.). Recurring droughts and reduced availability of water (El Ni?o- induced in 2015/2016, (Mlenga et al., 2019)) is a severe setback to the agriculture sector as majority of the farming community in Eswatini practice rain fed subsistence agriculture. The Eswatini Adaptation Communication (Government of Eswatini, 2021) highlighted a biome shift, habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, species loss and extinction, reduction in dispersal patterns, species migration, increased wildfire incidents, encroachment, a decline in genetic resources, a growing list of threatened and vulnerable species, and a decline in indigenous forests. These climate impacts have subsequently affected ecosystem services, livelihoods, ecotourism opportunities, and traditional medicine availability in the Kingdom. While the climate impacts affects both men and women the effects and consequences impact on women and men differently. Women disproportionately suffer the impacts of climate change because of inequity. Limited access to resources, restricted rights, reduced mobility and a limited voice in both community and household decision-making make women more vulnerable to the effects of climate change. This has negative implications for efforts to address land and resource degradation, as women play a unique role in the stewardship of land and natural resources in their communities. With their knowledge, they have an important contribution to make to developing adaptation interventions.

Given that agricultural activity and water supply within the Mbuluzi river catchment are strongly weather-dependent, changes in climate are likely to have significant effects not only on its nature, but also its contribution to people?s livelihood. Several climate predictions derived from the Coupled Model Inter-comparison Projects, or CMIPs which have been used by the World Climate Research Program (WCRP), are available that predict future scenarios. One such model is the Canadian Earth System Model version 5 (CanESM5) of the Canadian Centre for Climate Modelling and Analysis[1]. Climate change data for the Mbuluzi landscape based on the CanESM5 model were downloaded from the World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal for Development Practitioners and Policy Makers (https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/) and used to show the change in projected climate (temperature and rainfall) for the periods 2020 ? 2039 and 2040 ? 2059 (Figure 5). The projections presented on Figure 5 are based on the SSP-1.9 scenario of the model that predicts a warming of under 1.5?C by 2100 in line with the Paris Agreement due to supposed high level of environmental and social consciousness brought about by clear evidence that impacts of natural resource use, such as deforestation, soil depletion and pollution, pose a serious threat to the continuation of human life. The model shows an increase in temperature of 0.47 ?C for the next 30 to 0 years. Rainfall will also increase by 66 mm over the next 20 years resulting in flash flooding. In terms of seasonality, the present drier months of May, June, July, August and September are expected to receive more rainfall (with increments of up to 22 ? 42 mm in the 2020-2039 prediction which will reduce by 2 ? 11 mm in the 2040-2059 model).

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[1]Swart, N. C., Cole, J. N. S., Kharin, V. V., Lazare, M., Scinocca, J. F., Gillett, N. P., Anstey, J., Arora, V., Christian, J. R., Hanna, S., Jiao, Y., Lee, W. G., Majaess, F., Saenko, O. A., Seiler, C., Seinen, C., Shao, A., Sigmond, M., Solheim, L., von Salzen, K., Yang, D., and Winter, B.: The Canadian Earth System Model version 5 (CanESM5.0.3), Geosci. Model Dev., 12, 4823?4873, https://doi.org/10.5194/gmd-12-4823-2019, 2019.

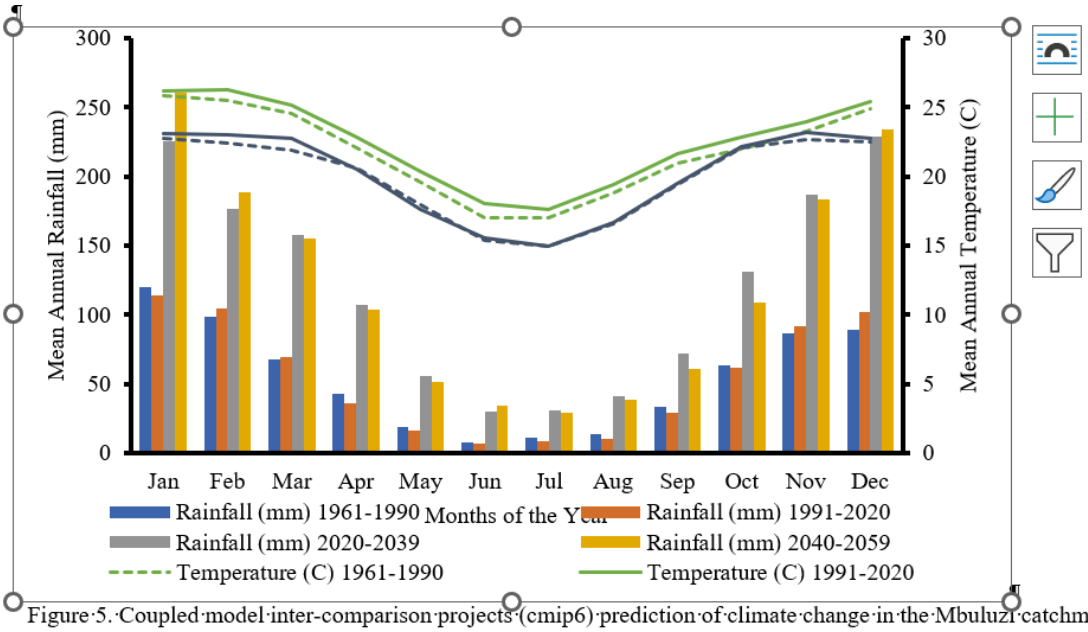


Figure 5. Coupled model inter-comparison projects (cmip6) prediction of climate change in the Mbuluzi catchment (2020-2039 and 2040-2059) based on mean historical climate record (1961-2020).

The dominant land cover of the Mbuluzi River basin is woodlands followed by bush grasslands and cultivated areas (Figure 6). The amount of afforestation within the catchment is very small. The natural vegetation of the Highveld consists of short grassland covered with bushes and small trees interspersed with rock-outcrops. Wet grassland systems and spots of temperate forests can also be found, especially in the valleys. The Middleveld vegetation is a mixture of temperate and tropical elements. In the mountainous terrain, woodland and savannah vegetation is predominant whereas riparian forest can be encountered in the larger valleys. The natural Lowveld vegetation consists mainly of woodland, dominated by large trees. The vegetation of the Lubombo region is similar to that of the Middleveld, consisting of acacia savannah, broad-leaved savannah, patches of open grassland and thick tropical forest in the river valleys.

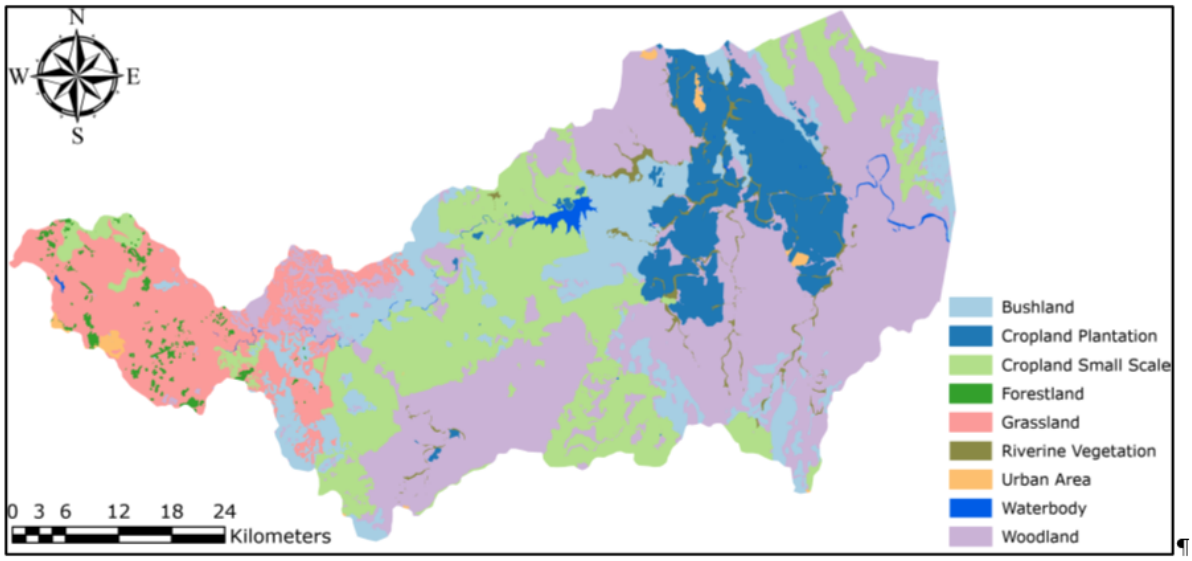
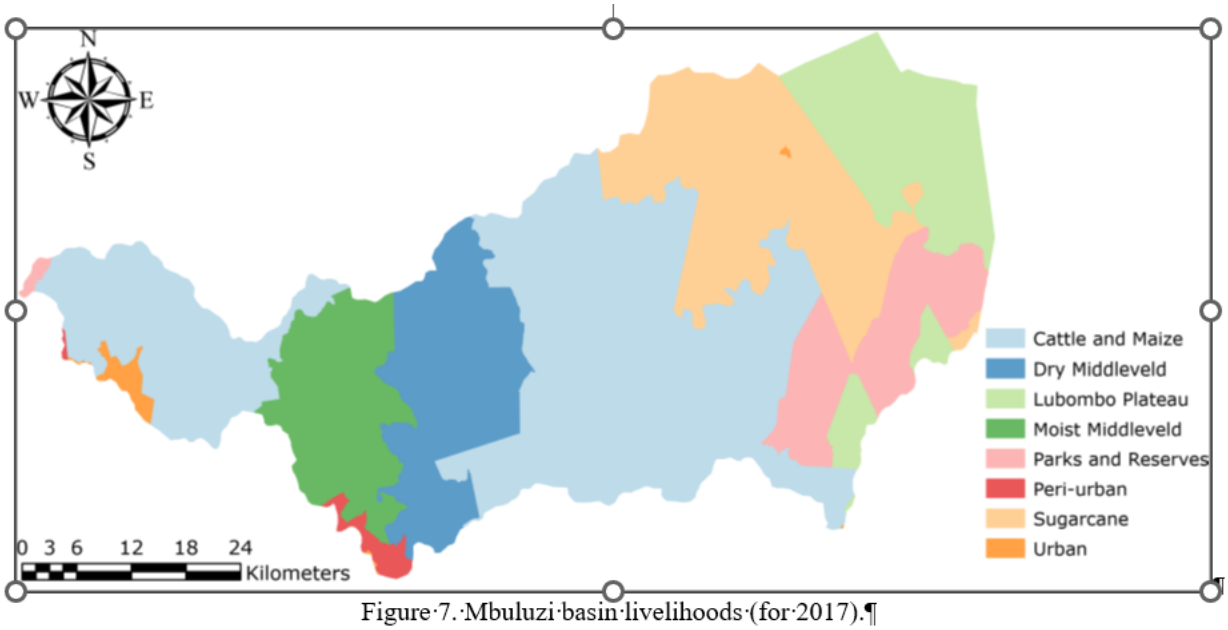
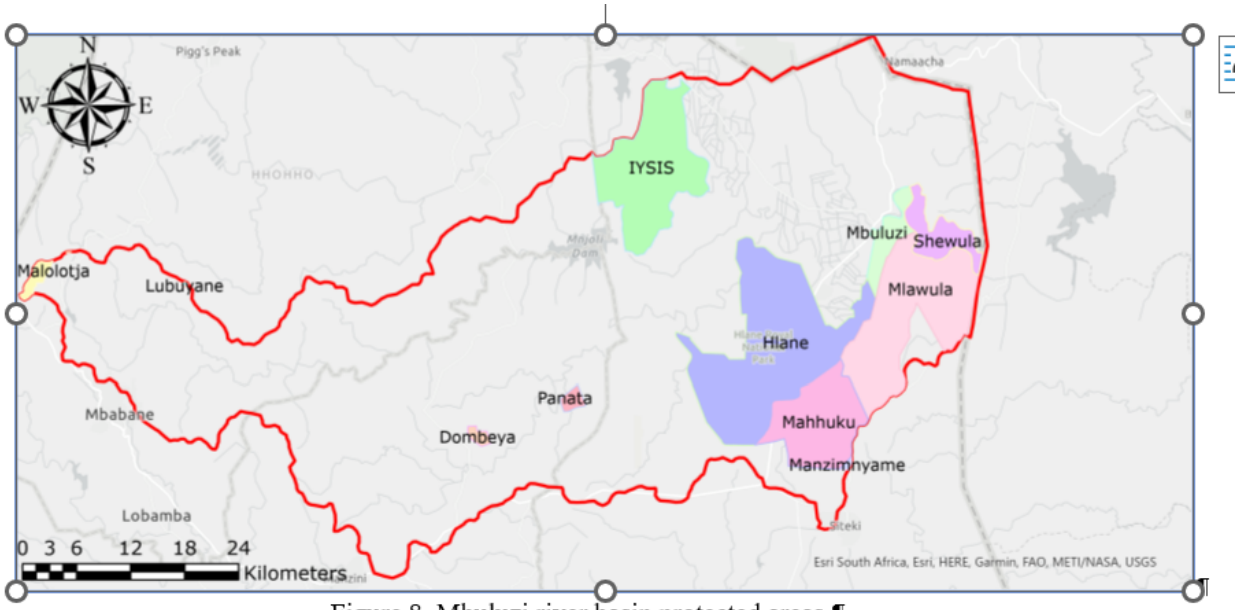


Figure 6. Land use and land cover in the Mbuluzi river basin

There are 14 constituencies within the basin, with an estimated population of about 300 000 people.[1] The basin is dominated by agriculture activities such as cattle, maize production and sugarcane plantations (Figure 7). The main land use in the Mbuluzi catchment is crop cultivation by local communities and commercial companies. In the western-most areas of the Highveld, the land use is not very intense due to the steep slopes and the cooler climate. The main activities in this area are small scale farming on the hill slopes, small scale cattle keeping and spots of forest plantations. The Hawane Dam and the water treatment plant for Mbabane are situated in the upper reaches of the Highveld. The Middleveld is dominated by traditional communal farming on a small scale, intermixed with extensive areas of controlled grazing land for cattle (Figure 7). The population in the area is scattered and there are no major towns. Around the Mnjoli Dam, local farmers grow sugar cane and use water from the dam for irrigation. The Lowveld downstream of the Mnjoli Dam is dominated by large-scale intensive irrigated sugarcane plantations with all activities associated with the sugar industry such as milling. Several protected areas are also found in the basin (Figure 8), with the parts of the Malolotje Nature Reserve in the headwaters of the Mbuluzi River and the Lubombo Conservancy (comprises of Mlawula Nature Reserve, Shewula Nature Reserve, Mbuluzi Game Reserve, Hlane National Park and Inyoni Yami Swaziland Irrigation Scheme (IYSIS) on the Lubombo Plateau as the river enters Mozambique (Figure 8).



Figure·7.·Mbuluzi·basin·livelihoods·(for·2017).¶



Figure·8.·Mbuluzi·river·basin·protected·areas.¶

[1]Eswatini Central Statistical Office. (2017). *The 2017 Population and Housing Census*.

The Mbuluzi catchment is characterized by severe deforestation, overgrazing and severe exploitation of vegetation for domestic use. Figure **9** shows some selected types of vegetation located within the basin, and further indicates their vulnerability status. Vegetation is crucial to minimizing land degradation and in the rehabilitation of degraded land. As indicated in Figure 9, a larger part of the basin vegetation falls

within the state of vulnerable, while the eastern side is least threatened. The area is also facing improper soil management. Poverty around the area pushes community members towards unstainable harvesting of natural resources for resale locally and internationally as a source of livelihood. The wood from forests is used for craftwork which is exported to other countries including South Africa. The Mbuluzi catchment is also a source of special grasses that are used for handicrafts and other domestic uses including making mat and handicrafts to meet domestic needs as well as for sale and contributing to income generation. Traditional handicrafts made from various plant materials are produced by men and women as an important source of livelihood, especially for the marginalized and vulnerable members of rural communities such as the disabled, elderly and poor women, who often have limited options for cash income generation. While women and other marginalized and vulnerable groups can earn incomes from these activities, it perpetuates their vulnerability that is linked to degradation and scarcity of natural resources.

Wetlands are highly degraded due to harvesting of such grasses and other land-uses including abstraction of water for domestic and livestock use. Overstocking is a common problem in the Mbuluzi catchment area. This is mainly due to the country?s traditional norm which values livestock as a measure of wealth. This then leads to high numbers of livestock per homestead which exceeds the carrying capacity of grazing lands. Furthermore, the country?s rangelands have witnessed bush encroachment which has made the conditions conducive for shrubs therefore reducing the country?s grazing capacity.

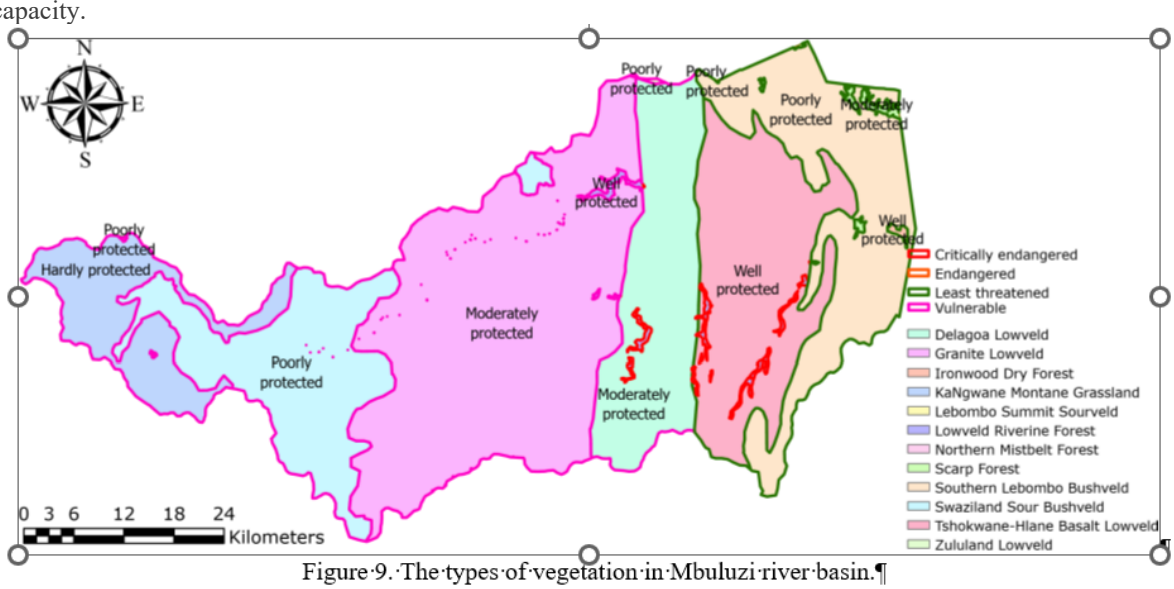


Figure 9. The types of vegetation in Mbuluzi river basin.

Soil erosion is widespread in Eswatini and is very severe on small holder farms and communal grazing areas. The Middle veld of Eswatini is the most affected. Results indicate that soil erosion is widespread in the basin. Over 55% of the basin is affected by moderate erosion where estate farming and controlled grazing are the main land uses. Very severe erosion takes place over almost 12% of the area where communal grazing and small holder farms are predominant. The erosion upstream of drainage basins affects economic activities downstream especially irrigated agriculture because it contributes sediment yield hence reducing the lifespan of dams and reservoirs. In situ damage caused by soil erosion includes the loss of crop production media, reduction of soil productivity as a result of lowered soil fertility, which may indirectly be perceived through decreased harvests. On the other hand, the products of soil erosion, viz. sediments, have a bearing on water quality in a river network. The Black Mbuluzi, which forms the headwaters of the Mbuluzi River, is experiencing effects of urbanization and poor land

use management due to human encroachment by residents from Mbabane city and Ngwenya municipality who are developing residential properties in an unplanned manner.

The Government?s National Development Strategy (NDS) which is implemented through three year rolling National Development Plans provides the overarching national development framework for Eswatini. The NDS focuses on improving the standard of living of the people of Eswatini through poverty eradication, employment creation, gender equality and environmental protection. This project is therefore designed to support the country?s transformational agenda to achieve greater environmental and economic security. It will primarily support both government, NGOs and community-led efforts in sustainable land and biodiversity conservation and catalyze associated behavioural change within the Mbuluzi River basin landscape, while raising capacities to promote long-term climate resilient development and to achieve biodiversity co-benefits through applied and integrated SLM approaches. It will take a landscape management approach, informed by lessons learned on the interlinked challenges of poverty, ecosystem services, climate change, biodiversity, institutional performance, governance, and community-based engagement and management. GEF support will be fully blended with government and NGO resources to fund locally driven planning and replicable, innovative actions, that will lead to the attainment of the following global environmental benefits: (a) the project will have impact over 83,376 hectares including (i) 700 ha of indigenous forests and woodlands of social and cultural significance restored through reforestation, (ii) 20,000 ha of degraded agricultural land restored through Integrated Land Management, (iii) 30,000 ha of agricultural land under Sustainable Land Management for improved maize and legume production systems, (iv) 32,676 ha of terrestrial protected areas under improved management for conservation and sustainable use; (b) 100,000 beneficiaries (50% women and 50% men) are expected to benefit from project activities.

1.1.2 Threats to sustainable land and biodiversity management

During project preparation, analysis of the developmental challenge revealed three different levels of causes for the land degradation/biodiversity loss in the Mbuluzi river basin i.e. root causes, threats and barriers (Figure 10).

Unsustainable land and biodiversity management practices result in loss of soil fertility, contribute to an increase in GHG emissions, increase community and ecosystem?s vulnerability to climate variability and change and reduce adaptive capacities at the local level. To effectively promote integrated landscape and biodiversity management in the Mbuluzi landscape, it is important that the threats and root causes of land and biodiversity degradation are identified and properly understood. Land and biodiversity degradation in the Mbuluzi landscape is directly attributed to biophysical factors and unsustainable management practices.

The prevailing conditions in the Mbuluzi landscape are the product of a combination of natural and anthropogenic processes. Generally, forest cover in the Mbuluzi landscape has reduced over the last three decades. There was an overall increase in woody vegetation cover both within the protected areas and in the buffer areas as seen from images of the Mlawula?Hlane?Mbuluzi (MHM) complex in Figure 11. For example, with the MHM complex, between 1985 and 2013, land with 10?40% canopy cover decreased from 52% to 47% and the area with >40% canopy cover increased by 6%. In the buffer, land with 10?40% canopy cover decreased slightly from 31% in 1985 to 29% in 2013 and cropland remained relatively stable at 16.3% in 1985 and 17.8% in 2013. Population density was highest in the 10?15 km buffer where high density mixed cropland and high-density urban were most abundant. However, high density land-cover classes never exceeded 5% of total land cover. Cropland was greatest in the 5 km buffer immediately north of the PA where it ranged from 19% to 25% of land cover during the study period. Mixed cropland increased in the 15 km and 20 km buffers but generally remained stable. Expansion of farmland is therefore closely associated with vast deforestation, wetland degradation and loss of biodiversity. The biodiversity has steadily declined at the ecosystem level, where habitats, species assemblages, and natural processes have drastically diminished and degraded in quality, thus weakening the fabric of ecological processes and curtailing prospects of sustainable economic growth.

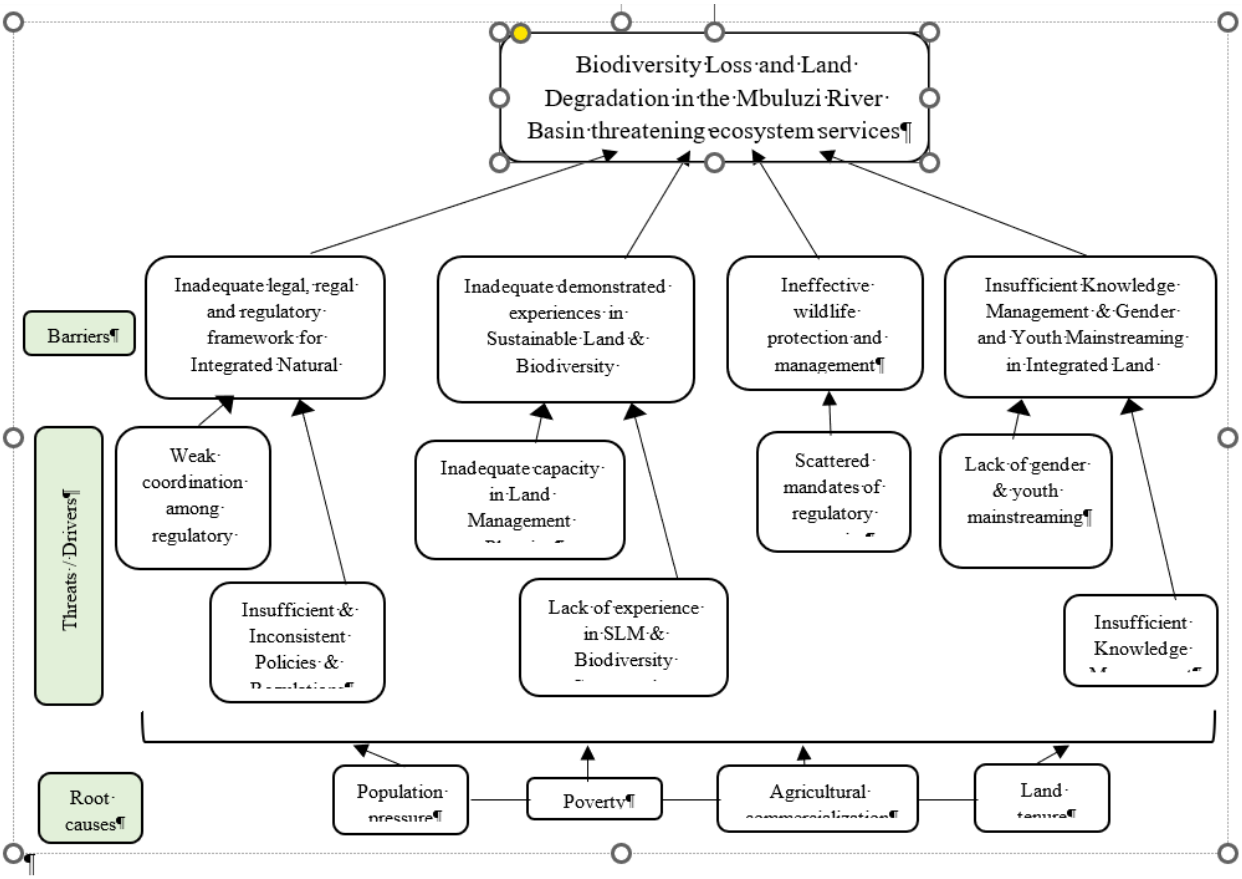
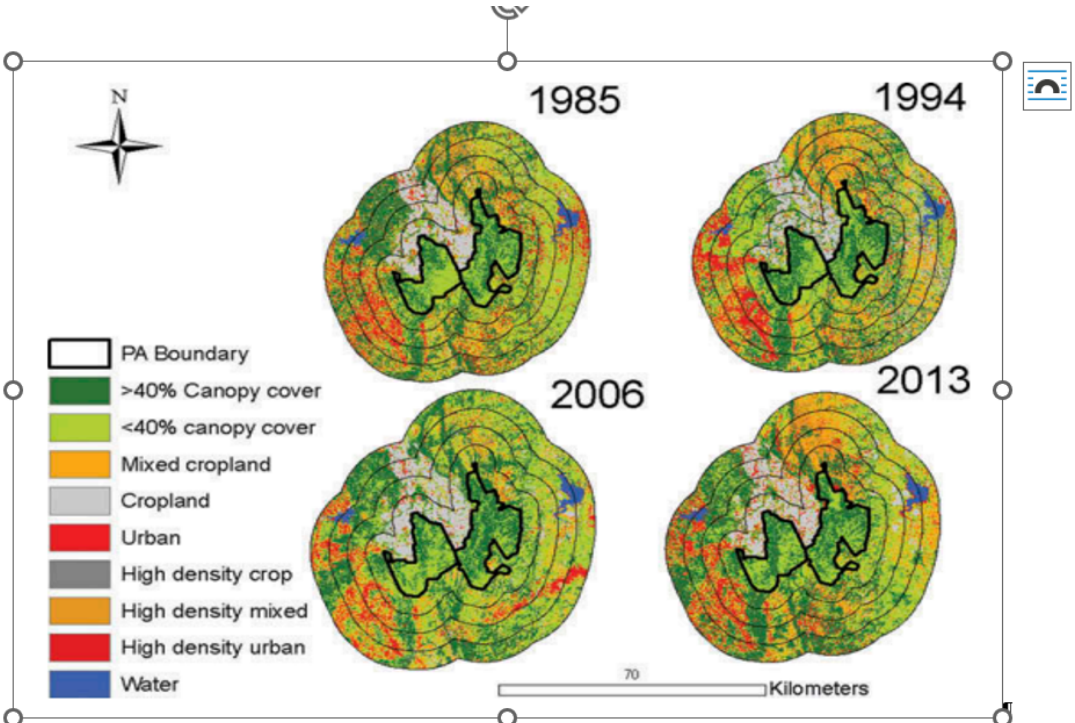


Figure 10. Problem tree for the causes of Biodiversity loss and land degradation in the Mbuluzi river basin

Temperatures in the Mbuluzi landscape are influenced by altitude. Higher altitude areas are much cooler than low altitude areas. Rainfall also varies with altitude, the Highveld receiving relatively more rain than the Lowveld. Like most parts of Eswatini, rainfall in the Mbuluzi landscape occurs in the summer season from October to March. The landscape experiences dry and cool spells from May to October. These climatic changes coupled with land use change causes various climate-related perturbations and hazards e.g., strong winds, lightning, soil erosion, crop pests and diseases, flooding, drought, and human diseases. Drought is also a major threat to sustainable land and biodiversity management in Mbuluzi landscape. Perceptions of drought, however, vary because reduction in rainfall may range from a few weeks to several years and its effects depend on the situation in a particular area. Therefore, in the Mbuluzi landscape, drought may be considered as only prolonged dry spells which are often associated with elevation, wind circulation and vegetation cover, given the influence these have on rainfall and temperature regimes. Prolonged dry spells with incipient rainfall thus result in water scarcity leading to water stress and unfavorable conditions for plant growth.

Habitat destruction is probably the most important factor leading to the decline and, ultimately, the extinction of animal and plant populations around the world. In Mbuluzi landscape, habitat destruction is exacerbated by agricultural development, especially, commercial agricultural development that has transformed many of Eswatini?s natural systems through resource use, monocultures and pollution. Additionally, invasive alien plant species are progressively invading arable areas and rangelands. This subsequently diminishes ecosystem services such as reducing agricultural productivity, degrades rangelands, and threatens human and livestock health.

Overstocking and overgrazing: The density of livestock, especially cattle, on Swazi Nation Land (SNL) in many communities is far higher than the carrying capacity of the land. As a result, severe overgrazing has occurred in these areas, leading to the loss of forest regeneration potential and grassland vegetation, thereby causing soil erosion and landslide problems.



Figure·11.·Land·cover·in·and·around·the·Mlawula–Hlane–Mbuluzi·complex·in·Eswatini·in·1985,·1994,·2006,·and·2013·(bailey,·et·al.·2015)¶

Hunting and Poaching: Illegal and uncontrolled hunting has resulted in the extermination of most of Eswatini's large mammals, especially on SNL. Many species of fauna and flora are used in traditional

medicine and are heavily exploited by the Tinyanga (traditional healers), but the effects of this exploitation have yet to be quantified. In addition, many species of vertebrates are killed for food and/or superstition. Crop and livestock depletion, and the expansion of cattle grazing area in the PAs and SNL, have also compelled hunting of the larger game animals.

1.1.1 Root causes of Land Degradation

Understanding the root causes of land and biodiversity degradation is critical to designing strategies to address the problem. Many socioeconomic and policy-related factors can be considered as being the root causes of land degradation in the Mbuluzi landscape, including population pressure; poverty; agricultural commercialization; privatization of the delivery of basic services, including technical assistance; land-tenure relationships; and general policy reforms.

- **Population pressure:** Population growth is one of the most important factors behind the increased land degradation in Mbuluzi landscape. The average annual rate of population growth in Eswatini is 3%. Population growth increases the pressure on arable land, resulting in land fragmentation. This also likely contributes to soil nutrient mining, as well as increasing erosion. Population growth leads to conversion of land to agricultural use and settlements. Ever increasing population growth is resulting in the rapid degradation of natural resources in a vicious cycle of declining availability of these hitherto free resources. With an expanding population, the area of land that can be protected is facing increasing threats from conversion. If action is not taken soon to formally protect protection-worthy areas, these areas will rapidly degrade, and the biodiversity resources and services will be lost.

- **Poverty:** This is a serious problem in the Mbuluzi landscape in particular and Eswatini in general, and is predominantly concentrated in rural areas. Poverty reduces farmers? ability to pay for investments in land improvement and accentuates the short-term perspective of farmers, which may limit their interest in making long-term investments in soil and water conservation. Moreover, with increasing poverty, farmers tend to grow all crops with a commercial orientation. This has great impacts on land management.

- **Agricultural commercialization:** In the Eswatini, sugar cane, cotton and citrus are the main cash crop that are grown for increased national income. But this has probably contributed to land degradation, because (1) exported plant nutrients through commercialization are not adequately replenished, and (2) farmers are less willing to invest in labor-intensive land management and conservation practices due to the costs involved. The inability of smallholder farmers to replenish soil nutrients is seriously inhibiting sustainable land management in the landscape. The high cost of inputs, particularly fertilizer, may be the most important reason for their limited use. Fertilizers would be profitable under high-input management practices, where complementary technologies, such as improved seeds, are used. However, use of a package of technologies is less feasible than the use of one component of a technological package for resource-poor farmers, given credit constraints. Women make significant contributions to the agricultural and rural economy in Eswatini and make up a significant proportion of smallholder farms. Yet despite this prominent role, they still have more

limited access to land, extension services, credit, technology and markets. This further limits opportunities for a transition to agricultural commercialization by women smallholder farmers.

- **Land tenure:** Land tenure security can influence land and biodiversity management, because it may affect farmers? incentive or ability to invest in land improvements. Farmers holding land under insecure tenure are less likely to invest in such long-term investments as building soil and water conservation structures and planting trees. Land tenure may also affect farmers? access to credit (affecting their ability to invest). As already noted above, the land use tenure system of the Kingdom of Eswatini is divided into three categories namely Swazi Nation Land (SNL), Tittle Deed and Crown land. SNL is land held by the chiefs in trust for the King and Tittle Deed Land is privately owned land and Crown Land is held by the King in trust for the Swazi Nation. In most cases the SNL is where communities undertake their activities communally while Title Deed Land is mostly owned by the private sector and private owner for specific purposes. The country?s land use is mainly small-scale subsistence crop agriculture, large scale commercial agriculture, extensive communal grazing, ranching, plantation forestry, parks: wildlife management, residential, industry, recreation and water reservoirs. Access and control over land and resources is engendered in Eswatini as only men can access Swazil Nation Land, which is done through paying allegiance to the chief. Despite the government?s recognition of the need for equitable participation by women, and the development of a gender policy aimed at addressing inequality, women are still largely disadvantaged by law and custom, under which they are largely unable to own land in their own right, which exacerbates the challenges associated with land tenure insecurity

1.1.2 Barriers to sustainable land and biodiversity management

The long-term solution is to facilitate a transformative shift from unsustainable to integrated sustainable land and forest management in the Mbuluzi River Basin in order to secure habitat for biodiversity conservation, to maintain a flow of multiple ecosystem services and to support rural development of livelihoods opportunities. This will be achieved through the application of innovative solutions to the threats and root cause of the following barriers:

- **Barrier 1: Inadequate legal, regulatory and institutional framework for Integrated Natural Resource Management:** The overall legal and policy framework for the management of natural resources in Eswatini suffers from insufficiently clear and consistent policies and regulations that are a barrier to the sustainable use of these resources. The financial and human resources earmarked for baseline programmes related to agriculture and forestry in the Mbuluzi River Basin are deployed and managed by sectoral departments/institutions in silos. There is a need to harmonize and coordinate efforts across sectors, and spearhead innovative ways and means of enhancing ecosystem functioning and resilience in an integrated and coordinated way that balances socio-economic and environmental objectives. Also, mandates for regulation of land and resource use are scattered among different authorities. Coordination among these regulatory authorities is weak. Decision-makers lack solid information on which to base decisions regarding land use allocation and management. Without a proper assessment, monitoring, and planning regime for the maintenance of ecosystem services,

managers and users have a difficult time effectively evaluating and integrating land degradation risks and threats to biodiversity with decision-making. The local authorities have inadequate capacity to generate, implement and enforce integrated land management plans. Thus, in practice, land use allocation and use typically does not consider the conservation values of forests and woodlands when assigning them to production purposes, nor does it incorporate the value of ecosystem goods and services that are delivered by intact natural areas. Land use planning also suffers from unclear divisions of responsibilities between relevant departments and poorly defined implementation and monitoring procedures and mechanisms at national, region, tinkhundla and Chiefdom levels. The technical capacities and orientation of land use planning staff also needs to be improved; many government officers responsible working with communities on land use planning need training to replace a culture of top-down planning with more participatory approaches.

- **Barrier 2: Inadequate demonstrated experiences in SLM approaches due to lack of capacity:** Eswatini does not have operational examples of integrated sustainable land management at a landscape scale. Moreover, the SNPAS implementation project using the landscape approach has resulted in the development of CDPs and improvement of in the capacity of local communities to benefit from ecotourism infrastructure, while also contributing to efforts to protect biodiversity. Without access to know-how, proven through demonstration, government decision-makers and resource users do not have the tools and knowledge necessary to decrease land degradation and safeguard biodiversity. There is a critical need to showcase innovative management practices and scale up approaches for the livelihood benefits that it will realize.

Forest/Woodland Conservation and Restoration: In order to maximize on the services provided by proper functioning ecosystems, these need to be identified and conserved. Areas where important services can be provided to the benefit of local communities and where these services have been compromised need to be identified and restoration processes started.
Rangeland management: There is a need to reduce carrying capacity of cattle in ecologically sensitive areas and promote other measures such as rotational grazing.
Arable land: Overproduction of land and continually reducing the nutrient content in the soil will lead to reduced productivity of land in the long-term resulting in financial and economic losses. Sustainable land management practices increase yield and are in most cases water efficient compared to other practices. Technologies are also available that can ensure similar or higher yields on the same land than conventional agriculture methods, with the use of less water and with no negative effects e.g. erosion. Such practices need to be demonstrated to farmers in order to ensure uptake.

- **Barrier 3: Ineffective wildlife protection and management to ensure protected areas on the ground:** Management of protected areas is focused mainly on tourism regulation and anti-poaching activities. The maintenance of intact ecosystems and restoration of degraded ecosystems are seen as secondary activities and only necessary if funds are available. There is a strong need to maintain and restore the integrity of ecosystems in the protected areas and maximize the land use it was allocated, while also integrating indigenous knowledge of both men and women. Women and men differ in how they interact with and use ecosystems, and therefore have unique knowledge to contribute to the management of protected areas. A critical constraint to effective wildlife protection in Eswatini is the very limited information that exists on biodiversity and the threats to biodiversity in the country. This information gap is compounded by and contributes to the absence of a landscape-level approach to protected areas including nature reserves and community conservancies and the lack of multi-sectoral

land and resource use planning, which together greatly reduces the effectiveness of existing efforts to manage wildlife and preserve ecosystem services including critical habitat areas and the corridors between them. Most of the protected areas in the Mbuluzi ecosystem need to have a protected areas Network strategy and action plan. Management of protected areas, and of the wildlife that resides within them, is further constrained by the lack of management plans and the insufficient technical capacities and resources of wildlife protection and PA staff. Most of the staff has inadequate training in PA management, wildlife conservation, community engagement and collaboration and development of sustainable resource use / livelihoods programs. At the management level, on the other hand, many posts remain unfilled and key capacities, for example in ecological monitoring, are very weak. The PA units and wildlife conservation staff targeted under this project also suffer from inadequate equipment and infrastructure: in general access to many areas of critical habitat is extremely difficult as there are few functioning vehicles; guard outposts are very poorly constructed; and field work and communications are greatly limited by a lack of radios, telephones, GPS units, binoculars, cameras, compasses, etc. Funding for wildlife protection and PA management is extremely limited and mostly allocated to salaries for rangers. Most of the biodiversity conservation funding in Eswatini over the past decade has come from the international donor community, but even the amount of these funds has been very limited. Finally, cooperation with the tourism sector on PA management and wildlife protection, as well as the generation of revenues / jobs for local communities, has been limited.

- **Barrier 4: Insufficient Knowledge and Lessons Learned on INRM and Mainstreaming of Youth and Gender in ILM relevant activities in Eswatini:** According to the Eswatini 6th National report to the CBD, the general level of understanding on sustainable utilization of ecosystems, biodiversity and resources is thought to be insufficient, even though environmental issues receive some coverage in the media and forms part of the agenda in certain fora. In order to ensure that the ILM practices that are tested and showcased in Eswatini is broadly taken up by the population of the country and all benefit equally from the provision of ecosystem services, it is necessary to mainstream youth and gender issues throughout the application and communication of results. This also applies to sensitize the population in general of the successes and value of ecosystems and practices applied to restore such services. There is also a need to learn from other countries in the region on how they apply the practices and share Eswatini?s experiences in regional fora. Eswatini should also apply new monitoring tools to track progress on its application of ILM. The 6th National report to the CBD recommends that there is a need to monitor the current level of awareness on biodiversity in the country and work towards increasing it to the desired level. It further recommends that, to raise awareness, initiatives and institutions that deal with public awareness on environmental issues need to be empowered and capacitated. Swaziland Environment Authority (SEA) developed the Swaziland Environment Action Plan (SEAP). The SEAP directed the formulation of the National EE Strategy in 2000 to guide the undertaking of Environmental Education (EE) activities in the country. The review of the 2000 National EE Strategy revealed a very low level of implementation of the Strategy by almost all the identified and designated stakeholders. The curricula of schools and tertiary institutions must therefore be enhanced to effectively include environmental issues. There are initiatives to enhance environmental education in school curricula that could be built upon, for example the Green Schools Initiative which introduces key sustainable development issues into teaching, such as, climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, poverty reduction, and sustainable consumption. In addition, there

should be clear unified messages at the highest governance level to instil behavioral change on issues of biodiversity and ecosystem services. There is dissonance between a number of traditional customs and statutory environmental laws, which makes it challenging to the control of some traditional practices that contribute to environmental degradation, such as household accumulation of livestock and overstocking of grazing areas. Bringing about behavioral change in these socio-cultural norms presents a barrier to SLM. Furthermore, gender inequality is still pervasive in the country, and they are exacerbated by strong patriarchal traditions, values and norms.

1.2 Baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects

1.2.1 Baseline scenario

It is now globally recognised that in order to have any impacts from food production and land restoration systems, it is important to promote sustainable integrated landscapes. This can go a long way to encourage transformation to more environmentally sustainable production practices and more resilient landscapes. As such, the main objective of this project is to promote ecosystem restoration for a productive Mbuluzi River landscape and effectively manage protected areas providing critical ecosystem goods and services. This is necessary because the Government of Eswatini urgently needs to meet the growing demand for agricultural products and address food security while conserving ecosystems that provide critical goods and services for rural livelihoods. However, unsustainable land management practices are prevalent in the Mbuluzi landscape, resulting in soil fertility decline, increased GHG emissions and reduced adaptation capacities at the local level. This is compounded by the absence of adequate institutional and governance systems leading to unsustainable land management practices. The major challenge is how to preserve the natural resource base that supports agriculture by having ecologically representative and viable landscape management practices. Moreover, there is a big knowledge and skills gap on the state of integrated landscape management approaches at the national and landscape levels. The above situation can be categorized into four major areas, which form the four components of intervention by this project.

Component 1: Strengthening Policy, Legislative and Institutional Frameworks for integrated natural

resources management in the Mbuluzi river catchment area:

Eswatini is currently implementing a National Development Strategy which aims to ensure that all programmes executed in the areas of agriculture, livestock, cooperatives and rural development are designed so that they achieve equitable roles and responsibilities among men, women, youth, as well as equitable access to benefits. This is pivoted in a national policy and legislative framework which is meant to enable effective land use planning and management, aligned with existing LDN Targets. However, some of these frameworks such as the Flora Protection Act of 2000 require updating, while others including the Tinkhundla Administration and Development Bill of 2015 and National Forest Bill 2016 as well as a legal framework for the management and control of alien invasive species are not yet enacted. Other frameworks such as the Integrated Natural Resources Strategy and Action Plan and National Forest Regulations can go a long way at reducing continued loss of environmental resources. Although Chiefdom Sustainable Development Plans exist, they do not specifically focus scale up the adoption of SLM and ecosystem restoration. In addition, the Tinkhundla Administration and Development Bill of 2015 acknowledges the need for Chiefdom Development Planning (CDP) framework. The CDP is a participatory land-use planning process involving the participation of households in a chiefdom and led by a multi-disciplinary team comprising a team of Land Use Planner, Irrigation Engineer, Soil Specialist and Social Geographer and Gender specialists. The team compiles an inventory of existing land use, land holdings and related issues; and identification of irrigation schemes, rain fed farming and livestock grazing areas, human settlements, rehabilitation sites and conservation areas. The CDP uses traditional

and modern development approaches to equip rural households with the capacity to plan for community development. However, there is a limitation on financial and staff capacity of the EEA to carryout timely inspections. There are currently budgetary constraints to mainstream CDPs escalation countrywide in the Ministry of Tinkhundla, Development and Administration.

Component 2: Ecosystem restoration through capacity strengthening for Promotion of sustainable land

management (SLM) practices:

Eswatini contains one of the largest remaining intact altitudinal gradients of natural ecosystems in Southern Africa and is the only place where this continuum is concentrated in relatively short distance (of about 200 km). Such an intact gradient holds great significance for biodiversity conservation because it allows ecological processes such as migration and gene flow and provides the opportunity for population shift as an adaptation to climate change. This considerable biodiversity is contained in four distinct ecosystems: namely montane grassland, savannah-woodland mosaic, forests and aquatic systems. Despite the global significance of its biodiversity, Eswatini?s Protected Area (PA) estate is comprised of very small and vulnerable PAs poorly distributed across ecosystems and formal PAs cover only 4.26% of the country. There is, therefore, a need to expand the PA estate, while strengthening PA management competencies. This in turn will require the participation of a broad range of stakeholders, including private landholders, local communities and the tourism industry to establish a new State PA, private and community managed reserves. A landscape approach is needed to strategically place these different PAs in proximity to one another and manage land in immediately adjacent areas to reduce threats to biodiversity and improve connectivity between PA sites.

Component 3. Effective management of 3 protected areas within the basin:

Under this component, a landscape protected Area network (PAN) Conservation Strategy for the Mbuluzi landscape will be developed and implemented. Therefore, Management frameworks and governance models for PAs including Management plans will be revised and aligned with the PAN developed and these revised Management frameworks and governance models will be implemented. The Capacity of PA Management staff will be supported and strengthened to implement actions of the PAN and also to implement and enforce provisions and obligations of Management frameworks and governance models that will have been developed/revised and aligned to the PAN. The PA staff will also be trained PA Management Effectiveness monitoring and they will be equipped with monitoring and tracking tools. In order to enhance maintenance of the ecological integrity of the targeted PAs, Protected Area Integrated fire management systems, that include participation of local communities, will be developed and implemented. Mbuluzi landscape is among the fire hotspots in the country and fires are a big threat to the wildlife protected areas therein. The current national efforts on fire management have been concentrated on forests. Therefore, this project will be a game changer in operations of the government by supporting it to expand its fire efforts from the forest estate to PAs. The fire target areas will also include communal lands around protected areas and hence reduce the land degradation therein. This means that efforts to reduce land degradation will be employed in PAs, communal lands and forestry and hence the government target of reducing land degradation in Mbuluzi landscape will be attained. Finally, the PA Management Effectiveness of the Mbuluzi landscape will be monitored and tracked and analyzed.

Component 4: Knowledge Management, Gender and Youth mainstreaming and M&E:

The 6th National report to the CBD recommends that there is a need to monitor the current level of awareness on biodiversity in the country and work towards increasing it to the desired level. It further recommends that, to raise awareness, initiatives and institutions that deal with public awareness on environmental issues need to be empowered and capacitated. In addition, the government of the Kingdom of Eswatini recognizes gender inequality as an impediment to sustainable national development and has

backed its constitutional guarantees of equality with a number of statutes, policies, and strategies. These include its 2004 ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (United Nations, 2012), its National Gender Policy (2010), and its 2018 Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Bill (Eswatini Action Group Against Abuse, 2018). The Government has recognized the need to ensure equitable and full participation of women and men at all levels of development. The National Gender Policy (2010) is aimed at redressing the inequities between women and men. It provides a guidelines and strategies for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the related constitutional provisions for equity. Despite these interventions, strong patriarchal traditions, values and norms continue to inhibit the empowerment of women and youth.

The momentum for large-scale restoration has never been stronger, as restoration is increasingly recognized as a key strategy to meet climate change and sustainable development goals. Eswatini can benefit from linking with and sharing global and continental initiatives, such as the African Forest Landscape Restoration initiative (AFR100), which was launched at COP21, the Bonn Challenge[1] and the *Land Degradation Neutrality* target working to accelerate sustainable landscape management. These highlight ?No One Can Go It Alone on Restoration?, reinforcing the links across these initiatives is essential to derive maximum value from the considerable technical, human and financial resources associated with each, while effectively supporting countries in meeting their environment and development objectives.

1.2.2 Associated baseline projects

Eswatini recognizes the challenges and costs of land degradation and biodiversity loss and is working towards improvement of environmental management, ecosystems restoration, water use efficiency, agricultural production enhancement across the country. The Eswatini National Annual Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis report assesses rangelands conditions (species, erosion, visible features, browsing potential). Apart from the Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation (LUSIP-GEF) Sustainable Land Management project which provides resources for the rangeland and livestock baseline data collection to assist in rehabilitation of rangelands, other associated institutions and baseline projects include:

The Department of Land Use Planning and Development under the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) develops land use plans and maps for government farms where it carries out (a) Soil surveys: to generate soil maps and accompanying reports that characterize the various soil types occurring in the survey area. (b) Generate land capability maps: to show different categories of land capability classes from prime arable land through marginal to non-arable land and (c) Develop land use plans: to cover resettlement plans, crops and forestry land suitability plans. Under this prosed project, this department will provide land us plans and maps for communal lands that the project will use to develop and implement chiefdom?s development plans. Without GEF intervention, the Department of Land Use Planning will continue producing land use plans for government farms only and yet the highest levels of land degradation exist in communal lands.

In 2002, Conservation Agriculture (CA) was introduced into Eswatini by the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) with support from FAO and the Cooperation of the Development of Emerging Countries (COSPE). It was piloted in two sites i.e. Shewula community in the north-east of the country and Kambhoke community in the south. Under this project, climate smart agriculture will be upscaled to all smallholder farms within Mbuluzi landscape. Without GEF intervention, this good technology for reducing land degradation will remain a preserve of the few areas. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) is implementing a farm input subsidy programme through the National Maize Corporation (NMC). This is meant to stimulate sustainable food production. The input subsidy has a requirement that farmers must produce soil fertility test results for them to get inputs, this has seen the good practice of soil sampling for soil fertility testing increase from lows of 3758 in 2013/14 to 23,872 in 2017/18 but only in Government and large private farms. Also, the Government and private farms promote the natural development of *Panicum maximum* (Guinea grass) in the Lowveld and in some farms

Eragrostis curvula (weeping love grass) planted for hay making. Under this GEF 7 proposed project, these initiatives will be scaled up to cover communal grazing lands and smallholder poor farmers.

The Forestry Department under the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs (MTEA) is currently doing a nationwide tree planting initiative expected to plant a million trees every year. The initiative is estimated at US$500,000 over 3 years for the whole country. The Department is also formulating an Alien Invasive Species Management Strategy which is mainly focusing in the Mbuluzi river basin since recently concluded mapping exercise highlighted the basin as a hotspot for *Chromoleana odorata* as one of the leading causes of land degradation in these areas. The Department of Forestry annual budget allocation for year 2016-17 stood at US$ 500,000. Only 23% of the costs are allocated to professional services such as forest protection and management, removal of alien plant species across the country. It is estimated that 10% (US$ 50,000) is invested in the Mbuluzi River Basin on an annual basis. Afforestation activities for soil conservation are carried out and the department of forestry provides subtropical and tropical trees grown from their nurseries. Co-financing from the Department of Forestry will contribute to both components 1 and 2 with a stronger attention on outputs 2.1.5 on Tree planting in degraded communal lands and along riverine and 2.1.6 on Capacity building of Community Forest Associations (CFAs). The GEF financing will support the forestry department in expanding and establishing community nurseries to all chiefdoms and lower levels in the basin and identify and train community members in nursery bed management. Without GEF intervention, tree nursery bed establishments will remain at the national and Tinkhundla levels only.

The Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development is Responsible for planning, implementing inclusive development; and mobilizing resources for effective service delivery at provincial and community level. Currently helping communities undertake their chiefdom development planning process within and outside the Mbuluzi catchment. The Ministry also has community development officers (5 within the catchment area) that assist with community initiatives. It invests and average of $330,000 per year. The Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development co-financing will contribute to output 1.1.4 on development and implementation of Chiefdom Sustainable Development Plans but will also contribute to component 4 because it is this same ministry that houses the gender and labor and social development affairs department of the kingdom. Under the GEF project, chiefdom development planning process will be technically supported to include land degradation interventions and technologies for all the chiefdoms in the Mbuluzi basin.

World Vision (WV), COSPE, PELUM and WaterAid are international NGOs working in Eswatini whose objective is to promote community livelihood programmes to relive pressure from reliance on natural resources. Projects and activities include land rehabilitation, donga reclamation, tree planting, community gardens, portable water supply and sanitation. For World Vision, a total of US$20.793 million in annual operating budget was received from donors and a fifth of this goes to Mbuluzi river basin. COSPE is currently implementing a 36-months trans-frontier project in the Lubombo Region of Eswatini and in the neighboring districts of Boane and Namaacha (Mozambique), aimed at supporting small farmers and their families to respond to disasters, and to build their own resilience towards climate change and its effects. From the project, COSPE has assisted local farmers within the basin to develop local adaptation plans, adopt local seeds produced and selected by farmers with a mixture of traditional knowledge and modern technologies, and build capacity for farmers, NGOs, local authorities, national institutions working in these communities. World Vision, COSPE, PELUM and WaterAid co-financing will contribute to component 2 on supporting farmers? on-farm training activities and food security and component 4 on youth and gender programmes and monitoring and documentation of best practices and lessons leant. The current coverage of WV is in a few Tinkhundla and chiefdoms. The communities around the Mbuluzi basin are also undertaking environmental initiatives under the food for work programme. Their activities include donga rehabilitation, tree planting and grazing land management which has environmental benefits. Of note is the Majotini community, the Dvokolwako communities and the Sihhoye community who have the food for work programme. They have invested about US$200,000 in 2019 and would continue to do so during the lifetime of this 8-year programme which ends in 2026 making a total of about USD 1.6 million. Their co-financing and participation will contribute to component 2 and 4.

The Food and Agricultural Organization?s Eswatini Programme supports the Eswatini government to achieve household food security, increased sustainable agricultural productivity through diversification and enhancement of commercial agricultural activities. Sustainable land Management is promoted in all the FAO projects, which offers leveraging opportunities for LDN. The total national investment is US$ 2 Million and about 30% (US$600,000) is invested in the upper Mbuluzi Basin in form of land management e.g. conservation agriculture, soil erosion control and farm inputs. NEPAD?CAADP Project ?Promotion of Sustainable Feed and Fodder Production and Utilization? worth USD 1.7 million is being implemented in Mbuluzi river basin by the Eswatini Meat Industries Limited, state owned company.

Eswatini National Trust Commission (ENTC), a public enterprise responsible for conservation of Eswatini?s Natural and Cultural heritage has three conservation areas within Mbuluzi river basin namely, Malolotja Nature Reserve, Mlawula nature reserve and Hawane (Ramsar site). The commission invests an average of $322,000 annually for staff salaries and maintenance work on park boundaries, routine patrols for these 3 PAs. The staff force comprises of 45 rangers, 1 law enforcement officer and 1 Park Warden. With the GEF funding, the staff will be trained and equipped with skills in effective management and monitoring of the protected areas. They will also be trained in effective fire management. Eswatini National Trust Commission (ENTC) co-financing will contribute to output 1.1.1 of component 1 and all outputs of component 3 on the protected areas.

The Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs is responsible for Promotion of environmental sustainability and climate change resilience, while conserving biodiversity to support livelihoods and economic beneficiation through tourism. The Ministry invests approximately US$ 230,000 annually on tourism promotion. Has staff members dedicated for the Hhohho region which houses the basin drawing approximately US$ 265,000 annually. The Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs co-financing will contribute to components 1 and 3 outcomes.

Mbuluzi Game Reserve is a privately owned reserve in Eswatini, within the Lubombo Conservancy, with an annual budget of about US$ 500,000, that supports community development and sustainable livelihood programmes in a few selected communities; which include promotion of conservation agriculture, supply of portable water, land rehabilitation, tree planting and encouraging sustainable use of natural resources to curb the challenge of poaching, unsustainable harvesting of natural resources. With GEF funding, this programme will be extended to all communities living around the 3 protected areas. Mbuluzi Game Reserve and the Lubombo Conservancy co-financing will contribute to components 3 on PA management and also will support communities living around these PAs. Work is in progress on the project ?Strengthening the National Protected Areas System (SNPAS) of Eswatini? which aims to strengthen the management effectiveness of existing PAs in addressing threats, while expanding the Protected Area (PA) estate to incorporate protection worthy areas that would have progressively been degraded as the pressures mount.

Veld and forest fires monitoring is done using MODIS data in GIS which is housed at the Eswatini National Trust Commission (ENTC). The MODIS data using a geographic information system (GIS) is used to monitor incidences of veld and forest fires in the country and is useful for planning purposes. The implementation of the fire management strategy has been effective in minimizing occurrences of fire incidences in the country. Among the good initiatives done are trainings of community fire-brigades where the trainees were given firefighting gears. Also, fire belts are built in boundaries and borderlines of forest plantation companies and some rangeland farms also do them. In the country?s regional fire hot spots, Fire Prevention Association were established to work in collaboration with fire protection service providers. Forest plantations have adopted cold burning for their terraces and fire belt when the Fire Danger Index (FDI) is below danger zone in the morning hours or cool evening hours. Mbuluzi landscape is among the fire hotspots in the country. The Ministry of Agriculture is continuing with maintaining and rehabilitating fire breaks in government farms and annually covering and maintains about 90 km (minimum) to 304 km (maximum) depending on machinery availability. Private ranches and forest plantations do maintain fire breaks which are also grass land biodiversity areas. Currently there is limited capacity in national wildlife protected areas to manage fires. Therefore, under this GEF project, this level of fire management by forest plantations will be extrapolated to national protected areas. The ministry

of agriculture and the department of forestry will provide training to the staff of protected areas in fire management.

The GEF5-funded project on Strengthening the National Protected Areas System of Eswatini (SNPAS) was a step in achieving this target. This project sought to strengthen the existing protected area network and improve the level of protection for biodiversity in reserves. It should be noted though that efforts are underway under the Lubombo Conservancy to establish an additional community conservation area in Mhlumeni. This GEF7 prosed project will add to these efforts by improving management effectiveness of three protected areas within the Mbuluzi river basin through landscape approach and by developing a protected area network strategy for the landscape. This landscape approach will bring together a broad range of stakeholders, including private landholders, local communities and the tourism industry to develop a protected area network strategy and implement it in a participatory manner private and community managed reserves. Without this approach, the current little conservation efforts will remain fragmented with no greater impact.

The Eswatini Government through the Komati Downstream Development Project (KDDP) and the Eswatini Water Development enterprise, is investing on projects to enhance run-off in the Mbuluzi basin, however, there is need for a holistic approach that introduces interventions in the entire catchment to address critical drivers of change in runoff including addressing land degradation, grass/plant cover and alien invasive plant species. The project will utilize the outcomes of the Adapting National and Transboundary water Resources Project to inform any interventions. This will ensure that interventions are resilience to climate change. Lessons learnt on the Lower Usuthu Sustainable Land Management Project under GEF 4, especially with regard to stakeholder engagement, women and youth engagement will be considered in the implementation of activities.

There are a range of other relevant GEF-financed biodiversity and climate change initiatives, that are recently completed, ongoing and in the planning pipe-line, which will be fully appraised and involved in this project to maximize synergies and avoid risk of duplication, namely:

? —The GEF-supported Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project (LUSIP-GEF/LUSLM) (2009-2015) project supported the development of Chiefdom Development Plans as vehicles for promoting sustainable land and resources management in the Usuthu River Basin.

? The recently closed SCCF project ?Adapting National and Transboundary Water Resources Management to Manage the Expected Climate Change Project? (2012-2016) sought to ensure that the management of Eswatini?s water resources was adapted to take into account the anticipated impacts of climate change. Using the principles of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), climate change risks were incorporated into a management approach to facilitate this process through a national dialogue between a wide range of stakeholders from different sectors. Information generated and lessons learned from pilot-scale adaptation measures funded by the project, assisted policy implementation for effective adaptation planning and climate risk management in the water sector. The present project will pursue recommendations made by the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, and build on lessons learned including the implementation of national transboundary strategy, which was developed to promote the effective management of the Mbuluzi Basin in order to meet the transboundary agreement with Mozambique.

? The UNDP GEF Strengthening National Protected Areas Systems Project (SNPAS) (2014-2020), which is about to undergo Terminal Evaluation?sought to develop, expand and efficiency manage Eswatini?s Protected Areas Network in order to protect globally significant biodiversity. The PA system was intended to increase from approximately 4% of the country?s total land area to 6%. The project is being implemented using the landscape approach across different sectors, integrating land and natural resource management to transform the current PA patchwork into an integrated connected network that conserves biodiversity, maintains ecosystems services and enhances vulnerability of communities? livelihoods especially those that are adjacent to the PAs, while taking climate change into consideration. The present project will build on the findings and recommendations of the Terminal Evaluation.

? The GEF-funded Smallholder Market-Led Project (SMLP) (2016-2022) targets reducing poverty and food insecurity of poor rural dwellers through investment supporting increased agricultural production and productivity and commercialization of smallholder agriculture. Production of commodities suitable both for household nutrition and market supply will be enhanced as will the

linkages between markets and producers, resulting in improved food security and incomes. The project targets economically active poor households and food deficit households in 37 chiefdoms located in within 12 Tinkhundla in the southeast of Eswatini. Project investments in systems for market linkage, land and water conservation and engagement of extension services have significance for national service delivery.

The proposed GEF project will leverage and build on these past and on-going interventions by adopting good practices, replicating successful approaches, drawing on existing expertise and integrating with existing Government-led coordination and project implementation arrangements.

Proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components

The project comes at an opportune time when Eswatini is in the process of domesticating the SDGs into its umbrella development frameworks and sectorial policies, under the leadership of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. The centrality of SDG 15 creates direct linkages between LDN and other SDGs in the areas of poverty, food security, water and sanitation, environmental protection, and sustainable use of natural resources. Implementing LDN therefore offers Eswatini a chance to realize her potential of creating multiple benefits that will make a direct contribution to achieving these and other SDGs. In this regard, the National Development Strategy offers an effective policy framework for LDN integration into the national development agenda in Eswatini.

The proposed project will promote the adoption and application of integrated sustainable land management and ecosystem restoration technologies to safeguard the integrity of key ecosystems in the Mbuluzi Catchment in Eswatini. It will focus on the interface between people and the ecosystems on which they depend for livelihoods. It will bring together all the people using land resources within the Mbuluzi River Basin to harness and manage their natural resources more sustainably for optimum benefits. The project will ensure that the sustainable management of ecosystem goods and services is fully integrated into national and local level development planning. It is expected to yield multi-developmental benefits to Eswatini?s Vision 2022 6th pillar: Agriculture and Environmental Sustainability. It will also build upon the strong commitment by the Government of Eswatini to promote productivity through improved biomes and productive ecosystems in the Mbuluzi catchment. The project is fully aligned with Eswatini?s National Voluntary Targets on Land Degradation Neutrality. The targets were defined during a LDN Target Setting Process, and seek to avoid, minimize and reverse land degradation; reduce current annual loss of forest to cropland; increase forest cover through afforestation and agroforestry programmes; increase land productivity in all the country?s four regions through SLM practices; increase the amount of land set aside for nature and wildlife conservation; rehabilitate degraded and abandoned land for crop production. This will be achieved through the following project components, outcomes and outputs:

The intervention logic for the project is premised on the understanding that resources will be deployed to implement the interventions (activities) to deliver outputs which in turn will lead to certain institutional and behavioral changes (outcomes) at the intermediate level provided that the assumptions (Table 3) and certain pre-conditions governing project implementation hold true. At the lowest level of the theory of change (Figure 12), necessary and sufficient interventions will be deployed to deliver outputs. The key assumptions underpinning this level of the theory of change is that there is political will for integrated landscape management, interest and commitment from the local communities. The next level of the theory of change, shows that outputs will lead directly to the delivery of the project outcomes, namely: (a) the Government of Eswatini adopts and starts enforcing an updated policy, institutional and legislative framework for SLM and ecosystem restoration (b) Reduced Land degradation through capacity strengthening for innovative SLM technologies in productive landscapes across 60,700 ha of the Mbuluzi River Basin (c) Capacity strengthening for Effective management of the three nature reserves of (Malolotja Nature Reserve, Mlawula nature reserve and Hawane Dam (Ramsar site) in the basin is undertaken d) Active participation of women and youth in biodiversity conservation and integrated land management will directly lead to an eco-resilient and highly productive Mbuluzi River landscape and effectively managed protected areas providing critical ecosystem goods and services (Project Objective).

The underpinning assumption here is that government is fully committed to the conservation and sustainable use of the Mbuluzi river basin. The outputs are deemed as sufficient and adequate to deliver the stated outcomes if the following assumptions are true: (i) Stakeholders are willing to cooperate in the project; (ii) Local communities are cooperative; (iii) Local scientists and other professionals are willing to partner with local communities; (iv) Information dissemination pathways are readily available for awareness creation. It is anticipated that delivery of the project objective will lead to the delivery of the anticipated project impact which is ?Food security and natural resource management are improved and contribute to rural livelihoods, national, regional and global environmental benefits?. In order to achieve the stated impact, factors/conditions (impact drivers) are necessary for the project to move from outcomes to delivery of impact: (i) target stakeholders exhibiting continuous commitment to integrated landscape management approaches; (ii) continuous engagement and ultimate ownership/buy-in of project activities by stakeholders; and (iii) project partnerships and personnel with key institutions/policy champions to drive political will necessary for policy change are stable.

Table 3: summary of key assumptions

S/n	Key assumptions	Remarks
1	Responsible government agencies have political will to support and promote integrated landscape management approaches	There is need for political support to drive Integrated Landscape Management in eSwatini
2	Land use plans, strategies, Production protocols, Capacity building plans and Market linkages are approved by the responsible institutions (government agencies, local governments, catchment committees, stakeholder forum management committees, etc.)	In absence of approved institutional frameworks, it will be difficult to advance Integrated Landscape Management approaches in eSwatini
3	Regulatory and institutional frameworks developed for strengthening governance and implementation of ILM are approved and acceptable to the national dispensation	Alignment to the ILM regulatory and institutional frameworks to the national policy and legal environment is critical to achieving the desired outcomes from the project
4	Staff with relevant skills and competencies in ILM approaches remain in office and available to offer their expertise	High turnover of staff will reverse and negatively impact on the capacity strengthening efforts for strengthening ILM approaches in eSwatini
5	Financial resources are available to implement ILM activities during the project period and beyond	Eswatini will find financial resources to continue with supporting ILM approaches beyond project life. Without funding, implementation of ILM approaches will stall and reverse back to the current baseline situation.
6	Mbuluzi landscape stakeholders will keep carrying out their functions/participating in ILM activities even after the project has ended	This is critical to ensure sustainability of project activities beyond the project period

7	Negative and unidentified consequences and outcomes will not affect any positive outcomes	In absence of any mitigating measure, the negative impacts will not adversely affect or reverse any positive outcomes
8	There exists an enabling environment for promotion of Integrated Landscape Management in the Mbuluzi landscape	This will facilitate replication of scaling up of ILM approaches in eSwatini and beyond

[1]The Bonn Challenge is a global effort to restore 150 million hectares of the world?s deforested and degraded land by 2020 and 350 million hectares by 2030. It is an implementation vehicle for national priorities such as water and food security and rural development while contributing to the achievement of international CC, BD and LD commitments. Underlying the Bonn Challenge is the forest landscape restoration approach, which aims to restore ecological integrity at the same time as improving human well-being through multifunctional landscapes.

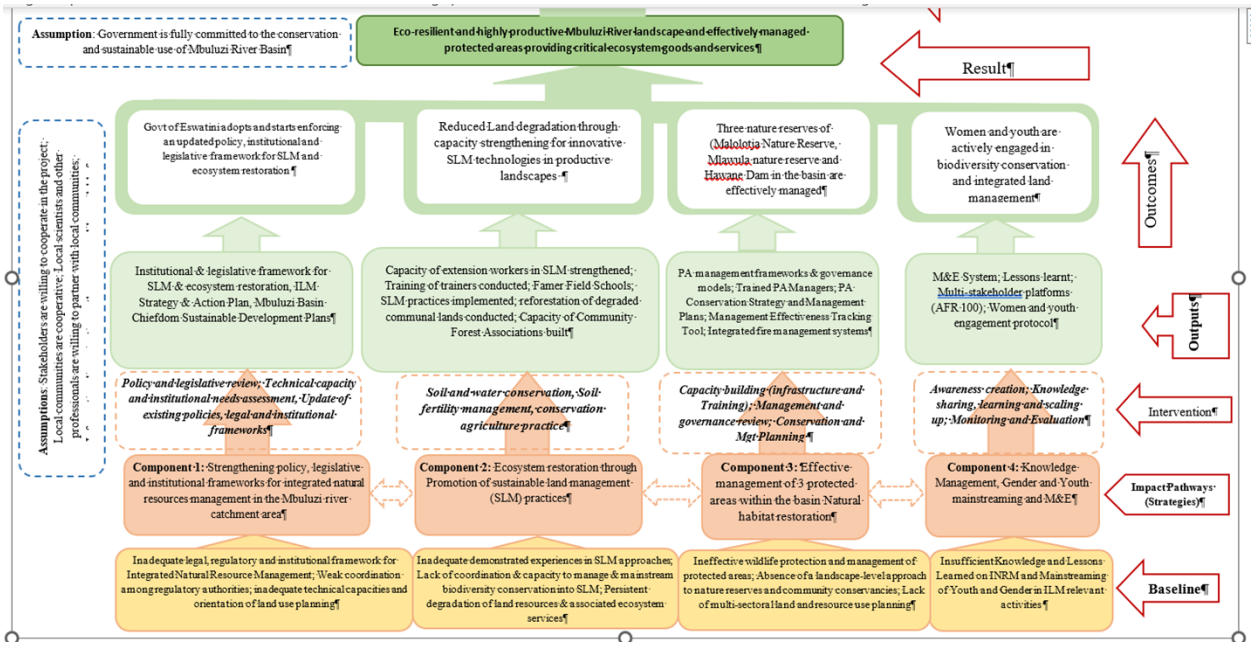


Figure 12: Theory of Change

Component 1: Strengthening Policy, Legislative and Institutional Frameworks for Integrated Natural Resources Management (INRM). Total Cost: USD 4,675,154 (GEF/TF: USD 454,000; Co-financing: USD 4,221,154).

Under this component, the project will result in the recruitment of a policy analysts and 3 SLM experts, specializing in Gender, Biodiversity or Ecology, Soil, and water conservation/engineering. The policy analyst will guide the stock taking, gap analysis and barrier analysis in Eswatini?s legal frameworks. These processes will produce recommendations on how to strengthen policy legislative and institutional frameworks (i.e., enabling frameworks), and will further result in the formulation and implementation of the Integrated Land Management Strategy and Action Plan for the Mbuluzi landscape. The analysis will ensure that Integrated Sustainable Land Management policies and frameworks are gender responsive. In addition, multistakeholder engagement using tools such as participatory rural appraisal (PRA) will provide knowledge environment and partnerships required for strengthening the legal frameworks. The 3 SLM experts will guide the development of the framework to align SLM projects in CDPs and demonstrate how SLM brings win-wins to communities. Regular field surveys will therefore be carried out to not only demonstrate the benefits of SLM but to identify degradation hotspots and to validate drivers of land degradation.

Outcome 1: The Government of Eswatini adopts and starts enforcing an updated, gender-inclusive

policy, institutional and legislative framework for SLM and ecosystem restoration

In this outcome, stock taking, gap analysis, policy enabling framework (or implementation plan) will be produced. Additionally, stakeholder mapping and multistakeholder engagement will be conducted to fast track the adoption and enforcement of the legal frameworks and the produced implementation plan.

Output 1.1: Institutional and legislative frameworks for SLM and ecosystem restoration in the Mbuluzi landscape revised, enacted, implemented and enforced and monitored to ascertain their effectiveness

Under this output, the National Policy and Legislative Framework Strengthened to Enable Effective Land-use planning and Management in the Mbuluzi basin, the national environment policy and legislative framework will be strengthened to enable effective land use planning and management, aligned with existing LDN Targets. Particular focus will be placed on the formulation of the comprehensive national environment policy, updating the Flora Protection Act of 2000, formulation of Integrated Natural Resources Strategy and Action Plan and the national forest regulations aimed at reducing continued loss of environmental resources. The project will support the development of Forest Management Regulations in support of the Forest Bill, which was developed in 2016 alongside a legal framework for the management and control of alien invasive species.

Activity 1.1.1: Identify institutional arrangements: A recruited policy analyst (recruited on the 4th project month) will be introduced to multistakeholders on the 5th project month through an inception workshop. This will be followed by a review of existing documents and stakeholders? consultation on the 6th project month. Consultations, assessments and situational analysis will entail stakeholder analysis, review key legal frameworks and policies on SLM, reports etc. These processes will yield stock taking reports, stakeholder engagement reports which will be validated on the 8th project month through multistakeholder meeting. The meeting will consist of men and women presented in equal terms, private companies, government departments, NGO?s.

Activity 1.1.2: Identify gaps and constraints in legislative frameworks: This activity will be done concurrently with activity 1.2.1 (identifying institutional arrangement) following the same timelines. The process will identify gaps in existing policy documents and regulatory frameworks with respect to their contribution to SLM practices and identify entry points for strengthening the frameworks. Outputs from this activity will be the stock taking reports, which will include gap and barrier analysis.

Activity 1.1.3: Integrate SLM into policies, planning and legislation: Following the identification of institutional arrangement, gaps and constraints in legislative frameworks, a framework to integrate SLM into policies, planning and legislation will be developed through a participatory approach on the 8th project month. An integration of SLM into policies is necessary because of land resource degradation driven by inappropriate land use, grazing practices, crop farming, over abstracting of water, invasive

alien plants, land tenure, education, pandemics, poverty, and climate change related effects. To guide the SLM integration, the project will update information on land use and vulnerability to climate change in the Mbuluzi River Basin to inform the land use participatory planning process in all the six project intervention sites of the basin and facilitate the mainstreaming of Integrated Sustainable Land Management practices.

Output 1.2: An Integrated Land Management Strategy and Action Plan for the Mbuluzi landscape developed in a participatory and gender responsive manner ~~and implemented~~.
Under this output, a National Sustainable Land Management Strategy and Action Plan for the Mbuluzi Basin will be developed. The strategy and action plan will be gender responsive to address men and women coping strategies, knowing that drivers of land degradation such as climate change will affect men and women differently. It is crucial to empower women to actively participate in their communities on SLM practices.

Activity 1.2.1: Develop an Integrated Land Management Strategy and Action Plan for the Mbuluzi landscape through participatory approach: Under this activity, key institutions that have direct and indirect interest to SLM will be identified through stakeholder mapping on the 8th project month. The process will be led by a consultant through multistakeholder engagement among other methodologies. This will consider many factors such as implementers of SLM activities and programs, funders and donors, government ministries and parastatals, NGOs, research institutions, communities, vulnerable and marginalized groups. Once the stakeholder mapping is completed, consultations will be carried out on the 9th project month mostly through workshops along with desktop reviews of existing national strategies and action plans. These will result to a draft of the Integrated Land Management Strategy and Action Plan which will be validated again through multistakeholder workshop on the 11th month to produce the final document on the same project month.

Output 1.3: SLM and ecosystem restoration mainstreamed into Chiefdom Sustainable Development Plans and implemented to scale up their adoption in the basin, using participatory approaches.
Under this output, Mbuluzi Basin Chiefdom Sustainable Development Plans Developed and Strengthened to scale up the adoption of SLM and ecosystem restoration using a participatory approach, the Mbuluzi Basin Chiefdom Sustainable Development Plans will be strengthened and implemented to scale up adoption of SLM and ecosystem restoration using participatory approaches. Tinkhundla Administration and Development Bill of 2015 acknowledges the need for Chiefdom Development Planning (CDP) framework. The CDP is a participatory land-use planning process involving the participation of households in a chiefdom and led by a multi-disciplinary team comprising a team of Land Use Planner, Irrigation Engineer, Soil Specialist and Social Geographer and Gender specialists. The team compiles an inventory of existing land use, land holdings and related issues; and identification of irrigation schemes, rain fed farming and livestock grazing areas, human settlements, rehabilitation sites and conservation areas. The CDP uses traditional and modern development approaches to equip rural households with the capacity to plan for community development. However, there is a limitation on financial and staff capacity of the EEA to carryout timely inspections. There are currently budgetary constraints to mainstream CDPs escalation countrywide in the Ministry of Tinkhundla, Development and Administration. Under this project, all the chiefdoms will be supported to develop CDPs with SLM and ecosystem restoration approaches and will be implemented.

Activity 1.3.1: Develop and finalize chiefdom development plans: Three SLM experts who will be recruited on the 11th project month will be introduced to stakeholders through an inception report on the 12th project month. They will then evaluate the number of communities with CDPs and review existing CDPs to check if they address SLM practices on the 13th month. The key deliverable under this activity will be the gap analysis report on CDPs on the same month.

Activity 1.3.2: Develop a framework to align SLM projects in chiefdom development plans: The review of existing CDPs will inform the framework to align SLM projects in CDPs. Multistakeholder consultations will be carried out on the 12th to 14th project month to ensure a comprehensive framework. The consultations will ensure the participation of vulnerable people, youth, women, and men. The draft

framework will be validated through a multistakeholder to produce the final framework on the 14th project month.

Activity 1.3.3: Demonstrate how SLM bring win-wins (e.g., contributing to climate change adaptation and mitigation): During the multistakeholder consultation for developing a framework to align SLM in CDPs on the 12th to 14th project month, demonstrations through infographics, knowledge sharing will be carried out. SLM will be shown how it contributes to climate change adaptation/building resilience and mitigation, reduces land degradation (erosion control, vegetation cover, restore soil organic matter), enhance agro-biodiversity (genetic resources, species) as well as economic benefits and livelihoods (yield, income, nutritional and food security, resilience, and reduced risk).

Component 2: Ecosystem restoration through capacity strengthening for Promotion of sustainable land management (SLM) practices. Total Cost: USD 20,038,519 (GEF/TF: USD 1,513,649; Co-financing: USD 18,524,870).

Using a landscape approach, this component will strategically develop measures to conserve, sustainably manage and restore land in the context of land use planning through the LDN approach involving a combination of actions that avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation. The component will build technical and operational capacity on SLM practices to existing extension officers from MoA, parastatals, agencies, private sector, and NGOs. On the same line, the project will recruit additional extension officers, trainers on SLM (specialists in crop production, livestock, or ranch management, ecology or biodiversity and soil and water conservation, trainer of trainees. The component will help local people better plan and manage their land resource based on the unit of chiefdoms through participatory approaches, farmer field schools, and established demonstration sites or farms for field demonstration. Activities under this component will further concentrate on raising SLM awareness, skill and SLM literacy on local people. Communities will be assisted to implements the elements of SLM plans to restore degraded areas and ecosystem functions. The application of the SLM practices will contribute to mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.

Outcome 2: Land degradation reduced by implementation of innovative SLM technologies in productive landscapes in the Mbuluzi River Basin–

The key deliverables under this outcome include technology development and transfer from MoA, parastatals, private companies, agencies and NGOs to sub-national level institutions and local communities, reports on the assessment of stakeholder capacity on SLM practices, farmer field schools and demonstration sites, 30,000 ha of landscape are under sustainable land management, 20,700 ha of degraded agricultural communal lands and riverine areas are restored through ILM and reforestation for biodiversity conservation. Under this outcome, activities are expected to sequestrate -5,469,132 metric tons of CO_2e. At least 3 community forest associations are able to and actively involved in the management and protection of the community forests under this outcome.

Output 2.1: Landscape-scale ecosystem and land use assessment conducted for Mbuluzi Basin
Under this output, the state of the environment ecosystems, ecological values, forests, and productive areas that merit rehabilitation and restoration through SLM and ecosystem restoration will be identified. The mapping will focus on the development of forest maps and wildlife maps etc. for the Mbuluzi basin which will be critical in informing future investments on these ecosystems. In addition, a landscape-scale ecosystem and land use assessment will be conducted specifically for the Mbuluzi Basin, identifying the state of the environment, and ecosystems, ecological values, forests, and productive areas that merit rehabilitation and restoration.

Activity 2.1.1: Identify degraded areas and initiate restoration and protection planning: Two SLM experts, specialists in Biodiversity or Ecology and Soil and Water Conservation/Engineering will be recruited to guide the identification of degraded areas on the 4th project month. The experts will apply advanced remote sensing tools, participatory approach and multistakeholder engagement including soil mapping to identify degraded areas in the six areas of implementation. An inception meeting with 100 stakeholders will follow on the 5th project month to introduce the project and to sensitize them on SLM practices. Stakeholders will include government ministries and parastatals, UN agencies, private companies, NGOs, community leaders, vulnerable groups, youth, women, and men in equal terms. As needed the consultants will consult with multistakeholders through a participatory rural approach to identify degraded areas while also assessing the drivers of land degradation from the 5th to 6th project month. Drivers of land degradation will include both direct (such as grazing practices, crop farming, over abstracting of water, invasive alien plants etc.) and indirect (including land tenure, inappropriate land use, education, pandemics, poverty etc.) Key deliverables will be stakeholder consultation reports, assessment of degradation including the drivers of land degradation reports and land use assessments.

Activity 2.1.2: Introduce land use planning in land degradation hotspots: Guided by the reports from the identification of degraded areas, the two recruited experts will apply their expert judgement in close collaboration with the Land Use Planning section of the Ministry of Agriculture to integrate the information they gathered with multistakeholder consultations, and indigenous knowledge from the affected communities on the 6th project month to produce land use plans. The land use plans will balance what can be obtained sustainably within the limits of the potential of the SLM project areas. The multistakeholder consultations will ensure that the aspirations of the people are considered. During the process of land use planning, the experts will identify and address the trade-offs between biodiversity conservation, agricultural productivity, and ecosystem restoration in order to make the land use plans more robust, and could reduce potential conflicts.

Activity 2.1.3: Initiate measures such as donga restoration, removal of Invasive Alien Plants: A handbook with proposed effective methods for dongas restoration and removal of invasive alien plans will be produced on the 7th project month. This will be produced through a participatory approach along with the introduction of land use planning in land degradation hotspots (Activity 1.1.2). Multistakeholders (NGOs, government departments (Land Use Planning section under the Ministry of Agriculture), parastatals, community members) will be involved in the rehabilitation of dongas where trees will be planted in degraded areas and gabions constructed. Invasive plants that are alien to Eswatini will be prioritized and the handbook will promote livelihoods such as utilizing the invasive alien plants for crafts and furniture among other beneficial uses.

Output 2.2: Capacity of agriculture extension workers in SLM and all staff in relevant ministries and departments strengthened

Under this output, the key deliverables include recruitment of extension officers and a 100% training of all agriculture extension officers including from MoA, parastatals, private companies, agencies, and NGOs on SLM practices.

Activity 2.2.1: Recruit extension officers: The key deliverable under this activity is technology development and technology transfer. Extension officers from relevant fields such as crops, livestock, and soils will be recruited on the 6th project month. This will be concurrent with the recruitment of trainers on SLM, specialist in crop production, livestock, soil and water conservation, and ecology.

Activity 2.2.2: Train extension workers: Expected from this activity are training reports and certificates of completion issued. Recruited and new extension officers will be trained through three training workshops on the 7th and 8th project months, after which certificates of completion will be issued.

Output 2.3: Training of trainers at local community levels including chiefdoms conducted

Under this activity the main deliverables are training reports and certificates of completion issued. Three trainers, specialists in agriculture education, soil conservation and gender will be recruited on the 6th project month. They will train trainers through a three-day training workshop on the 7th project month.

Activity 2.3.1: Recruit trainers: Three trainers, specialists in agriculture education, soil conservation and gender will be recruited on the 6th project month.

Activity 2.3.2: Train personnel on SLM: This training like all the trainings will produce training reports and certificates of completion issued. Three trainers, specialists in agriculture education, soil conservation and gender will be recruited on the 6th project month. They will train personnel through a three-day training workshop on the 7th project month.

Output 2.4: Famer Field Schools (FFS) and SLM demonstration sites established for farmer groups and farmer open field-days organized

In this output, the deliverables include a report on the assessment of stakeholder capacity on SLM practices, 3 active farmer field schools and SLM demonstration sites, and farmer field school progress reports.

Activity 2.4.1: Establish farmer field schools: Three consultations with communities will be carried out to ascertain their capacity on SLM practices, to discuss potential sites for farmer field schools and SLM demonstration farms/sites on the 8th project month. This will be followed by field visits to the proposed sites on the same month. By the 10th project month, there will be one active farmer field school and SLM demonstration site. Three farmer field schools will be active by the 12th month, and every month progress reports will be produced from the farmer field school activities until the 48th project month.

Output 2.5: SLM practices targeting maize and legumes for crops and livestock piloted in communities to improve soil fertility and reduce land degradation

In this output the key deliverables are SLM practices in communities and learning for sustainability reports. SLM practices will be tracked through the number hectares under SLM, communal land and riverine restored. Thirty thousand (30,000) ha of landscape across Mbuluzi will be under SLM while twenty thousand seven hundred (20,700) ha of degraded communal lands and riverine areas will be restored through ILM and reforestation, and -5,469,132 metric tons of CO?e sequestered.

Activity 2.5.1: Diversify crops to include leguminous crops: Crop diversification, being a continuous process will be carried from the 10th month of the project to the 48th month. Key deliverable is the SLM practices report which is expected to describe the legumes planted and their hectarage.

Activity 2.5.2: Improve water use by allocating usage: Water allocations will be introduced in farmer field schools on the 10th to 12th project month and implemented from then till the 48th project month.

Activity 2.5.3: Harvest water: In the introduction of water allocation on the 10th to 12th project month, water harvesting will be promoted and rainwater harvesting expected from the 10th project month onwards.

Output 2.6: Tree planting in degraded communal lands and along riverine areas promoted to reduce land degradation

In this output, the main deliverable is strengthened and enhanced biodiversity and ecosystems of the landscape through planting of trees in communities, with a focus on communal lands and riverine areas. It will involve consulting the CDPs of communities with such plans, and aligning the intervention with them. These plans will highlight the proposed approach for biodiversity protection and preservation, and likely, appropriate vegetation types, and areas allocated for CFs. Where there are no CDCs, an analysis will be undertaken to identify appropriate tree species suited for the respective community. It will lead to the engagement of traditional authorities on the proposed CFs and proposed tree planting process, with the intention to be granted permission to introduce the intervention, and especially to be assigned a committee or individuals to work with during the intervention process. The actual rehabilitation process will degraded target areas being planted with trees suited and appropriate for the area under rehabilitation. This will result in enhanced tree species distribution across the region, and especially improved communal lands and riverine areas.

Activity 2.6.1: Align with the CDPs and especially the intention to develop CFs and CFAs: Consultations will be done on participating communities to establish the existence of CDCs and CDPs. For communities with the CDPs already developed, these will be interrogated to establish what the stipulate on issues pertaining to biodiversity, and thus ensure that any rehabilitation work and tree planting aligns with the CDP. For communities without these plans, consultations and capacitation will be undertaken to traditional authorities and relevant community development structures to sensitise them on the importance of the rehabilitation of degraded lands and riverine areas, as well as for their buy-in and ownership of the initiative. This will be done between the 12th and 14th project months. Where consent and support is received from traditional and community development structures, this time and into the 15th month CFs and CFAs will be established.

Activity 2.6.2: Identify appropriate indigenous tree species to be planted in the community: For sustainable and enhanced biodiversity and ecosystem strengthening in participating communities, a geospatial approach will be adopted to establish the types of trees best suited for each target area. Geospatial datasets (e.g., physiographic zones, soil types, vegetation types, degradation type layers, etc.) will be sourced during the 4th project month. In addition, participating communities (e.g., CDCs) will be consulted between the 5th and 7th month of the project to input on the appropriate tree types and, where possible, best species types. Thereafter, an overlay of the geospatial datasets and local knowledge will be integrated using the GIS-based approach to identify appropriate species in the participating communities during the 10th project month.

Activity 2.6.3: Arrange with communities through CFAs and CDCs for planting of trees: With the initial consultation done on communities during the 5th project month, to understand institutional arrangement and existence of CDCs and CFAs, if any, an appropriate work plans for the planting of the trees will be developed by the 09th month of the project.

Activity 2.6.4: Undertake rehabilitation work and protect planted trees until they are established: The Department of Forestry under the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs (MTEA) will be consulted for guidance and support in the tree propagation and planting during the 09th month. For communities that will require indigenous trees, the Department will be the main source of such trees. As needed, through assigned community structures such as CDCs and//or CDPs, nurseries for trees in participating communities will be established between the 11th and 13th project months. In addition, some degraded areas being rehabilitated will require earth works using heavy machinery. This assistance will be sought from the Department of Land Use in the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), and will be targeted to be undertaken between the 11th and the 14th months of the project. Importantly, earth works will need to be done when rains will not hamper heavy machinery and the disturbed areas, and once tree planting and rehabilitation can be done immediately. Between the 11th and the 20th months of the project, the actual tree planting will be undertaken. For purposes of enhancing food security, as best as possible, planted trees will be mixed with fruit trees. Depending on the time of year the trees are planted, there may be need to support them through watering until they are rooted and established, especially in the drier parts of the country. In addition, some of the lands being rehabilitated will need to be fenced off to protect planted trees and earth works from livestock disturbance between the 15th and 20th month.

Activity 2.6.5: Continued preservation of the trees and established forest, with sustainable utilization by community through fencing and preservation: Sustainability will be key in this output, and this will be ensured through proactive planning and action. A maintenance plan for planted trees and forests post planting will need to be developed, and especially embraced by CDCs, CDFs and the traditional authorities in these communities. From the 11th month, when communities are being consulted and buy-in is being sought, the component of sustainability will need to be introduced. Ownership of the planted trees will be established with the traditional structures, which will ensure that the trees and abolished forests are preserved from the 11th project month until the end of the project.

Output 2.7: Capacity building of Community Forest Associations (CFAs) for community biodiversity conservation enhancement

In this output, the establishment of community forests (CFs) and community forests associations (CFAs) will be encouraged, and existing ones strengthened with the aim of enhancing and strengthening

biodiversity conservation within communities where most populations are found in the country, and most anthropogenic activities are leading to forest and biodiversity loss. Sensitization among traditional authorities and communities will be among key deliverables, with the hope that this will encourage commitment of lands for protection and the establishment of CFs.

Activity 2.7.1: Establish CFs and CFAs: Sensitization among communities without CFs and CFAs will be done, and especially focusing on the traditional authorities. The buy-in from traditional authorities will be needed to influence decision and community-wide commitment and ownership of the initiative. Communities will be assisted to establish CFs and CFAs, and through traditional authorities, areas to be used to establish the CFs will be committed, and arrangements for their management established.

Activity 2.7.2: Conduct capacity building and training of CFAs in communities: With CFs and CFAs established, the CFAs will be capacitated on how to strengthen biodiversity in CFs, while the community utilization of the resources remained controlled and sustained. Identified capacity and training needs will result in the training of the CFAs. The CFAs are to be capacitated to the point they are ambassadors for CFs, and are capable of assisting even other communities to establish more CFs.

Component 3: Effective management of protected areas**. Total Cost: USD 15,158,447 (GEF/TF: USD 1,277,099; Co-financing: USD 13,881,348).**

Under this component, a landscape protected Area network (PAN) Conservation Strategy for the Mbuluzi landscape will be developed and implemented. Therefore, Management frameworks and governance models for PAs including Management plans will be revised and aligned with the PAN developed and these revised Management frameworks and governance models will be implemented. The Capacity of PA Management staff will be supported and strengthened to implement actions of the PAN and also to implement and enforce provisions and obligations of Management frameworks and governance models that will have been developed/revised and aligned to the PAN. The PA staff will also be trained PA Management Effectiveness monitoring and they will be equipped with monitoring and tracking tools. In order to enhance maintenance of the ecological integrity of the targeted PAs, Protected Area Integrated fire management systems, that include participation of local communities, will be developed and implemented. Mbuluzi landscape is among the fire hotspots in the country and fires are a big threat to the wildlife protected areas therein. The current national efforts on fire management have been concentrated on forests. Therefore, this project will be a game changer in operations of the government by supporting it to expand its fire efforts from the forest estate to PAs. The fire target areas will also include communal lands around protected areas and hence reduce the land degradation therein. This means that efforts to reduce land degradation will be employed in PAs, communal lands and forestry and hence the government target of reducing land degradation in Mbuluzi landscape will be attained. Finally, the PA Management Effectiveness of the Mbuluzi landscape will be monitored and tracked and analyzed.

Outcome 3: Effective PA management and governance models for PAs implemented by government agencies and local stakeholders in selected locations–

This outcome aims to strengthen capacity for effective management across Malolotja Nature Reserve, Mlawula Nature Reserve and Hawane Dam protected areas within the Mbuluzi Catchment Basin. This will be achieved through the development and implementation of a conservation strategy for these protected areas through a protected area network (PAN), the revision and alignment with the PAN of existing management frameworks and governance models for PAs, including management plans. The revised and aligned plans, frameworks and governance models will then be implemented through the project, in partnership with the PAN, participating PAs and participating communities (especially communities neighboring PAs). This project work in the three protected areas (Malolotja Nature Reserve,

Mlawula Nature Reserve and Hawane Dam) will be closely linked with Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCA) which is under implementation by eSwatini together with Mozambique and South Africa. Through the TFCA concept, the project will contribute to improved quality of life of the Mbuluzi landscape sustainable use of natural resources, effective and efficient management and conservation of the specific protected areas and associated biodiversity. Furthermore, the outcome will strengthen the Protected Area Management (PAM) staff, and capacitate them to implement the PAN, enforce provisions and obligations of management frameworks and governance models on good governance systems. Integrated fire management systems for PAs, inclusive of participation local communities, will be developed and implemented to enhanced biodiversity and ecological infrastructure in the Mbuluzi landscape. The developed and implemented systems will need to be tracked and monitored to ascertain how well they are achieving the intended goals and targets through establishing a baseline for PAs, and then monitored going forward using an established monitoring system.

Output 3.1: A protected Area network (PAN) Conservation Strategy for the Mbuluzi landscape developed and implemented

In this output, the main deliverable is the development and successful implementation of a conservation strategy for the protected area network (PAN). This will be achieved through working closely with PAN, sensitizing them on the need for developing a conservation strategy, and especially its implementation upon its development through a stakeholders' inception report to be attended by 40 stakeholders, and led by a consultant. Initial focus and deliverable of the consultant will be a scoping and gap analysis of existing strategies, policies and plans within the basin and PAs in the basin which will be done through a series of consultative meetings with the three PAs and participating communities. This will then be followed by the drafting of the strategy by the consultant, in close consultation with the PAN, and the finalized draft shared with members of the PAN for feedback and further inputs. The last steps will be the validation of the strategy by a larger national stakeholder meeting of 60 participants, before each PAN member roles out specific activities associated with the implementation of the strategy.

Activity 3.1.1: Sensitize stakeholders on need for a conservation strategy: An initial PAN-wide meeting will be held with stakeholders to introduce the project and to sensitize them on the need for the strategy during the 5th month of the project. As per a need, follow-up meetings will be held with individual PAN members to further engage and sensitize them on the proposed strategy.

Activity 3.1.2: Conduct scoping and consultations for development of strategy: A rigorous scoping exercise and gap analysis will be undertaken during the 4th month of the project through a desktop review of existing development and management plans, strategies and policies, to output a report that details the status of the basin on strategy-related issues. The review will be followed by consultation of stakeholders and receipt of inputs on the proposed conservation strategy for the basin between the 5th and 7th project months.

Activity 3.1.3: Develop a draft strategy document: From the scoping and gap analysis report and the inputs of stakeholders, the proposed conservation strategy for the PAN will be drafted between the 8th and 12th months of the project. A consultant will be hired to lead the strategy development process, and the expert working closely with PAN during the strategy development. In drafting the strategy document, the project will utilize the lessons learnt from previous and ongoing TFCA projects in approaches such as community involvement and private sector participation which are critical in the success of conservation efforts.

Activity 3.1.4: Validate the draft strategy: The draft strategy will then be shared back to the PAN members for inputs and feedback during the 13th and 14th months. Then during the 15th project month, a national stakeholders? workshop will be held to validate the draft strategy document. Received comments and inputs will immediately be incorporated into the draft strategy, with the PMU and ENTC tasked with ensuring that the finalized document captures comments and inputs of stakeholders. Finalized strategy document will then be shared with PAN, and also made publicly available for the benefit of all national stakeholders, and especially other PAs outside of the Mbuluzi basin.

Activity 3.1.5: Implement the validated strategy: Work aimed at implementing the finalised and validated conservation strategy for the PAN will then begin from the 16th month, first with a stakeholder planning meeting that will focus on the implementation process. A series of exchanges and meetings with PAN members will also be held to develop an implementation programme during the 16th month of the project. The developed programme will assist PAN members to identify individual/specific activities to be undertaken towards implementing the strategy. Capacity building will be undertaken as well for any activity PAN members identify as areas where capacitation is needed from the 17th project month. Then between the 17th and 45th project months, PAN members will roll out and undertaking the identified activities, in line with the developed programme, all aimed at implementing the strategy across the whole network. Once implementation is underway, regular meetings will be held with PAN to reflect on progress and challenges faced in the implementation of the strategy, and continually forge a way forward, which will be done until the 48th project month.

Output 3.2: Management frameworks and governance models for PAs including Management plans revised, aligned with the PAN and implemented

In this output, a comprehensive review of existing management plans, frameworks and governance models for PAs in the Kingdom of Eswatini, and specifically within Mbuluzi catchment basin, will be produced. A review will be undertaken to establish and highlight gaps, areas of improvement and opportunities on the management and governance of the basin. In addition, effective management strategies and programmes will be identified in the process. The review will then be used to inform the revision of existing management plans, frameworks and governance models so that they are aligned with the developed PAN management strategy. Ultimately, the main deliverable for the output is the successful implementation of the revised and re-aligned management plans, frameworks and governance models to the PAN strategy. So, after the revision and re-alignment of the plans, frameworks and governance models, PAN members will be engaged, capacitated and supported as they undertake individual activities aimed at undertaking the implementation process.

Activity 3.2.1: Review existing management plans, frameworks and governance models for Pas: The review process will initially be a ddesktop-based review of existing management plans, frameworks and governance models for PAs globally, regionally, nationally, and in the basin during the 7th project month. The review will highlight gaps, opportunities, areas of improvement, and existing synergies PAN can ride on for effective management of PAs. During the 8th and 9th project months, consultations will be done with PAN members to further enhance the documentation of the identified gaps and opportunities.

Activity 3.2.2: Revise existing plans, frameworks and governance models to align with developed PAN: The review reports of the plans, frameworks and governance models that the consultant will develop, and inputs sourced from PAN will then be used in the revision process between the 10th and 14th project months. The consultant will lead this process, aided by the PMU and ENTC to undertake the review. The process will aim to ensure that revised management plans, frameworks and governance models for the PAs are in alignment with the PAN and making reference to best practices for the region and globally. Then during the 15th month, the revised and re-aligned PAs management plans, frameworks and governance models will be taken to stakeholders for validation through a consultative meeting. Received comments and inputs from stakeholders will be incorporated into the revised and re-aligned documents, to produce validated products by the 15th month.

Activity 3.2.4: Implement revised and realigned management plans, frameworks and governance models to the PAN: Thereafter, the PAN will be engaged through a consultative meeting of about 40 stakeholders to establish a comprehensive implementation plan and programme for the revised and aligned documents in the 16th month. Where need for capacity building is identified or requested by PAN members, capacitation will be undertaken in preparation for the implementation process during the 16th and 17th project months. From the 18th project month, PAN members will start undertaking individual activities specific to their PAs, aimed at the implementation of the revised and re-aligned management plans, frameworks and governance models, with the supervision and support of the PMU and ENTC until the 48th month.

Output 3.3: Capacity of Protected Area Management (PAM) staff strengthened to implement the PAN, enforce provisions and obligations of Management frameworks and governance models on good governance systems

In this output, the main deliverable is to build capacity of the protected area management (PAM) staff, through strengthening their expertise and exposure to the provisions of enforcement and obligations of the revised and realigned management frameworks and governance models. First, for enforcement provisions and obligations of management frameworks to be effective, the environment will need to be enabling. Therefore, a key deliverable of the output will be a review of institutional arrangements, policies and acts, and their roles in enabling enforcement. Identified gaps and hindrances in policies, acts and laws, and areas of improvement will be used to lobby for updates of some laws and policies to improve enforcement. Staff of the PAM will then be capacitated on the process of enforcing laws and obligations of the management frameworks.

Activity 3.3.1: Review institutional arrangements, policies and acts and their role in enabling enforcement: Under this output, the initial steps will be to undertake a desktop review of all institutions involved in the management of PAs in the basin, and documents (acts, policies and strategies, frameworks and governance models) used in protected areas, which will be done between the 4th and 10th project months. It will also be ensured that reviewed documents are the revised management plans, frameworks, and governance models PAN will be engaged in implementing, which will be undertaken during the 16th project month. By the 17th project month, the draft review report will be validated by stakeholders, and finalised during the 18th month. Where gaps, hindrances and challenges to enforcement are noted in policies and acts, lobbying for their reviews and updates. This will be done over the 11th month to the 45th month of the project.

Activity 3.3.2: Capacitate PAM staff and CFAs on enforcement: With a review having been done, and an understanding of enforcement opportunities, an analysis will be undertaken by a consultant who will be recruited nationally, to understand the limitations of staff and their training needs on enforcement and obligations during the 18th project month. By the 19th and 20th month, training material for the capacitation and training of PAM staff and CFAs will be developed by the consultant. Thereafter, PAM staff and CFAs training will be done over the 21st project month, and with follow-up trainings during the 25th and 40th project months.

Output 3.4: Gender responsive, Protected Area Integrated fire management systems, that include participation of local communities, developed and implemented for Biodiversity and ecological infrastructure enhancement in Mbuluzi landscape

Under this output, gender responsive integrated fire management systems will be developed for PAs. However, these systems will be inclusive of local communities, especially those neighboring the PAs. The main output is functional and implemented systems that will ensure that biodiversity and ecological infrastructure of the basin is preserved and enhanced. This will be achieved through a series of actions that include, consultation of all PAs and CFAs falling within the landscape for initial exchanges with regard for the need of gender responsive fire management systems. The initial meetings with PAs and CFAs will inform the development of a programme that integrates them, and institutions mandated with fire management in the Kingdom. Guided by the developed programme, gender responsive integrated fire management systems will be developed for the PAs, CFAs and neighboring communities, with inputs sourced from all stakeholders, especially local communities. To successfully implement these management systems, there will be a need for resources, thus the need for a resources mobilization exercise, as will be stipulated in the developed programme. Through the assistance of Eswatini Fire Services (EFS), National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) and ENTC, a training programme for communities and PAs will be developed, and these stakeholders trained and capacitated in fire management. For continuity, a key deliverable for this output is the gender responsive fire management handbook developed in both English and SiSwati through the leadership of EFS. Lastly, the developed gender responsive integrated fire management systems will need to be implanted across the landscape, with needed equipment sourced, and capacity in PAs, CFAs and neighboring communities.

Activity 3.4.1: Consult all PAs and CDCs/CFAs with CFs (for capacity building) falling within the landscape and develop a programme to guide the development of the management system: Building up

on revised and realigned management plans, frameworks, and governance models, introductory and planning meetings will be held between the PAs, communities and the institutions mandated with fire management during the 16th month of the project. Further consultative meetings will be held with the PAs, CDCs, CFAs and participating communities to solicit existing arrangements on fire management and needs for effective management during the 18th project month. A follow-up meeting will be held to receive input and to develop a programme for developing the gender responsive integrated fire management systems for the participating PAs and communities in the basin. The developed programme which will guide the development process of the fire management systems will be done in consultation with the institutions mandated with fire management (NDMA, EFS and ENTC), and will specify their roles in the development of the fire management systems between the 19th and the 21st month.

Activity 3.4.2: Draft gender responsive integrated fire management systems with inputs from local communities: Guided by the developed programme, NDMA, ENTC and EFS will take the lead in the development of the gender responsive integrated fire management systems from the 22nd month of the project. Inputs will be sourced from PAs and communities through consultative meetings, drawing from their past experiences in fire management. In addition, ad-hoc, but experienced fire management networks, especially from forest plantations and sugarcane plantations will be consulted for input on best practices and experiences in managing fires in the landscape and/or nationally, through the 26th month of the project. By the 27th month, the draft management systems documents will be validated by stakeholders through workshops, and inputs and corrections incorporated to each system for finalisation.

Activity 3.4.4: Conduct resources mobilization for the gender responsive integrated fire management system: With the appreciation of the cost associated with the implementation of the gender responsive integrated fire management systems across the PAs and neighboring communities that are sustainable, stakeholders will be engaged on the need for resources mobilisation for the development of the gender responsive fire management systems, and especially their implementation. The exercise will be undertaken, initially, during the 16th month, and into the 22nd month of the project. Participating stakeholders will be requested to commit resources in writing, towards the implementation of the systems. A landscape and national drive will also be undertaken under the leadership and guidance of ENTC to solicit funding and support from strategic partners and stakeholders, towards the development and implementation of the gender responsive fire management systems. Letters of commitment will be sought between the 22nd and 26th months of the project.

Activity 3.4.5: Establish training programme for communities and PAN, train PAN staff and communities and develop a handbook for management: From the 21st month of the project, a training programme for communities and PAN on integrated gender responsive fire management will be developed, with training material and content specific, where necessary, to each PA and/or community. Then training sessions will be held for PAN staff and participating communities on integrated fire management, led by EFS, NDMA and ENTC. An initial training meeting with all stakeholders will be held on the 23rd project month, followed by disaggregated trainings that are site specific, a process that will roll out from the 28th month until the 43rd project month. Taking from the trainings and further exposure to the management needs of each partner, a handbook on gender responsive fire management in the local context will be developed by EFS, NDMA and ENTC, between the 26th to the 29th month. The draft handbook will then be validated through stakeholders? consultative workshop during the 30th month. Upon correcting and finalising the handbook, the validated and finalised handbook will then be translated to the local language, SiSwati, for ease of usage even across rural communities during the 31st and 32nd months.

Activity 3.4.6: Implement the gender responsive integrated fire management systems: The next and key step will be the implementation of the gender responsive integrated fire management systems across the landscape. Under this activity, first, PAN and participating communities will be engaged, and planning done with each partner. This process will be done between the 17th and 22nd months of the project and will be guided by the developed programme for the implementation of the management systems. This will highlight individual activities to be undertaken by each PAN member and community towards implementing the integrated management systems. Thereafter, the implementation process will be undertaken across the landscape between the 22nd and 45th project months. The implementation process

will be integrated with a tracking tools assessment component to review progress made. Regular meetings by key institutions, PAN and participating communities will be held to reflect on progress and challenges faced in the implementation process of the gender responsive integrated fire management systems. These meetings will be held once every two months from the 22nd project month, until the end of the project.

Output 3.5: Management Effectiveness of Mbuluzi landscape PAs monitored and tracked
In this output, an assessment system of the effectiveness of the management of PAs in the basin will be established. The system will have the ability to monitor and track the effectiveness of interventions, and will be based on established tracking tools and systems. For continuity and the power of visualization, the system to be developed will be GIS-based, outputting spatial maps.

Activity 3.5.1: Map PAs and develop GIS-based monitoring system: A baseline inventory of all the PAs will developed through the sourcing of existing field data on PAs in the basin from ENTC. This data will then be integrated with GIS and remote sensing (spatial) data covering the PAs and participating communities in the basin to develop and complete the baseline. This will be done on the 6th month of the project. Using the baseline and GIS-based approaches, a robust and replicable monitoring system will be established for the PAs in the landscape by the 10th month, and the developed monitoring system used to the end, and especially beyond the life of the project.

Component 4: Knowledge Management, Gender and Youth mainstreaming: Total Cost: USD

847,731 (GEF/TF: USD 272,851; Co-financing: USD 574,880).

This component aims to transform the situation from the baseline?in which there is inadequate awareness and management of protected areas and high infestation rate of invasive alien plant species in protected areas to a situation where protected areas along the basin are well managed, invasive plant species controlled and the Swazi population understands and accesses opportunities to use SLM technologies and biodiversity conservation in the River Basins. The knowledge shared via project activities will raise awareness of the importance of effective management of protected areas and will harmonize relationships between communities and protected areas. It will also raise awareness on sustainable landscape restoration and management, which contributes to adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change, thus increasing the resilience of landscapes and subsistence livelihoods. The knowledge sharing approaches catalyzed and supported by the project?including South-South cooperation?are designed to ensure that the project benefits from lessons of past projects, programmes and research to avoid reinventing the wheel, and it will share results (locally, nationally and internationally) to enable others to benefit by scaling-up achievements post-project. As this project will be utilizing outcomes of two main projects: firstly the Adapting National and Transboundary Resources to the Impacts of Climate change which highlighted the need to address biodiversity loss and land degradation including control of invasive plant species and secondly the Lower Usuthu Sustainable Land Management Project that introduce similar activities in the Usuthu Basin which highlighted the need to introduce the same intervention for the Mbuluzi Basin.. Innovative methodologies will be used to track the country?s progress the project?s contribution of the country?s national targets including targets under the NBSAP and the LDN.

Outcome 4: Women and youth engagement strategy on biodiversity and land degradation developed

and implemented

There is a marked difference between women, men and youth in the use and governance of natural ecosystems, particularly in rural areas under customary land tenure systems. The patriarchal systems that characterize communities under traditional leadership results in decision-making that is largely

dominated by men. However women are typically the primary users of natural resources, and those often most affected by environmental degradation. Women therefore have a key role to play in management and decision-making. Land use management is weakened by the lack of participation by women and youth. The project therefore recognizes the need to build processes and strategies that evolve beyond token representation of women and youth in sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation, to being inclusive and equitable. The women and youth engagement strategy will therefore address gender balance by empowering women and youth to meaningfully participate in decision-making, implementation and benefit sharing at all levels.

Output 4.1: Systems established for monitoring progress and outcomes of the project
This output focusses on establishing and implementing an interactive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system to track implementation of the protected area management and SLM interventions, and the strategy for gender and youth mainstreaming, empowerment of women, and equitable sharing of benefits for purpose of up scaling. This M&E system will be applied to monitor the progress and effectiveness of the project, and inform adaptive management of interventions to maximize benefits and impact. The results of the M&E will inform lessons learned and best practices, which will be documented and disseminated to support information and knowledge generation to encourage up scaling at a landscape and national level, and to enable others to benefit (scaling-up achievements post-project). The interactive M&E system will incorporate a combination of technical and citizen science tools and techniques, and will be implemented by implementing agencies in conjunction with participation by project supported communities, local and traditional authorities (chiefdoms and tinkhundla) and NGOs, private sector and research institutes active in the area. Training will be provided to stakeholders to capacitate them to participate in the M&E. Women and youth will be actively engaged and encouraged to participate to ensure best practices and lessons learnt reflect perspectives of all stakeholders.

Activity 4.1.1: Design an interactive M&E system incorporating citizen science approaches and technical tools to track progress in the SLM and biodiversity conservation and livelihoods interventions by the project (component 1, 2 and 3) to inform adaptive management: Adaptive management is an approach to enhance the effectiveness of the project interventions and maximize benefits from the project by adapting project interventions through the life of the project as required. M&E is critical to informing adaptive management. The PMU will host a series of workshops with implementing agencies and with stakeholders from private sector, governance and administrative sectors (national and local), academic and research institutes, development partners NGOs and CSOs, as well as local level target communities, chiefdoms and tinkhundla) to participate in the development of an interactive M&E system. The M&E system will include a combination of technical and citizen science tools and techniques to track progress in the SLM and biodiversity conservation and livelihoods interventions by the project. The M&E system will include indicators and measures to collect both qualitative and quantitative information. Reports by the technical task team and implementing agency representatives will document the national stakeholder workshops to design interactive M&E system. The M&E system will be developed and documented with details on indicators, means and methods of their measurement to set up an interactive and participatory monitoring process. It will incorporate an evaluation and learning framework to inform adaptive management of project interventions. The participation of local project communities and stakeholders at local and landscape levels in the M&E system, through incorporating citizen science tools and techniques, is an important not only for monitoring but also for knowledge and information sharing to support the adoption and up scaling of project interventions (i.e. learning by doing). The final M&E framework will be developed, published and disseminated by the PMU in the first 9 months of the project and be ready for implementation before the end of year 1.

Activity 4.1.2: Identify and implement measures to monitor the effectiveness of gender and youth mainstreaming, empowerment of women, and equitable sharing of benefits from project interventions, for effectiveness and up-scaling of practices (disaggregated by gender and age): In order to assess the effectiveness of project (to inform adaptive management and up-scaling) in terms of gender and youth mainstreaming, empowerment of women, and equitable sharing of benefits from project interventions and improving human livelihoods of people in the area, it will be necessary to monitor a number of indicators and measures relating gender, youth, and sharing of benefits. This will include for example: (i) the number of women and youth in project decision-making positions at national, landscape and

community levels, (ii) type and extent of activities implemented to empower women to participate effectively in all aspects of the project, (iii) extent of participation and engagement by other vulnerable and marginalized groups in project activities, (iv) type and extent of benefits from the project derived by women, youth and men to inform the assessment of the equitability of benefit sharing. The PMU will engage with key stakeholders to secure input from technical experts at national level as well as women and youth at project communities, chiefdoms and tinkhundla levels on the development of these indicators and measures. These indicators will be incorporated into the overall interactive M&E framework developed for the project under activity 4.1.1.

Activity 4.1.3: Identify and implement measures to monitor the effectiveness of governance frameworks for effective implementation and up-scaling of integrated land management practices: In order to assess the effectiveness of governance frameworks for effective implementation and up-scaling of integrated land management practices, it will be necessary to develop a number of indicators and measures relating governance effectiveness for SLM and protected area management at local, tinkhundla, landscape and national levels. This includes governance by both traditional leaders and authorities as well as government agencies and the private sector. This M&E is critical to informing adaptive management if project interventions as well as for up scaling to other areas. The PMU will engage with key stakeholders to secure input on the development of indicators and measures that will be incorporated into the overall interactive M&E framework developed for the project under activity 4.1.1.

Activity 4.1.4: Develop training materials and capacitate a range of stakeholders and implement the M&E system at pilot sites including communities/chiefdoms stakeholders (livestock owners, crop producers; schools); private sector (forestry and sugarcane); protected areas (private and state); government departments (Water Affairs; Agriculture; Environment) and governance frameworks (chiefdoms, Tinkhundla and regional authorities): The PMU will recruit a task team of experts from implementing agencies and a range of partner organization and stakeholders (e.g. Eswatini National University) to develop the training material. The training material and capacity development methods and approaches will aim to capacitate the range of stakeholders who will participate in the interactive M&E system. The training will be based on social learning approaches (learning by doing) and the first round of training forms the initiation of the first round of M&E, which becomes the baseline for the project. The training material will be developed to include technical and citizen science tools and techniques and will reflect the multi-disciplinary dimensions of the M&E system (i.e. incorporating SLM, biodiversity management, governance frameworks, livelihoods, and gender and youth mainstreaming). The draft M&E system will be workshopped with a range of stakeholders to gain input and buy-in for the M&E system, and to ensure that the input of women and youth is effectively integrated into the M&E system. The interactive M&E system will be implemented by the implementing agencies in collaboration with project partners and stakeholders at local pilot sites, landscape and national levels from Month 12 of the project (i.e. to capture the results and outcomes from year 1), and six monthly for the rest of the duration of the project (to capture seasonal variations). The PMU will be responsible for coordinating implementation of the M&E system and for collecting the data and results from the monitoring undertaken by implementing agencies and partners at all levels.

Activity 4.1.5: Analyze M&E data and disseminate outcomes using a range of appropriate media and languages to raise public awareness and to inform adaptive management of project interventions, and incentivize up-scaling across the country at chiefdom, landscape and national levels: The M&E data will be analyzed and interpreted by the implementing agencies with support from specialists from a range of partners, stakeholders and agencies (e.g. University of Eswatini and other relevant academic and research institutes. The qualitative and quantitative data and information will be captured and analyzed using the appropriate software (e.g. GIS, SPSS, etc.). The outcomes from the analysis will be workshopped by the PMU, implementing agencies and key stakeholders to formulate the results and to prepare the reports for dissemination. This capture, analysis and dissemination of the M&E information will be repeated biannually (every 6 months) so that the results are shared before the next round of monitoring is initiated. Biannual workshops will be held by the Project Implementation Unit and the technical task team to identify adaptive management interventions based on M&E outcomes and to incorporate these into revised work plans accordingly. During the end line survey, the outcomes of the project will be compared

to the baseline established at the start of the project. The results of this survey will be made widely accessible through publication in appropriate outlets.

Output 4.2: Documentation, publication and dissemination of best practices and lessons learnt
Under this output, information for up scaling ILM and to guide adaptive management and learning collated will be documented and disseminated with active participation of key stakeholders and project partners. The results of the M&E undertaken under Output 4.1 will provide important information for the preparation of the lessons learnt and the best practices. Lessons learned from the project are shared at national and international levels including exchange visits hosted through south-south triangular cooperation. This output will ensure that best practices and lessons learned are collated, documented and disseminated at chiefdom, landscape and national levels to inform uptake of ILM practices in Eswatini and also to shares the project?s results to enable others to benefit (scaling-up achievements post-project).

Activity 4.2.1: Collate and document information from pilots at project supported communities, tinkhundla and protected areas on lessons learned and best practices for SLM and protected area management and disseminate at landscape and national levels using a range of media (video, printed, photo-journals, voice narratives; public/community meetings, acting groups) with active participation of key stakeholders to enable others to benefit (scaling-up achievements post-project): A communication and environmental awareness and education expert will be recruited within the first 6 months of the project to lead and oversee the collation and documentation of the information on lessons learned and best practice. The communication expert will prepare a communication strategy that will outline targets and milestones for the publication and dissemination of materials. This includes the production of a range of materials, using a range of media, in both English and siSwati to target a wide range of stakeholders at local community, regional and national level, as well as international level. This will include for example printed materials such as technical reports in formats suitable for dissemination, posters, and information brochures. It will also include television news and radio broadcasts, newspaper articles. Short videos documenting pilot site interventions and impacts will also be prepared annually for each of the pilot sites. Printed materials will be published and distributed in public places at local, regional and national level. Material will be published and disseminated on an ongoing basis based on biannual targets and milestones. Project impacts and results will also be presented at annual stakeholder workshops, including at local, regional and national levels to share the report of experiences, best practices and lessons learned that will be arranged and facilitated by the PMU in conjunction with implementing agencies. The communication and environmental awareness and education expert will prepare bi-annual reports on the number and type of materials published, and where and how they have been disseminated. This report will be supported with samples of these materials, synthesis, publication and dissemination of information on lessons and best practice. The communication expert will hold bi-annual review meetings with the PMU to present the report and to review the progress and effectiveness of the dissemination strategy to inform adaptive management and revision of the strategy.

The communication and environmental awareness and education expert will also be responsible for increasing the levels of environmental awareness education and awareness at schools by developing a programme focusing on SLM and biodiversity conservation. The programme will be developed in collaboration with the PMU and implementing agencies, and the communication and environmental awareness and education expert will roll-out the programme through a train the trainers (teachers) approach at target schools in the project target areas. The PIU will also present the programme to the Ministry of Education in support of encouraging wider uptake of the programme at schools across the country.

Activity 4.2.2: Actively engage women, men and youth in documenting the best practices and lessons learnt to ensure the impacts and benefits from SLM and protected area management are captured and reflect perspectives of all stakeholders including vulnerable and marginalized groups, and disseminate to enable others to benefit (scaling-up achievements post-project): Women play a unique role in the stewardship of land and natural resources and with their knowledge they can help to develop strategies to address ILM and protected area management. It is essential that lessons learnt and best practice reflect women?s and men?s different perspectives and knowledge. The inclusion and active participation of women and youth ensures that their valuable knowledge and skills are not excluded or misrepresented in

the preparation of the lessons learned and best practices. Integration of lessons and best practices that reflect equitable decision making, participation and benefit sharing will enable others to benefit equitably. Stakeholder workshops are designed and facilitated to ensure that women and youth are given opportunities to effectively express their perspectives and these are captured. The PMU will ensure equitable representation and participation of women and youth at biannual workshop with SLM stakeholders at local, regional and national levels to gain input into lessons learned and best practice, to ensure the perspectives of women and youth are adequately represented.

Activity 4.2.3: Arrange and participate in cross learning exchange visits project supported communities, tinkhundla and protected areas to enhance knowledge sharing and the upscaling of ILM: Experiences and lessons learned will be shared between stakeholders at pilot sites and across tinkhundla, between protected areas, and nationally through exchange visits arranged and facilitated by the PMU in collaboration with implementing agencies. These exchange visits will be held annually to encourage replication of shared best practices and lessons learned at landscape level and to inform uptake of ILM practices in Eswatini. The PMU will also arrange two international exchange visits (mid-term and end of project) through south-south triangular cooperation to share the project?s results to enable others to benefit across the region.

Output 4.3: Multi-stakeholder platforms are established at landscape level to champion ILM in line with the African Forestry Restoration Initiative (AFR100) Voluntary Guidelines

This output will establish landscape level multi-stakeholder platforms to champion ILM practices in the country and to ensure that lessons learned from the project are shared locally and nationally. The momentum for large-scale restoration has never been stronger, as restoration is increasingly recognized as a key strategy to meet climate change and sustainable development goals. Eswatini can benefit from linking with and sharing global and continental initiatives, such as the Hoedspruit Hub ? which is supported by GIZ SA Employment and Skills for Development in Africa (E4D) program, African Forest Landscape Restoration initiative (AFR100), which was launched at COP21, the Bonn Challenge and the *Land Degradation Neutrality* target working to accelerate sustainable landscape management. These highlight ?No One Can Go It Alone on Restoration?, reinforcing the links across these initiatives is essential to derive maximum value from the considerable technical, human and financial resources associated with each, while effectively supporting countries in meeting their environment and development objectives.

Activity 4.3.1: Recruit stakeholders from a range of sectors (public sector, civil society, private sector and academia) to establish landscape level multi-stakeholder platforms in accordance with the African Forest Restoration Initiative (AFR100) Voluntary Guidelines, to share knowledge, experience, resources, technologies, networks, etc. to champion ILM and protected area management across the country: Stakeholders from a range of sectors (public sector, civil society, private sector and academia) will be identified and recruited to establish at least two landscape level multi-stakeholder platforms. The establishment of these landscape level platforms will be led by the PMU and guided by AFR100 Voluntary Guidelines. The platforms to provide a vehicle for key stakeholders to network and, as a collective, to share knowledge, experience, resources, technologies, etc. to champion ILM and protected area management at landscape level in the country. This collective effort will significantly boost the adoption and upscaling of lessons learnt and best practice for ILM at a meaningful scale. The platforms will be formally constituted, and stakeholders will confirm their membership and commitment to the platforms in writing.

Activity 4.3.2: Appoint the national focal point to coordinate landscape level multi-stakeholder meetings and to represent Eswatini at Annual Regional AFR 100 Partner Meetings to present national restoration goals, targets and set the direction (south-south triangular cooperation): A national AFR 100 Focal Point will be recruited from one of the implementing entities. Their role is to facilitate and coordinate activities of the two landscape level multi-stakeholder platforms. This includes convening the bi-annual workshops beginning in Month 12, recording the minutes and outcomes of the workshops, and producing the proceedings that the platform members can use to guide their activities between the bi-annual platform workshops. The national focal point will also represent Eswatini annually at regional AFR 100 partner meetings to present national restoration goals, targets and set the direction. The focal point will in turn

feed back to the two landscape level platforms and the PMU on the direction, goals and targets proposed at a regional level to guide national level targets and goals. The national focal point will prepare and maintain monthly reports on activities and progress, which will be workshopped with the PMU on a quarterly basis to inform adaptive management by the project.

Activity 4.3.3: Convene workshops at least twice a year for the landscape level multi-stakeholder platform to review existing restoration initiatives, identify goals and support needs, set the objectives and targets for the year: The national focal point, with support from the PMU, convenes workshops for the two landscape level multi-stakeholder platforms least twice a year (starting from month 12). The purpose of these workshops is to review progress and effectiveness of existing restoration initiatives, identify goals and support needs, set the objectives and targets for the year, and develop consolidated annual work plans and progress reports, and to mobilize support from the broad range of in-country partners needed to realize Eswatini?s restoration targets. The PMU facilitates cross learning between the project and the landscape level platforms and between the two landscape level platforms themselves. Reports on the workshop proceedings and action plans, including commitments from stakeholders, for the following 6 months are prepared and circulated to the platform stakeholders, the PMU, and project implementing partners.

Output 4.4: Women and youth engagement protocol developed for adoption by the project

Restricted rights and limited access to resources limits the opportunities for women and youth to participate in decision-making and to equitably share in project benefits. This output will focus on development of the project?s youth and gender strategy which will identify youth and gender sensitive initiatives for the project and recommends effective measures to ensure that the youth and women effectively contribute to decision-making in the project at all levels, and to inform equitable benefit sharing. A women and youth engagement protocol will be adopted for the project. The implementation of the gender and youth strategy will be monitored and reported to inform adaptive management of project activities.

Activity 4.4.1: Develop project protocol and implement strategy to ensure effective participation and benefit sharing by women, youth as well as marginalized and vulnerable groups in project initiatives at all levels: A project level protocol on women and youth engagement will be developed to provide project level guidelines and rules for empowering women and youth to equitably participate in all levels of the project, including decision making, implementation and benefit sharing. A strategy will be prepared to inform the implementation of the protocols though project interventions and activities. Critically, women and youth, as well as other marginalized and vulnerable groups will be engaged in the development of the protocols and strategy to ensure that their perspectives and needs to effectively represented. The protocol and strategy will address empowerment at national, landscape, tinkhundla, chiefdom and project selected community levels. The protocols and strategy will be translated into siSwati and disseminated to implementing agencies and stakeholders at all levels.

Activity 4.4.2: Identify gender and youth sensitive mechanisms and initiatives using participatory approaches for the effective participation and benefit sharing by women, youth and other marginalized and vulnerable groups in the implementation pilot project initiatives at all levels: Cultural barriers and social norms can inhibit equitable participation in project activities. Gender and youth sensitive mechanisms and initiatives are needed to pro-actively overcome these barriers and constraints. The PMU will coordinate a multi-disciplinary task team to undertake a participatory assessment of opportunities to overcome these barriers and constraints and to empower effective participation by women and youth. This participatory assessment will involve workshops with women and you at project sites at community, tinkhundla and landscape and national levels. The outcomes of the assessment will be workshopped with project implementing agencies and key stakeholders to inform the identification of gender and youth sensitive mechanisms and initiatives that encourage and support effective participation and benefit sharing by women, youth and other marginalized and vulnerable groups in the implementation pilot project initiatives at all levels. These draft interventions and mechanisms will be workshopped with sample stakeholders at the project sites to assess their desirability and levels of support from women, youth and other marginalized groups. The outcomes of these workshops will inform revisions that may be required prior to implementation. The strategy for implementing these interventions and mechanisms

will be published and disseminated to the project implementing agents and stakeholders to share the knowledge and promote their pro-active adoption and uptake. Monitoring and evaluation will inform adaptive management of these interventions and mechanisms.

Activity 4.4.3: Build capacity of women and youth to ensure equitable representation and participation in the project decision-making structures and benefit sharing at all levels: Representation on decision making structures cannot assume to translate into effective participation in decision making. A lack of capacity can limit the ability of women and youth to participate effectively in project decision making structures and processes. The Technical task team undertake a training needs assessment at local, tinkhundla and national level to inform effective capacity building of women and youth to equitably participate in the project. The PMU will recruit representatives from implementing entities and key stakeholders (ensuring equitable representation of women and youth) onto a multi-disciplinary task team to develop training modules to empower women and youth to participate equitably in project decision making. These capacity building activities will be design and planned taking into consideration the constraints of women and youth. The training will be offered to interested stakeholders at pilot communities, chiefdoms, tinkhundla and nationally in the last quarter of year 1, with ongoing mentorship on a quarterly basis to address additional capacity requirements until the end of year two. Representation and level of participation by women and youth in project decision making will be monitored to identify of any additional capacity development is require to support equitable participation by women and youth. Records of the training material and capacity development workshops and events will be published and disseminated to support knowledge sharing and upscaling of the empowerment of women and youth.

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

Eswatini has completed the process of setting LDN Targets, through a participatory process that involved multiple stakeholders. In full alignment with the National Targets, the project seeks to halt and reverse land degradation and promote the adoption of SLM in the Mbuluzi River Basin. Investing in restoration of ecosystems and the establishment of sustainable agricultural production systems are all cost effective measures as they contribute to the reduction in costs of reversing the impacts of land degradation and biodiversity loss. Land degradation and habitat loss all result in extensive degradation of productive lands which could generate "environmental refugees" as communities move to find better lands. Such movements usually result in conflict which can be costly in terms of losses of human lives and productive resources and assets.

Scenario without GEF

Without GEF-support, emphasis would be on supporting agricultural development and smallholders? livelihoods, without an integrated landscape management approach, targeting improved ecosystem services as the underlying foundation for resource users? livelihoods. Beneficiaries would mainly derive local environmental benefits from local planning and co-management of natural resources, without

realizing global environmental benefits through integrated planning, policy and legal reforms and incorporation of community-led, district and national level natural resource management approaches. However, the GEF project will not have a strong focus on governance reform, but the focus will be on bottom-up work and coalition building and bringing about solutions and improvements at the local level, empowering communities and chiefdoms to address these issues. Where necessary, national level regulations and their changes will become part of the small sub-component on institutional work under component 1. Without GEF support, a global connection to best practices would be missing: globally used knowledge management on how to achieve the LDN targets and M&E tools for the land degradation would not be integrated into the national strategies and local stakeholders would not be knowledgeable about the underlying concepts and how to meaningfully contribute their own expertise in providing data to these tools.

Scenario with GEF

The GEF financing will facilitate the integration of initiatives on combating land degradation - extending integrated planning/management of natural resources to the landscape level - focusing on strategies and activities that generate benefits for the global environment contributing to the productive landscape and ensuring food security for the targeted beneficiaries and achievement of LDN. GEF resources will be used for connecting critical pieces of knowledge and innovation globally to local application through SLM coalitions including Multi-stakeholder platforms (AFR 100) to champion INRM practices in the country, while influencing the enabling policy, legal and institutional framework to integrate lessons learned around local engagement in landscape management approaches. Proposed investment will be designed to strongly contribute to the national LDN goals, target the ecosystem restoration of the basin and ensuring effective management of the 3 protected areas within the basin, while contributing to local resilience opportunities through improved food security and livelihoods diversification. The proposed alternative is based on a holistic and integrated landscapes and livelihoods approach with specific interventions. The high-level decision to adopt landscape management therefore presents tangible opportunities for the solutions to the landscape degradation problem to be devised at the most appropriate level and for the specific environmental degradation problems to be well-understood before solutions are crafted.

1.3 Global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)

The Global Environmental Benefits that will be generated from project implementation include the sustainable management of natural resources and critical habitats in an integrated manner providing development and environmental benefits. The implementation of the proposed project will have an immediate global environmental benefit through the rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands in the basin. The project is designed to support the country?s transformational agenda to achieve greater environmental and economic security. It will primarily support both government, NGOs and community-led efforts in sustainable land and biodiversity conservation and catalyze associated behavioural change within the Mbuluzi River basin landscape, while raising capacities to promote long-term climate resilient development and to achieve biodiversity co-benefits through applied and integrated SLM approaches. It will take a landscape management approach, informed by lessons learned on the interlinked challenges of poverty, ecosystem services, climate change, biodiversity, institutional performance, governance, and community-based engagement and management. GEF support will be fully be blended with government and NGO resources to fund locally driven planning and replicable, innovative actions, which will lead to the attainment of the following global environmental benefits:

a) The project will have impact over 83,376 hectares including:

? 700 ha of indigenous forests and woodlands of social and cultural significance restored through reforestation.

? 20,000 ha of degraded agricultural land restored through Integrated Land Management,

? 30,000 ha of agricultural land under Sustainable Land Management for improved maize and legume production systems

? 32,676 ha of terrestrial protected areas under improved management for conservation and sustainable use

(b) 100,000 beneficiaries (50% ? and 50% ?) are expected to benefit from project activities

The results of the proposed project will pave the way for similar improvements nation-wide leading to the achievement of LDN voluntary targets and improved flow of ecosystems goods and services. The project will contribute to the following National Voluntary LDN Targets: (i) Reduce current annual loss of forest to cropland of 9.1 km2 to 4 km2 by 2022 and achieve 0 km2 forest loss by 2030; (ii) Increase forest cover through Afforestation/Agroforestry in existing forest; areas of shrubs/grassland; croplands by 465,290 ha; (iii) Improve by 50% productivity and SOC stocks in cropland and grasslands by 2030 as compared to 2015; and (iv) Rehabilitate 115,000 ha of degraded and abandoned land for crop production by 2030.

More specifically, the project will lead to the development of chiefdom land use plans covering the basin. It will also lead to improved land management introducing and promoting the use of SLM and SFM practices. At least 100,000 people will benefit directly from the project. Among the beneficiaries, at least half will be women. The project will also assist the country in combating land degradation and moving towards LDN. A knowledge management system to widely disseminate the lessons arising from the pilot tests will be carried out. The project will also bring about the protection of valuable ecological resources such as arable land through the enforcement of land use plans, buffer zones, and riparian strips. This, in turn, will lead to the restoration and renewal of the natural habitats of a number of plant and animal species and valuable ecosystem services. In addition, land productivity, in various forms, will be enhanced. As a result, globally significant biodiversity will be conserved, valuable ecosystem services will be safeguarded and land under sustainable agricultural production will be increased.

The project will put in place measures to strengthen the enforcement of wildlife protection laws, with the main priority being the protection of globally significant and threatened species against poaching and illegal harvesting. This outcome of the project is expected to produce tangible conservation benefits for endemic plant and animal species which are critically endangered such as *Warburgia salutaris*, *Encephalartos striatus*, *Aloe albida*, *Protea comptonii* and *Gardenia thunbergia* that are under threat from poaching and overexploitation. The project will support Local communities to benefit from enhanced services provided by maintaining and enhancing the integrity of ecosystems. In addition, the project will support activities that will lead to improved management of a total of 34,500 ha of protected areas. Improved management of these protected areas will help to maintain globally significant biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services.

The project also will contribute to Eswatini?s achievement of the CBD 2020 Aichi Targets mainly through Target 12, as the project contributes to reducing the loss of known threatened species, and possibly preventing their extinction across the landscapes; and will also contribute to other Aichi targets as follows: Target 4, to the extent that the project will engage governments, business and various other stakeholders to manage biodiversity within safe ecological limits (e.g. through site management activities); Target 11, as the project will contribute to improving the management effectiveness of the PA system; and Targets 14 and 15, as the project support the enhancement of ecosystems? functions, structure and resilience, including in the face of climate change.

1.4 Innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up

1.4.1 Innovativeness

The multisectoral approach used in designing this project will facilitate the collation and use of the outcomes and recommendations from a plethora of GEF funded projects that have been implemented in Eswatini over the years to develop activities that enhance integrated management of common resources such as land and forests for purposes of advancing local development. The project is therefore innovative in that it breaks out of the "silo mode" that most development projects have been developed and implemented in over the years. This project will learn from the experiences of others who are already implementing the approach, mainstreaming the landscape approach into locally used systems of land use planning. It will also serve to build national capacity to implement Eswatini?s commitment to the Land Degradation Neutrality target of the UNCCD.

The proposed project is intended to build upon prior investments through the GEF. Community members in the Mbuluzi have been sensitized to the need and value of local action through initiatives such as the construction of sand and earth dams to improve availability of water, and these techniques will now be demonstrated though experiential hands-on learning. The project also includes training and capacity building of individual farmers and representatives of institutions charged with planning and implementation of water and biodiversity management at the Basin level. This approach will ensure that actions taken under this project will be developed with the full participation of beneficiary communities sustained beyond its lifespan. The proposed documentation and dissemination of the results from project implementation is expected to facilitate scaling up of the project to other larger River Basins in Eswatini. It will also inform activities in neighboring Mozambique, which forms part of the Mbuluzi river system.

The project will provide a platform for strengthening coordination towards LDN and biodiversity conservation. In the face of growing challenges, there will be a growing need for awareness on the importance and value of biodiversity conservation and environmental protection, particularly among local communities who are the custodians as well as consumers of wildlife products. Increasing greater participation of local communities in conservation purposes will be useful to maintain the integrity of land, conserving biodiversity and achieving LDN in the future. Innovation through use of audio-visual, social media and interactive materials on conservation issues for education, awareness and advocacy will be developed, involving community-based organizations and building their capacities to reach out to the communities.

1.4.2 Sustainability

As the project builds a strong enabling environment taking into account the needs of the government sector and focusing on building their capacities for long term effective management, the actions proposed are expected to be sustainable. The project will work closely and in full partnership with central and local governments and local communities and the parastatals, which will be reinforced and strengthened engagement with local farmers? cooperatives in terms of training for new approaches and managing competing land uses. This will create a better climate for sustainability. The project will also work with the private sector and local NGOs and civil society organizations at landscape and local levels to establish networks for ILM and protected area management. These partnerships and networks will enhance long terms sustainability both in terms environmental sustainability and resourcing (human and financial). Furthermore, the project incorporates extensive awareness raining through the dissemination of information and knowledge sharing, and training and capacity development at local, landscape and national levels. Lessons learned and best practices will be widely published and disseminated to support sustainability and upscaling of interventions and impacts. These are key to social sustainability. Additionally, the project incorporates a number of livelihood interventions, by facilitating pilot activities targeting local communities for sustainable land management and restoration activities. Gender and youth mainstreaming and central to all activities. A gender analysis has been undertaken during the project?s design and this will guide the development of gender and youth protocols and strategy development during the inception phase to ensure women and youth are meaningfully included in decision making, implementation and benefit sharing at all levels. Furthermore the rights and needs of other vulnerable and marginalized groups are also considered and incorporate into the project approach. Sustainability is also addressed through updating and enforcing policy, institutional and legislative framework for SLM and ecosystem restoration. Strengthening the governance capabilities at national, tinkhundla and chiefdom levels will maximize the institutionalization of ILM.

1.4.3 Replication

The project approach is to develop the enabling environment and then test/demonstrate the resulting elements in pilot project situations. The SLM Pilot project sites will be selected based on numerous factors including significant tree cover loss, socio-economic, bio-physical and major agro-ecological zones. The pilot sites will be tried in various centers to understand the successes and challenges in implementing SLM measures. In order to be impactful, LDN will be mainstreamed in development sectors resulting in investments in SLM/SFM by private sector developers like Teak Timbers, to prevent further land degradation. Lessons learnt and experiences will be shared in order to reduce the cycle from innovation to replication. In order to do so, component 3, will ensure the dissemination for replication and scaling up of results, innovative approaches and achievements. These mechanisms will provide the means for scaling-up and replicating best practices for rehabilitation of degraded land, the prevention of further degradation and achievement of land degradation neutrality. Publication and dissemination of lessons and best practice will also aim to enhance replication, and will target other government and non-government agencies/institutions at national, landscape, tinkhundla and chiefdom levels. Dissemination will also target private sector, civil society and non-government organizations. The implementing agencies will establish partnerships with other stakeholder organizations where appropriate. This will include activities such as interactive M&E, workshops, pilot site restoration activities, and surveys. This participatory and interactive approach will encourage and enhance replication and upscaling of project interventions beyond project target sites.

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1b. Project Map and Coordinates

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

The map below is for areas of project implementation in the Mbuluzi river basin.

Figure 14. Areas of the project implementation in the Mbuluzi river basin

The coordinates of each specific site of project implementation are indicated below

Please refer to the following figures in the attached CEO endorsement for all the maps with their coordinates including the actual sites.

Figure 15. Msengeni area (latitude -26.018745? and longitude 32.028895?) under Lomahasha inkhundla.

Figure 16.Sifundza area (latitude -26.055561? and longitude 32.038918?) under Lomahasha inkhundla.

Figure 17. Mliba area (latitude -26.201003? and longitude 31.589460?) under Mkhiweni inkhundla.

Figure 18.Mbelebeleni area (latitude -26.277368? and longitude 31.456129?) under Mkhiweni inkhundla.

Figure 19.Epulazini area (latitude -26.232642? and longitude 31.093152?) under Motshane inkundla.

Figure 20.Hawane area (latitude -26.195898? and longitude 31.103484?) under Motshane inkhundla.

1c. Child Project?

If this is a child project under a program, describe how the components contribute to the overall program impact.

N/A

2. Stakeholders

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

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Yes

Private Sector Entities Yes

If none of the above, please explain why:

The project stakeholders include a range of civil society organizations (CSOs) and civil society broadly. CSOs are strategic as partners in implementation, as potential providers of technical and financial support. They are also strategic as they have the potential to provide independent monitoring and observation of project activities, which can add credibility and validation that is important in securing support from broader civil society. Their participation supports transparency in governance, and checks on accountability. The participation of CSOs can also play an important role by facilitating and promoting mutually beneficial linkages between local communities, civil society, and government agencies for integrated land management and biodiversity conservation. CSOs will be strategic partners to project implementation at a local level in particular. They are often embedded at local level (planning, financing and implementing sustainable land management activities (e.g. conservation agriculture, climate smart agriculture, etc.)), and they therefore have the potential to act as agents for and voices of local communities, to facilitate participation in the implementation and sharing of benefits from integrated landscape management. They also provide ?citizen science? input data on ILM.

The project will proceed more smoothly with approval and support from civil society, which includes rural communities (including women, youth, vulnerable and marginalized people or groups), private landowners, and even the general public broadly. Participation by civil society and CSOs therefore aims to: 1). Increase awareness, understanding and visibility of the Mbuluzi basin ILM and Protected areas management project, and 2). Generate support from and strengthen collaboration by civil society and CSOs. This participation by civil society involves a combination of information sharing, consultation, and collaboration and empowerment actions and processes: a) Information sharing: i) Magazine or news articles and press releases, ii) Background information material, iii) Exhibits or displays, iv) Websites and v) Radio or talk shows; b) Consultation: i) Public meetings and briefings, ii) Open days/open house, iii) Surveys, questionnaires and polls, and iv) Participatory rural appraisal (PRA)/participatory learning and action (PLA); c) Collaboration and Empowerment through workshops, focus groups or key stakeholder meetings. Participation by CSOs and civil society will evolve during the course of the project and the processes therefore needs to be adaptable and frequently reviewed and monitored to inform revision as needed.

Please provide the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent assessment.

The purpose of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is to establish a systematic approach to stakeholder engagement that will help the project to identify stakeholders, and build and maintain a constructive relationship with them, in particular project-affected stakeholders. The SEP also aims to promote and provide means for effective and inclusive engagement with interested and affected stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle on issues that could potentially affect them, or that they could influence. The SEP also provides stakeholders with means to raise issues and grievances, so that these may be addressed by the project. Effective collaboration between the project and local communities at pilot sites is critical to the success of the project, and the participation of local stakeholders is important in ensuring the maximization of benefits and the minimization and mitigation of environmental and social risks.

The success of the project will depend on: a) broad awareness, as well as knowledge and understanding about the goals and objectives of the project and its alignment with the Convention on Biodiversity, UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals and the national NDP, b) sound partnerships with key stakeholders and trust and collaboration for long term and post-project SLM and ecosystem restoration in the country, c) engagement of multi-stakeholder platforms towards enhancing the achievement of the project goals and objectives, as well as up-scaling interventions nationally, and d) awareness among stakeholders about opportunities for them to participate in the project. Therefore, the fundamental principles that will be applied are inclusivity and informed participation. These principles will be addressed through a range of engagement processes and tools including workshops, and disseminating information via website and media, and information brochures. These tools will accommodate a two-way engagement process that facilitates the participation of stakeholders in decision making processes, and creates opportunities for the stakeholders to raise concerns or share opinions (incorporating gender sensitivities and participation by youth and other vulnerable or marginalized groups). In so doing, effective dialogue and collaboration will be created between the project and stakeholders. One of the critical issues will be to take gender sensitivities into consideration in support of gender equity and the promotion of participation by women, youth and other marginalized and vulnerable groups in decision making and implementation of project activities.

The stakeholder engagement process will incorporate a combination of approaches, including: a) Information sharing through advertisements, news articles and press releases, background information material, exhibits or displays, technical reports, posting information on websites, field trips and radio or talk shows; b) Consultation through public meetings and briefings, open days/open house, field offices or information centers, surveys, questionnaires and polls, participatory rural appraisal (PRA)/participatory learning and action (PLA); c) Collaboration and Empowerment through workshops, focus groups or key stakeholder meetings, advisory panels and committees, interactive workshops aimed at building an active partnership between the project and stakeholders in the implementation of the project including open and frequent dialogue between stakeholders to identify and address critical issues of common concern and interest. The project will therefore extend stakeholder engagement to include stakeholder participation, which will involve exploring driver-like roles for target stakeholder groups. These approaches will be co-designed and developed together with stakeholders during the inception phase of the project as the detailed roles and responsibilities are clarified and implemented.

Special attention will also be given to exploring opportunities for collaboration and establishing partnerships with NGOs and Development Partners that have active programmes at the local level addressing aspects relevant to sustainable land management, protected area management, livelihoods, and the empowerment of women, youth and vulnerable groups. Examples of NGOs include CANGO, FODSWA COSPE, ACAT, PELUM, SRWA, and ESWADE. Examples of relevant Development Partners active in Eswatini include the World Food Programme, World Vision, FAO, and The Blue Deal Programme. There are also a number of private sector and parastatal businesses that also implement corporate social responsibility projects at local level that could have synergies to the project in terms of gender equity and empowerment of women and youth, for example Royal Eswatini Sugar and Peak Timbers. Where synergies with the project exist, partnerships for collaboration will be established with those organizations that are active in the target project sites to secure technical support and inputs into the project activities, and enhance up scaling and long term sustainability. A stakeholder database will be compiled, and the PMU will ensure that relevant project information will be widely disseminated to project stakeholders and to the public using a range of public and targeted media (broadcasts, articles,

events, etc.). Adequate budget has been allocated towards SEP implementation, to ensure that there is continuous engagement and information sharing with stakeholders and opportunities for their participation in decision making and planning for implementation of project interventions.

Monitoring and evaluation of the stakeholder process is important in ensuring that the schedule and nature of engagement can be adapted if required to ensure their effectiveness. A monitoring and evaluation system will be designed during the inception phase of the project to continuously assess the effectiveness of the stakeholder engagement plan in achieving the overall objectives. The PMU will collaborate with the project teams and other stakeholders to monitor and review the implementation and outcomes of the stakeholder engagement plan. The monitoring criteria will include: a) Levels of participation at stakeholder engagement events and activities, b) Adequacy of resources to undertake the engagement, c) Inclusiveness of the processes and activities, in particular inclusion of women, youth and other marginalized groups, d) Effectiveness of participatory tools and approaches, e) Effectiveness of methods for information dissemination, and f) Feedback from stakeholders. Evaluation of stakeholder engagement will include a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators, for example: i) Number of stakeholder groups (e.g. government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector, academia, researchers, local communities, etc.) that are involved in the project implementation at national, landscape and community level; ii) Number, type and frequency of stakeholder engagements (meetings, workshops, etc.); iii) Number, type and frequency of project materials prepared and disseminated to stakeholders; iv) Growing awareness of stakeholders at all levels; v) Representation levels of stakeholder groups attending meetings (e.g. women, vulnerable groups); vi) Interest to be involved in decision making at different stages by stakeholders; vii) Numbers of direct project beneficiaries; viii) Increasing ability of stakeholders to propose and undertake actions, ix) Take-up rates of project interventions; and x) Number of grievances raised, resolved and closed.

In addition, provide a summary on how stakeholders will be consulted in project execution, the means and timing of engagement, how information will be disseminated, and an explanation of any resource requirements throughout the project/program cycle to ensure proper and meaningful stakeholder engagement

Monitoring and evaluation of the stakeholder process is important in ensuring that the schedule and nature of engagement can be adapted if required to ensure their effectiveness. A monitoring and evaluation system will be designed during the inception phase of the project to continuously assess the effectiveness of the stakeholder engagement plan in achieving the overall objectives. The PMU will collaborate with the project teams and other stakeholders to monitor and review the implementation and outcomes of the stakeholder engagement plan. The monitoring criteria will include: a) Levels of participation at stakeholder engagement events and activities, b) Adequacy of resources to undertake the engagement, c) Inclusiveness of the processes and activities, in particular inclusion of women, youth and other marginalized groups, d) Effectiveness of participatory tools and approaches, e) Effectiveness of methods for information dissemination, and f) Feedback from stakeholders. Evaluation

of stakeholder engagement will include a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators, for example: i) Number of stakeholder groups (e.g. government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector, academia, researchers, local communities, etc.) that are involved in the project implementation at national, landscape and community level; ii) Number, type and frequency of stakeholder engagements (meetings, workshops, etc.); iii) Number, type and frequency of project materials prepared and disseminated to stakeholders; iv) Growing awareness of stakeholders at all levels; v) Representation levels of stakeholder groups attending meetings (e.g. women, vulnerable groups); vi) Interest to be involved in decision making at different stages by stakeholders; vii) Numbers of direct project beneficiaries; viii) Increasing ability of stakeholders to propose and undertake actions, ix) Take-up rates of project interventions; and x) Number of grievances raised, resolved and closed. The project stakeholders include a range of civil society organizations (CSOs) and civil society broadly. CSOs are strategic as partners in implementation, as potential providers of technical and financial support. They are also strategic as they have the potential to provide independent monitoring and observation of project activities, which can add credibility and validation that is important in securing support from broader civil society. Their participation supports transparency in governance, and checks on accountability. The participation of CSOs can also play an important role by facilitating and promoting mutually beneficial linkages between local communities, civil society, and government agencies for integrated land management and biodiversity conservation. CSOs will be strategic partners to project implementation at a local level in particular. They are often embedded at local level (planning, financing and implementing sustainable land management activities (e.g. conservation agriculture, climate smart agriculture, etc.)), and they therefore have the potential to act as agents for and voices of local communities, to facilitate participation in the implementation and sharing of benefits from integrated landscape management. They also provide ?citizen science? input data on ILM.

Select what role civil society will play in the project:

Consulted only;

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor; Yes

Co-financier; Yes

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

Executor or co-executor; Yes

Other (Please explain)

The project stakeholders include a range of civil society organizations (CSOs) and civil society broadly. CSOs are strategic as partners in implementation, as potential providers of technical and financial support. They are also strategic as they have the potential to provide independent monitoring and observation of project activities, which can add credibility and validation that is important in securing support from broader civil society. Their participation supports transparency in governance,

and checks on accountability. The participation of CSOs can also play an important role by facilitating and promoting mutually beneficial linkages between local communities, civil society, and government agencies for integrated land management and biodiversity conservation. CSOs will be strategic partners to project implementation at a local level in particular. They are often embedded at local level (planning, financing and implementing sustainable land management activities (e.g. conservation agriculture, climate smart agriculture, etc.)), and they therefore have the potential to act as agents for and voices of local communities, to facilitate participation in the implementation and sharing of benefits from integrated landscape management. They also provide ?citizen science? input data on ILM.

The project will proceed more smoothly with approval and support from civil society, which includes rural communities (including women, youth, vulnerable and marginalized people or groups), private landowners, and even the general public broadly. Participation by civil society and CSOs therefore aims to: 1). Increase awareness, understanding and visibility of the Mbuluzi basin ILM and Protected areas management project, and 2). Generate support from and strengthen collaboration by civil society and CSOs. This participation by civil society involves a combination of information sharing, consultation, and collaboration and empowerment actions and processes: a) Information sharing: i) Magazine or news articles and press releases, ii) Background information material, iii) Exhibits or displays, iv) Websites and v) Radio or talk shows; b) Consultation: i) Public meetings and briefings, ii) Open days/open house, iii) Surveys, questionnaires and polls, and iv) Participatory rural appraisal (PRA)/participatory learning and action (PLA); c) Collaboration and Empowerment through workshops, focus groups or key stakeholder meetings. Participation by CSOs and civil society will evolve during the course of the project and the processes therefore needs to be adaptable and frequently reviewed and monitored to inform revision as needed.

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Provide the gender analysis or equivalent socio-economic assesment.

The objectives of this project position it well to contribute to addressing a number of the gender equity and women empowerment challenges that have been highlighted nationally, regionally and locally including in particular addressing poverty and sustainable livelihoods; gender and youth empowerment, and resilience to the impacts of climate change. The project recognizes the importance of both men and women?s active participation in adapting to the future changes the Mbuluzi landscape faces from environmental degradation and other external threats, and in addressing the ongoing challenge of securing rights to land and resources to provide sustainable livelihoods. The project, also, recognizes the role of women, as primary users and stewards of many natural resources, in environmental protection, as well as in productive systems in sustainable agriculture and forestry. The project will therefore address elements of economic empowerment of women and equitable participation in decision making regarding sustainable land use and protected area management. It will ensure that women are equally represented in governance bodies of the 3 targeted protected areas and tikhundla. Additionally, while working to empower local communities living in and around the project implementation areas, the project will give specific attention to include women as well as men. The project will seek to (a) analyze and identify any project-relevant gender differences as well as opportunities to empower women relevant to the project outcomes. This will require adequate tools for engagement and awareness raising, capacity building, training and the design of systems and structures that monitor and evaluate this participation to inform adaptive management of the project activities to ensure goals for gender equity are achieved.

Women and men differ in how they use and depend on natural resources, which influences the benefits they derive. Recognizing the different roles that women and men play in the use of natural resources is essential in ecological restoration initiatives as it allows for their differentiated inputs and promotes specific responses that women and men could and should undertake. This project therefore considers gender equity and human rights as fundamental to sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation. In recognition of this, a rights-based approach will be applied to empower women and youth and other vulnerable groups to equitably share in the benefits created through the project. The Project will participate in furthering the knowledge and finding innovative ways of dealing with gender issues in Mbuluzi landscape. By creating an enabling environment for capacity development and knowledge sharing, the project will be investing in the development of the target communities and pro-actively implement gender responsive interventions that create opportunities for improving gender equality and strengthening empowerment of women in decision making as well as implementation and benefit sharing from project interventions. More particularly, within each component, gender issues will be considered. For example, in Component 3, to strengthen protected area management and increase participatory governance and planning, the project will use appropriate mechanisms to enroll women in protected area governance, as men are often seen as the family representatives, leaving no room for women?s participation in public spheres. Relative to Component 2, gaps will be identified to ensure that technical support for SLM is provided to both men and women alike and that women can participate, since women often have an important role traditionally in agroforestry, farming and land management. For Component 1, analysis of gaps in policies and legal frameworks will also identify gender gaps so that these can be addressed through specific measures where needed for women and vulnerable groups, for example, the fact that women are less likely to have official documents, which may impede their ownership of land. Component 4 will develop specific strategies and guidelines for ensuring projects develop gender sensitive activities. Project monitoring will measure number of female beneficiaries and will aggregate other gender related indicators as specified by each outcome.
The project will consider the development of people as an essential element of environmental conservation through short-term contract jobs created with the emphasis on endeavoring to recruit women (the target is 50%), youth (20%) and people with disability (5%). By creating an enabling environment, the project will be investing in the development of the selected communities and will target women, youth and other marginalized groups. Other measures for improving gender equality and strengthening economic empowerment of women may include: 1) taking into consideration the perspectives and needs of women, youth and other vulnerable groups during strengthening of the legislative framework for landscape management and protected area management (Output 1.1); 2) equitable participation of women and youth as well as representation of vulnerable groups in the development of the National Sustainable Land Management Strategy and Action Plan for the Mbuluzi Basin (Output 1.2); 3) adoption of pro-active gender responsive processes, such as introducing elements of dualism, empowerment and capacity development as a means of addressing the current under representation of women and youth in local level decision making structures (Output 1.3); 4) incorporating a gender and youth sensitive approach, and women and youth participation in project events, such as in Outputs 2.1,2.4, 2.5, 3.1 and 4.4.

At all output levels, the project will ensure collaboration with project-contracted partners to continually develop and implement mechanisms which may further strengthen the capacities of women, youth and vulnerable persons. Furthermore, the project implementation will ensure that there is equitable representation of women in the project?s decision-making structures, including the Project Steering Committee (project management) and Project Management Unit. The project has a high-level gender indicator of ?at least 50,000 women direct benefitting from project activities as a result of the GEF investment?. This will be achieved through capacity building initiatives, e.g. in Outputs 3.3 and 3.4; farmer field schools and SLM demonstration sites (Output 2.4); SLM pilot activities in Output 2.5, and in the establishment of community forests (CFs) and community forests associations (CFAs) (Output 2.7).

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

Yes

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

Improving women's participation and decision making Yes

Generating socio-economic benefits or services or women Yes

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

Yes

4. Private sector engagement

Elaborate on the private sector's engagement in the project, if any.

Collectively, the private sector has continuously invested in the natural resources management and promoted ecosystem services. This has been done primarily through development and maintenance of tourism facilities, protected areas planning, law enforcement and biodiversity monitoring and staff development. The private sector is expected to contribute towards the protection of the ecosystems as they benefit immensely from the ecosystem services. An effective integrated Landscape Management regime therefore depends on a strong partnership with the private sector and opportunities for networks need to be created for business and government to work together. Support from the private sector can range from support by integrating sustainable land management issues into their respective codes of practice, business plans, and corporate communications, through to funding and technical support for local level livelihood activities from private sector Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes.

Private sector partners will therefore be important stakeholders for supporting this ILM project in Mbuluzi landscape. A range of private sector partners have been identified in the stakeholder analysis and described in the stakeholder engagement plan (see Appendix 12 of the project document) including Swaziland Sugar Association, Royal Eswatini Sugar, Swaziland Citrus Board, Irrigation Districts in Mbuluzi Basin, Water User and Farming Associations in Mbuluzi Basin, Conservancies and private game reserves: Shewula Nature Reserve and Mbuluzi Game Reserve, Eswatini Bank, Peak Timbers, Montigny Usutu Investments, National Maize Corporation, Eswatini Meat Industries Limited, RMI Development Eswatini, Private and corporate landowners and farmers. It is important that partnerships are established with these private sector stakeholders at an early stage of the project to ensure their participation in design, decision making and implementation. Participation by the private sector therefore aims to: 1) Increase awareness, understanding and visibility of the project, and 2) Support the establishment of networks and strengthen collaboration with private sector stakeholders

A detailed private sector participation plan will be developed, in consultation with private sector representatives, during the inception phase of the project. The private sector participation plan will address private sector participation through: a) Raising awareness about the project and enhance the capacity of the private sector to engage effectively, through conducting publicity events, media campaigns, etc., b) Promoting awareness of issues on SLM and protected area management by convening workshops and seminars targeting private sector stakeholders, c) Encouraging partnerships between public and private sectors in activities to address SLM and protected area management through their

involvement and participation in decision making and planning structures and processes, and d) Ensuring support for the sustainability of SLM and protected area management activities by developing long-term programmes of action that includes funding and technical support from the private sector.

Participation by the private sector includes a combination of information sharing, consultation, and collaboration and empowerment actions and processes, aimed at building active partnerships between the project team and private sector stakeholders. This includes open and frequent dialogue and participation through: i) Workshops and focus group meetings, and ii) Advisory panels and committees. The participation of stakeholders will evolve during the course of the project and the process therefore needs to be adaptable and frequently reviewed and monitored to inform revision as needed.

5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Elaborate on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, the proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation.(table format acceptable):

The results framework matrix in Annex A summarizes the principal risks and assumptions associated with the project. Every effort has been made to minimize these in the design of the project strategy and its activities and outputs. This has included a review of past and ongoing GEF projects or projects in similar sectors. In addition there has been a wide consultation through review and discussions with the country stakeholders during the project development phase.

The project strategy identifies the following key risks and their mitigation measures will be continuously monitored and updated throughout the project implementation period.

Risks and risk management measures

Identified Risks	Risk Assessment	Description of Risks	Mitigation Measures
Capacity and resources constraints limit the implementation of key activities such as M&E, documentation, and dissemination of lessons learnt and best practice, empowerment of women and youth, capacity development needs.	Low	Effective M&E, documentation and dissemination of lessons and best practice, capacity building, and participatory approaches are very resource intense. The resources available for these activities are finite.	The number of sites and scale at which the interventions are implemented are selected to reflect the available budget
Limited local level ownership/buy-in of project activities by stakeholders that limits upscaling	Low	The participatory nature of the activities depends on meaningful buy-in and participation by stakeholders at all levels. If meaningful buy-in and support is not secure the momentum required to effectively implement the activities will be difficult to attain.	Stakeholder buy-in will be maximised through extensive engagement and consultation on the key aspects of the project, so that the project is not seen as externally driven but rather as a stakeholder driven initiative that has external support.

Identified Risks	Risk Assessment	Description of Risks	Mitigation Measures
Social and cultural barriers inhibit equitable participation by women and youth.	Moderate	Eentrenched cultural and social norms are unlikely to be meaningfully changed within the timeframes of the project.	Cultural and social norms are recognized and acknowledged by project interventions. Where possible barriers and constraints such those to the empowerment of women and youth are accommodated through incorporating elements of dualism, and addressed through proactive awareness raising and capacity building.
Health risk for staff, partners and communities in the pilot sites, including disruption and/or suspension of activities; and spread of COVID-19 among targeted communities	Moderate	**Short term:** There is risk of increased COVID transmission due to return of persons from urban centres to the communities, pressure on land (fragmentation and unsustainable practices), deforestation and human-wildlife poaching. -	In the short term, the project will take preventive measures including protection of staff, partners and people in need by using protective equipment, physical distancing, minimizing physical meetings and use of virtual meetings. The project will keep in close touch with the District COVID-19 task forces established by government as well as health facilities in the region to promptly report any incidence of the disease. For **long term** mitigation, the COVID 19 pandemic provides an **opportunity** for the local communities, CSOs, NGOs, and government agencies to come together for effective planning to mitigate the impacts associated with the pandemic. The project will take care of this during the development of the local and district land use plans, district development plans, integrated landscape management plans, and sectoral plans.

Identified Risks	Risk Assessment	Description of Risks	Mitigation Measures
Climate change is affecting rainfall patterns and exacerbating land slides and flooding conditions, exacting additional stress on the already vulnerable ecosystems	Moderate	There are increasing incidences of drought, landslides, soil erosion and flooding in the project area	Project activities will include consideration of adaptation and resilience measures, as well as a study to evaluate the vulnerability of communities investing in value chains. The project will therefore adaptation and resilience measures including climate-smart agricultural practices, water management, agroforestry, wetlands management and institutional and regulatory reforms, development of knowledge systems and integrated land use planning.

6. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination

Describe the institutional arrangement for project implementation. Elaborate on the planned coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) will be the GEF Agency responsible for supervision and provision of technical guidance during project implementation. In this project therefore, the UNEP TM will be directly responsible for: (i) providing consistent and regular project oversight to ensure the achievement of project objectives; (ii) liaising between the project and the GEF Secretariat; (iii) ensuring that both GEF and UN Environment policy requirements and standards are applied and met (i.e. reporting obligations, technical, fiduciary, Monitoring and Evaluation); (iv) approving budget revisions, certifying funds availability and transferring funds; (v) organizing mid- and end-term evaluations and reviewing project audits; (vi) providing technical, legal and administrative guidance if requested; and (vii) certifying project operational completion. In addition, UNEP will bring to bear its vast scientific and empirical experience of critical relevance to the objectives of the project through sharing experiences of its other projects being supported by GEF or other agencies.

The Eswatini National Trust Commission (ENTC) will be the project executing agency and will implement the project on behalf of the Government of Eswatini (Appendix 8 of the project document). ENTC will provide overall coordination. The ENTC will chair the Project Steering Committee (PSC) that will ensure the strategic orientation of the project. The DEFF will be accountable to UNEP for the achievement of the project objective and outcomes, according to the approved overall project work plan. To expedite delivery of outputs, the ENTC will work with project partners in the implementation of project activities through signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MoU). These MoUs will clearly spell out the activities agreed upon and responsibilities of each partner in the execution of the project. This will be concretized at the launch/inception of the project. To minimize delays in the delivery of project outputs by partners, ENTC in consultation with UNEP will identify how best to support the partners to effectively implement the project activities. The project partners are Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development, National Maize Corporation, Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Peak Timbers, International center for Research in Agro-Forestry (ICRAF) and World Vision. These partners will contribute to the outcomes/outputs as outlined in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Project partners and their responsibilities in the project

Components/Outcomes	Responsibility Assignment

	Lead partner(s)	Support partner(s)
Component 1: Strengthening Policy, Legislative and Institutional Frameworks for integrated natural resources management in the Mbuluzi river catchment area		
Outcome 1: The Government of Eswatini adopts and starts enforcing an updated, gender inclusive policy, institutional and legislative framework for SLM and ecosystem restoration		
Output 1.1: Institutional and legislative frameworks for SLM and ecosystem restoration in the Mbuluzi landscape revised, enacted, implemented and enforced and monitored to ascertain their effectiveness	ENTC, Ministry of Agriculture	EEA, ESWADE, DWA
Output 1.2: An Integrated Land Management Strategy and Action Plan for the Mbuluzi landscape developed in a participatory and gender responsive manner and implemented	ENTC, Min of Agriculture,	Forest Department, MTAD, EEA, MNRE, DPMO, MTEA
Output 1.3: SLM and ecosystem restoration mainstreamed into Chiefdom Sustainable Development Plans and implemented to scale up their adoption in the basin, using participatory approaches	Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development, ENTC	Forest Department, MTAD, EEA, MNRE, DPMO, MTEA
Component 2: Ecosystem restoration through capacity strengthening for Promotion of sustainable land management (SLM) practices		
Outcome 2: Land degradation reduced by implementation of innovative SLM technologies in productive landscapes in the Mbuluzi River Basin		
Output 2.1: Landscape-scale ecosystem and land use assessment conducted for Mbuluzi Basin	Ministry of Agriculture	ENTC Forest Department, MTAD, EEA,MNRE, MTEA
Output 2.2: Capacity of agriculture extension workers in SLM and all staff in relevant ministries and departments strengthened	Ministry of Agriculture	ENTC Forest Department, MTAD, EEA, MNRE, MTEA, ESWADE, ENTC
Output 2.3: Training of trainers at local community levels including chiefdoms conducted	World Vision	ICRAF, ESWADE Forest Department, MTAD, EEA, MNRE, MTEA, ENTC,
Output 2.4: Famer Field Schools (FFS) and SLM demonstration sites established for farmer groups and farmer open field-days organized	World Vision	ICRAF, ESWADE Forest Department, MTAD, EEA, MTEA, ENTC
Output 2.5: SLM practices targeting maize and legumes for crops and livestock piloted in communities to improve soil fertility and reduce land degradation	ICRAF, National Maize Corporation, Eswatini Meat Industries Limited	Ministry of Agriculture ESWADE Forest Department, MTAD, EEA, MTEA, ENTC
Output 2.6: Tree planting in degraded communal lands and along riverine areas promoted to reduce land degradation.	Forest Department	Peak Timbers, ESWADE, MTAD, EEA, MTEA, ENTC
Output 2.7: Capacity building of Community Forest Associations (CFAs) for community biodiversity conservation enhancement	Forest Department	ENTC, MoA, MTAD, EEA, MTEA, ENTC
Component 3: Effective management of 3 protected areas within the basin		
Outcome 3: Effective PA management and governance models for PAs implemented by government agencies and local stakeholders in selected locations		
Output 3.1: A protected Area network (PAN) Conservation Strategy for the Mbuluzi landscape developed and implemented	ENTC	Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Mbuluzi Game Reserve, Lubombo Conservancy

Output 3.2: Management frameworks and governance models for PAs including Management plans revised, aligned with the PAN and implemented	ENTC	Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Mbuluzi Game Reserve, Lubombo Conservancy
Output 3.3: Capacity of Protected Area Management (PAM) staff strengthened to implement the PAN, enforce provisions and obligations of Management frameworks and governance models on good governance systems	ENTC	Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs Mbuluzi Game Reserve, Lubombo Conservancy
Output 3.4: Protected Area Integrated gender responsive fire management systems, that include participation of local communities, developed and implemented for Biodiversity and ecological infrastructure enhancement in Mbuluzi landscape	ENTC	Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs Mbuluzi Game Reserve, Lubombo Conservancy, MTAD
Output 3.5: Management Effectiveness of Mbuluzi landscape PAs monitored and tracked	ENTC	Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs Mbuluzi Game Reserve, Lubombo Conservancy
Component 4: Knowledge Management, Gender and Youth mainstreaming and M&E		
Outcome 4: Women and youth engagement strategy on biodiversity and land degradation developed and implemented		
Output 4.1: Systems established for monitoring progress and outcomes of the project	ENTC	Ministry of Agriculture- refer to proposed project steering committee
Output 4.2: Documentation, publication and dissemination of best practices and lessons learnt	ENTC	ICRAF, World Vision
Output 4.3: Multi-stakeholder platforms are established at landscape level to champion ILM in line with the African Forestry Restoration Initiative (AFR100) Voluntary Guidelines	ENTC	ICRAF Forest Department
Output 4.4: Women and youth engagement protocol developed for adoption by the project	ENTC	ICRAF World Vision

Project Internal Structure

a) Project Management Unit

A Project Management Unit (PMU) will be established in ENTC and will comprise of the Project Manager (who will also provide expertise in Integrated Land Management), Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Project Finance and Administrative Assistant, three (3) field-based officers (one at each Ikhundla). The PMU will be responsible for the daily management of the project and for ensuring efficient and timely implementation of the project annual work plans. The PMU will be hosted and supported technically by ENTC who will allocate part-time experts according to the PMU needs as part of government co?financing. Memoranda of Understanding will also be developed with relevant partners if required for the coordination of some specific interventions of the project. The PMU will work in close collaboration with UNEP.

The ToRs of the PMU staff are provided in Appendix 9 of the project document. However, some key functions of the PMU are:

? Technically identify, plan, design and support all activities;

? Liaise with government agencies and regularly advocate on behalf of the project;

? Prepare the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP/B) and monitoring plan, and submit them to GEF and NPSC for validation;

? Play the role of the Secretariat of the NPSC;

? Organise regular meetings and workshops with the NPSC;

? Be responsible for day?to?day implementation of the project in line with the AWP;

? Ensure a results?based approach to project implementation, including maintaining a focus on project results and impacts as defined by the results framework indicators in Appendix 4 of the project document;

? Ensure close collaboration with baseline and partner project to maximise synergy and complementarity;

? Ensure the submission of appropriate yearly expenditure reports on the budget identified as co?financing by the baseline projects;

? Prepare and submit bi?annual progress reports and contribute to the preparation of UNEP progress reports;

? Continuously monitor and evaluate the project progress regarding the Results Matrix Targets according to a specific plan validated by ENTC and UNEP, and submit M&E reports regularly to UNEP and NPSC;

? Be responsible for the elaboration of UNEP Project Progress Reports (PPR) and the annual Project Implementation Review (PIR); and

? Facilitate and support the mid?term evaluation/review and final evaluation of the project.

? PMU staff will be supported by national and international consultants who will be recruited during project implementation as needed.

Project External Structure (Project Oversight Mechanism)

a) Project Steering Committee

ENTC will be supported by a National Project Steering Committee (NPSC) that will be drawn from relevant stakeholders. The NPSC will be the main decision? making platform of the project, responsible for guiding implementation of the project. The specific NPSC responsibilities will be to:

? Provide overall guidance and direction to the project, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints;

? Provide guidance on new project risks and agree on possible countermeasures and management actions to address specific risks;

? Review the project progress and provide direction and recommendations to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily according to plans;

? Appraise the project annual review report and make recommendations for the next annual work plan;

? Provide strategic advice to the Project Management Unit (PMU) for the implementation of project activities to ensure the integration of project activities with sustainable development objectives;

? Advise the PMU when needed;

? Oversee and ensure technical quality of outputs;

? Ensure alignment of the activities and products with the project document;

? Review the progress reports and financial reports;

? Ensure close linkages between the project and other relevant on-going projects and programmes relevant to the project;

? Ensure timely availability and effectiveness of co?financing support;

? Ensure sustainability of key project outcomes, including up?scaling and replication;

? Ensure effective coordination of government partner work under this project;

? Modify, where needed, and validate the six?monthly Project Progress and Financial Reports, the Annual Work Plan and Budget;

? Provide contributions to the mid?term evaluation/review and final evaluation, analyse the conclusions and formulate response plans;

? Assist the PMU in solving any issues in the project implementation; and

? Facilitate the dissemination and integration of the results in national policies and programmes.

b) Technical Working Group

The ENTC will identify subject matter specialists among the stakeholders and constitute them into a Technical Working Group (TWG). The TWG will be responsible for technical backstopping during the implementation of the project. The TWG will thus support the PMU and NPSC in their work to ensure that implementation of project activities is on course and producing the desired outputs. The TWG will meet at least once per quarter. The specific terms of reference for the TWG will include:

? Support the PMU in the development of work plans and budgets;

? Support the PMU in the development of Terms of Reference for activities to be undertaken by consultants;

? Collate salient and credible data/information to support the PMU and consultants in the delivery of legitimate reports;

? Assess and advise on implementation of the planned project activities against set timeframes to deliver the following key outcomes of the project:

- Strengthening Policy, Legislative and Institutional Frameworks for Integrated Natural Resources Management (INRM) ? Component 1 of the project.
- Ecosystem restoration through capacity strengthening for Promotion of sustainable land management (SLM) practices ? component 2 of the project.
- Effective management of protected areas, specifically Malolotja Nature Reserve, Mlawula nature reserve and Hawane Dam (Ramsar site) ? component 3 of the project.
- Knowledge Management, Gender and Youth mainstreaming and M&E - component 4 of the project.

? Review and provide input on draft project reports to ensure adequacy in the attainment of the project objectives and deliverables;

? Support the PMU on quality assurance of documents/reports to be presented to the NPSC for consideration; and

? Perform any other duties that may be assigned by NPSC or UNEP.

c) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) missions

There will be Annual Stakeholders? Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Missions of the Project to assess progress towards achievement of the project targets and effectiveness of implementation in terms of achieving project objectives, outcomes and outputs and to discuss and agree on mechanisms to improve project performance. Findings and recommendations of this review will be instrumental in bringing improvement in the overall project design and execution strategy for the remaining period of the project?s term if necessary.

UNEP will arrange for the project?s mid-term and final evaluation in consultation with the Project Management Unit (PMU). The project mid-term and final M&E will, inter alia: a) Review the effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of project implementation; b) Analyze effectiveness of partnership arrangements; c) Identify issues requiring decisions and remedial actions; d) Propose any mid-course corrections and/or adjustments to the implementation strategy as necessary; and e) Describe the technical achievements and lessons learned derived from project design, implementation and management. The final evaluation will be carried out three months after closure of the project. The aim of the final evaluation will be to identify the project impacts, sustainability of project results and the degree of achievement of long-term results. The final evaluation will also have the purpose of indicating future actions needed to expand on the existing project in subsequent phases if planned, mainstream and up-scale its products and practices. The final evaluation will pay special attention to the outcome indicators.

The reporting requirements and responsibilities in the monitoring and evaluation of the project have been proposed in Table 6 as follows:

Table 6. Project reporting requirements

M&E Component/Activity	**Responsibility Assignment**		**Means of Assessment/Monitoring Data Source**
	Institution	**Project/Agency Officer**	

Project Inception	ENTC (PMU) in consultation with UNEP,	Project Manager, Consultant	Inception report with detailed methodology
Steering Committee Meetings	ENTC (PMU)	Project Manager, UNEP Task Manager	Minutes of the meetings
Semi-annual M&E review meetings	ENTC (PMU)	Project Manager, UNEP Task Manager	Minutes of the meetings
Monitoring visits to field sites	ENTC (PMU) in collaboration with the participating institutions	Project Manager, UNEP Task Manager	On site data collection Monitoring reports
Annual Review and Planning Meeting (ARPM)/Project Implementation Review (PIR)	UNEP in consultation with the PMU, and participating institutions/agencies and stakeholders	Project Manager, UNEP Task Manager	On site data collection PIR reports
Mid-Term external evaluation (MTR)	UNEP in consultation with the PMU, and participating institutions/agencies and stakeholders	Independent Consultant	On site data collection Consultant report
End of Project Terminal Evaluation	UNEP in consultation with the PMU, and participating institutions/agencies and stakeholders	Independent Consultant	On site data collection Consultant report

Project Organogram

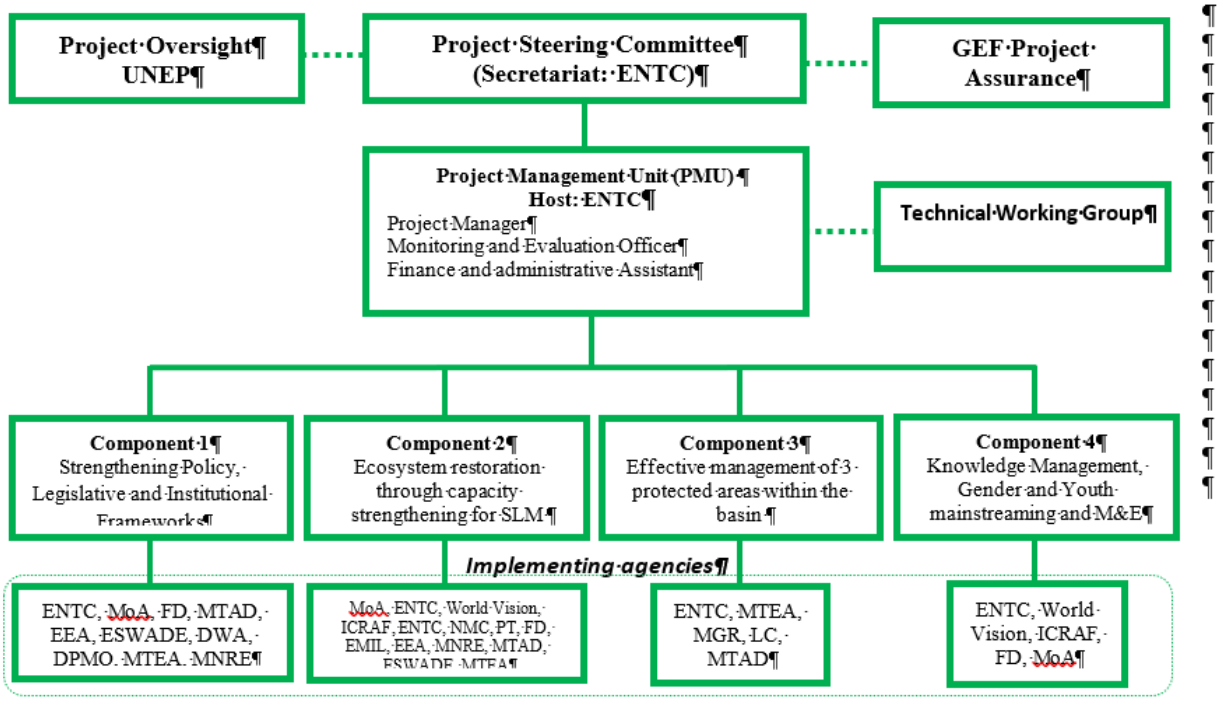

Figure 13. Project organogram

Note: ENTC = Eswatini National Trust Commission, MoA = Ministry of Agriculture, FD = Forest Department, ICRAF = International centre for Research in Agroforestry, NMC = National Maize Commission, EMIL = Eswatini Meat Industries Limited, PT = Peak Timbers, MTEA = Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs, MGR = Mbuluzi Game Reserve, LC = Lubombo Conservancy, UoE = University of Eswatini

The management structure, as shown in Figure 13 above, will respond to the project?s needs in terms of direction, management, control, and communication. As the project is cross-functional and involves various stakeholders, its structure will be flexible in order to adjust to ongoing changes in the context. Staff and consultants will be contracted according to the established rules and regulations of the Government of Eswatini and all financial transactions and agreements will similarly follow the same rules and regulations.

National, Regional and Global Networks

Networks are important in project implementation as they are critical sources of capacity building through joint learning, leveraging and incentivizing project stakeholders and implementation staff. Networks are also critical avenues for communicating project success and scaling up of best practices to similar landscapes in the country, regionally and globally. The project will, therefore, engage with national, regional and global networks to share communication products, outreach tools and solicit support to ensure that project interventions, improved practices and incentives are well documented and widely understood among relevant stakeholders and the public at the national and global level.

At landscape level, the project will work in collaboration with the Tinkhundla administrations during project implementation and joint participatory monitoring so as to enable learning, sharing of experiences and integration of project activities into the respective Administration and Development Plans. The project will use the traditional leaders (Chiefdoms) who are responsible for developing Chiefdom Development Plans which have direct implications for land management. These institutions will not only be enlisted to participate in activities to promote sustainable and management in the Mbuluzi catchment, but will also foster knowledge sharing, learning, and synthesis of experiences. In addition, an action research and learning program will be established to provide evidence and support for local innovation and flexibility in order to support the adoption of approaches at community level. The action research and learning will gather information on innovations, best practices and lessons learned and provide evidence to foster sharing, learning, and synthesis of experiences and opportunities for scaling out and up.

At national level, the project will be integrated into similar Government Programmes such as: (i) the National Development Strategy of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development so as to incorporate and/or strengthen critical dimensions of poverty eradication, employment creation, gender equity, social integration and environmental protection, ii) the National Protected Area System in order to strengthen the management effectiveness of existing PAs in addressing threats, including degradation as a result of various external and internal pressures, iii) Sustainable Land and Water Management practices, and iv) Knowledge sharing, learning, and synthesis of experiences. Knowledge sharing, learning, and synthesis of experiences will also be done during the Environment Sector Review meetings that involves all line Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies as well as Private Sector Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, donors/development agencies and bilateral agencies.

At the regional and global levels, Eswatini is a member of various bodies and platforms such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and New Partnership for Africa?s Development (NEPAD) as well as the African Adaptation Initiative (AAI) of the African Union (AU), the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR 100) under the Bonn Challenge on Landscape Restoration among others. The project will use these platforms for learning, sharing experiences and creating synergies. The project will be aligned to various global and regional frameworks that Eswatini is a signatory to and participates in such as: the UNCCD; UNCBD and UNFCCC. Eswatini will use her participation in these global platforms to share experiences and for learning as well as create synergies for leveraging and scaling up and out.

7. Consistency with National Priorities

Describe the consistency of the project with national strategies and plans or reports and assesments under relevant conventions from below:

NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc.

The project is consistent with and supportive of the following national strategies, plans, reports and assessments under the relevant conventions:

The *National Development Strategy* (NDS) which is implemented through three year rolling National Development Plans provides the overarching national development framework for Eswatini. The NSD focuses on improving the standard of living of the people of Eswatini through poverty eradication, employment creation, gender equality and environmental protection. In the National Development Strategy (NDS) Vision 2022, Chapter 3.7 of the key Macro Strategic Areas, the Government of Eswatini recognizes environmental management as a necessary condition for sustainable development. This entails the maintenance of an ecological balance; accommodating environmental considerations in policies, strategies and programmes of both the public and private sectors; accommodate environmental compliance procedures; and ensuring that sector strategies for achieving the country's vision are environmentally friendly. The broad strategies of environmental objectives fulfilment are:

? *Integration:* Fully integrate environmental management and development planning in to ministries and initiate a collaborative coherent programme approach with all sectoral ministries and departments, each contributing in their area of expertise.

? *Monitoring:* Establish a national environmental mechanism for ensuring that the environmental priorities of national planning are observed and sought after. Coordinate monitor and control environmental protection measures.

? *Legislation:* Strengthen or develop a comprehensive system of environmental laws and regulations and reinforce the enforcement capability of the Eswatini Environment Authority.

? *Capacity Building:* Encourage popular participation and training, including embracing sectoral human resource development, education and training, public information and public involvement.

? *Gender:* Ensure a gender dimension in environmental management. Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels.

? *Enforcement:* Enforce all environmental laws. Ensure that enacted environmental laws and regulations are implemented.

? *Conservation:* Curb and prevent the erosion of the soil, promote conservation and management of water and land resources, develop measures to conserve endangered animal and plant species, establish and promote the idea of botanic gardens.

? *Implementation:* Implement the country?s Environment Action Plan, implement the national biodiversity strategy and action plan, initiate economic incentives to promote environmental management.

? *Finance:* Source financial resources needed for the introduction of the necessary institutional changes required for sustainable development, establish an Environmental Fund.

The Strategy for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth (SSDIG), which is the review of the National Development Strategy (NDS) 1997 ? 2022, was commissioned in 2013. The Government review took stock of the emerging challenges and opportunities that were not foreseen during NDS formulation in 1997. The revised strategy identified four thematic areas as critical for the attainment of the Vision namely: Good governance, Vibrant and diverse economy, Environmental sustainability and highest human capital and social development.

The Government also developed and adopted the Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Programme (PRSAP, 2006-2015) which serves as a critical means and guide to realizing the national vision and attain the Sustainable Development Goals. The Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Plan (PRSAP) recognizes environmental management as pivotal to a sustainable increase in agricultural productivity. It recognizes that the underprivileged depend on the environment and natural resources for their survival, therefore any meaningful poverty reduction strategy will have to address issues related to the environment. The strategy further acknowledges that the three critical environmental problems in country are soil erosion, deforestation and forest degradation (including both actual loss of trees and the changing composition and structure), and water and air pollution.

The project is aligned with the *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan*, which details the national strategy for conservation and management of biodiversity. As most of the country's population depend upon subsistence agriculture, development planning in eSwatini recognizes the need for sustainable land management as a vehicle for addressing poverty and managing biodiversity conservation at the community level. The propose project will contribute to target 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) targets: By controlling and management of invasive plant species, in the Mbuluzi catchment area, the project will contribute to target 9 of Eswatini?s NBSAP which aims at ensuring that By 2020 invasive species that are alien to Eswatini and their pathways are identified and prioritized and eradicated and management plans established. The control of alien invasive plant species is particularly important in this catchment for downstream availability of water. The project will also contribute to target 10 of the country?s NBSAP by controlling and eradicating pressures on Eswatini?s most vulnerable ecosystem (grassland ecosystem) which the last grassland wilderness in the country. By enhancing management effectiveness of nature reserves, the project will contribute to target 12 of the country?s NBSAP which aims at ensuring that by 2022, the extinction of species known to be threatened in Eswatini has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those that are endemic and those most in decline, has been improved and sustained and target 11 of the NBSAP which aims at ensuring that By 2022, at least 20 per cent of Eswatini's land area is conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas

According to Eswatini?s LDN Target Setting Report; between 2000 and 2010, a total of 465,290 Ha of land was degraded, which makes up 27% of the country. The report further highlights areas in the Mbuluzi catchment like Mhlangatane, Mnjoli, Madlangempisi, Lomahasha and Sitsatsaweni, as hotspots for land degradation which is directly driven by Deforestation, Improper soil management; Improper management of annual, perennial and scrub and tree crops; Disturbance of water cycle and Overgrazing. The project is expected to contribute to Eswatini?s LDN specific targets of increasing by 10% net land productivity in all land cover categories through SLM practices. It will also contribute to the specific target of rehabilitating 115 000 ha of degraded and abandoned land by 2030.

Other policies and strategies which are relevant to this proposed project are the *Climate Change Policy* and Strategy and the *National Emergency Response Mitigation and Adaptation Plan* (2016-2022). These aim to provide the framework for addressing the impacts of climate change. Closely related to this is the country's participation in international initiatives to address climate change at the global level under the auspices of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). As part of this engagement, the country produces National Communications and Nationally Determined Contributions to the Convention (NDC) which detail the strategies the country proposes to implement in order to meet its obligations under the Climate Change Convention. The last NDC was submitted in 2015. National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, 2016 aims at Promoting adoption of sustainable land management practices such as the soil management, seed management, and adaptive capacity of smallholder farmers.

The Natural Resources Management Act, 1951 prevents cultivation of crops within 33 meters of banks of public streams. It aims at protecting the destruction of biodiversity rich ecosystems close to the riverbanks. The Environment Management Act, 2002 aims to provide and promote enhancement, protection and conservation of the environment and the sustainable management of natural resources and to promote sustainable use of natural resources such as land considering the consequences for the present and future generations.

Several national policies are in the process of formulation to enable sustainable implementation of agricultural production and these are; (a) the National Agricultural Extension Policy Draft, (b) the Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, (c) the National Agricultural Research Policy, (d) the National Climate Change Policy, (e) the National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, (f) the National Wildlife Management Policy. Completed policies are (a) the Disaster Risk Management Policy, which aims to prevent and minimize the impact of disasters and (b) the Eswatini Resilience Strategy and Action Plan. Other proposed legislation that is in the process of its enaction to enable sustainable agricultural production are (a) the Plant Health Protection Bill, 2015 which aims to prevent the introduction and spread of pests, facilitate trade in plants and plant products (b) the Eswatini National Research Authority Bill, 2015 (c) the Dairy Act Amendment Bill, 2017 (d) the Seeds and Plant varieties (amendment) regulation 2017: amendment

regulations of 2002 (e) the Livestock Identification and Traceability Regulations, 2015: to give effect to The Livestock Identification Act 2001.

8. Knowledge Management

Elaborate the "Knowledge Management Approach" for the project, including a budget, key deliverables and a timeline, and explain how it will contribute to the project's overall impact.

This project aims to transform the situation from the baseline?in which there is inadequate awareness and management of protected areas and high infestation rate of invasive alien plant species in protected areas to a situation where protected areas along the basin are well managed, invasive plant species controlled and the Swazi population understands and accesses opportunities to use SLM technologies and biodiversity conservation in the River Basins. The knowledge shared via project activities will raise awareness of the importance of effective management of protected areas and will harmonize relationships between communities and protected areas. It will also raise awareness on sustainable landscape restoration and management, which contributes to adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change, thus increasing the resilience of landscapes and subsistence livelihoods. The knowledge sharing approaches catalyzed and supported by the project?including South-South cooperation?are designed to ensure that the project benefits from lessons of past projects, programmes and research to avoid reinventing the wheel, and it will share results (locally, nationally and internationally) to enable others to benefit by scaling-up achievements post-project. As this project will be utilizing outcomes of two main projects: firstly the Adapting National and Transboundary Resources to the Impacts of Climate change which highlighted the need to address biodiversity loss and land degradation including control of invasive plant species and secondly the Lower Usuthu Sustainable Land Management Project that introduce similar activities in the Usuthu Basin which highlighted the need to introduce the same intervention for the Mbuluzi Basin.. Innovative methodologies will be used to track the country?s progress the project?s contribution of the country?s national targets including targets under the NBSAP and the LDN.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Describe the budgeted M and E plan

Monitoring and Evaluation Budget and Work plan

Type of M&E activity	Responsible Parties	Budget from GEF	Budget co-finance	Time Frame
Inception Meeting	ENTC (PMU), UNEP	20,000	308,169	Within 2 months of project start-up
Inception Report	ENTC (PMU)	0	0	1 month after project inception meeting

Type of M&E activity	Responsible Parties	Budget from GEF	Budget co-finance	Time Frame
Measurement of project indicators (outcome, progress and performance indicators) at national and global level	ENTC (PMU), PSC	52,800	46,000	Outcome indicators: start, mid and end of project Progress/perform. Indicators: annually by M&E officer and project partners through co-financing
Semi-annual Progress/ Operational Reports to UNEP	ENTC (PMU), PSC	0	0	Within 1 month of the end of reporting period i.e. on or before 31 January and 31 July
Project Steering/Review meetings	ENTC (PMU), PSC	20,000	668,169	Twice a year minimum.
Reports of PSC meetings	ENTC (PMU), PSC	0	0	Annually
PIR	ENTC (PMU), PSC	0	0	Annually, part of reporting routine
Monitoring visits to field sites	ENTC (PMU)	0	0	As appropriate by the M&E Officer
Mid Term Review/Evaluation	ENTC (PMU), PSC, Consultant	35,000	135,238	At mid-point of project implementation
Terminal Evaluation	ENTC (PMU), PSC, Consultant	40,000	360,000	Within 6 months of end of project implementation
Project Final Report	ENTC (PMU), PSC	0	0	Within 2 months of the project completion date
Co-financing report	ENTC (PMU)	0	0	Within 1 month of the PIR reporting period, i.e. on or before 31 July
Publication of Lessons Learnt and other project documents	ENTC (PMU), PSC	42,851	164,357	Annually, part of Semi-annual reports & Project Final Report
Total M&E Plan Budget		**210,651**	**2,064,730**	

The project will follow UNEP standard monitoring, reporting and evaluation processes and procedures. Reporting requirements and templates are an integral part of the UNEP legal instrument to be signed by ENTC and UNEP. The project will implement an efficient working arrangement with both UNEP and ENTC for purposes of monitoring and evaluation.

The project M&E plan is consistent with the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation policy. The Project Results Framework presented in Appendix 4 of the ProDoc includes SMART indicators[1] for each expected outcome as well as mid-term and end-of-project targets. These indicators are designed according to the GEF indicator guidelines. These indicators along with the key deliverables and benchmarks included in Appendix 6 of the ProDoc will be the main tools for assessing project implementation progress and whether project results are being achieved. The means of verification and the costs associated with obtaining the information to track the indicators are summarized in Appendix 5 of the ProDoc. Other M&E related costs are also presented in the Costed M&E Plan and are fully integrated in the overall project budget.

The M&E plan will be reviewed and revised as necessary during the project inception workshop to ensure project stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities vis-?-vis project monitoring and evaluation. Indicators and their means of verification may also be fine-tuned at the inception workshop. Day-to-day project monitoring will be the responsibility of the project management team but other project partners will have responsibilities to collect specific information to track the indicators. It will be the responsibility of the Project Manager to inform UNEP and the NPSC of any delays or difficulties faced during implementation so that the appropriate support or corrective measures can be adopted in a timely fashion.

The NPSC will receive periodic reports on progress and will make recommendations to UNEP concerning the need to revise any aspects of the Results Framework or the M&E plan. Project oversight to ensure that the project meets UNEP and GEF policies and procedures will be the responsibility of the Task Manager in UNEP. The Task Manager will also review the quality of draft project outputs, provide feedback to the project partners, and establish peer review procedures to ensure adequate quality of scientific and technical outputs and publications.

Project supervision will take an adaptive management approach. The Task Manager will develop a project supervision plan at the inception of the project which will be communicated to the project partners during the inception workshop. The emphasis of the Task Manager supervision will be on outcome monitoring but without neglecting project financial management and implementation monitoring. Progress vis-?-vis delivery of the agreed project global environmental benefits will be assessed with the NPSC at agreed intervals. The quality of project monitoring and evaluation will also be reviewed and rated as part of the PIR. Key financial parameters will be monitored on a quarterly basis to ensure cost-effective use of financial resources.

Risk assessment and rating (Table 4), is an integral part of the Project Implementation Review (PIR). Perhaps the most infamous risk is that posed by COVID-19. Eswatini is swiftly adapting to this new environment and remains very dedicated to support implementation of this GEF project despite the challenges faced from this pandemic. The project will take the following actions to mitigate negative results arising from COVID-19 or any other health related risk: a) Identify critical stakeholders the absence of whom can lead to unplanned delays, b) Consider legal and financial implications of COVID-19 and develop a mitigation plan at the inception stage, c) Communicate any disruptions due to COVID-19 to all stakeholders, including staff, ENTC and UNEP, d) Conduct scenario analysis and consider alternative delivery methods, such as virtual or online meetings, radio programmes, recorded messages and guidelines, personal protective equipment or any other steps that will allow the project to be completed on time and on budget, even if it is delayed at some stages by COVID-19.

A mid-term management review or evaluation will take place after 2 years of project implementation as indicated in the project milestones. The review will include all parameters recommended by the GEF Evaluation Office for terminal evaluations and will verify information gathered through the GEF core indicator worksheet, as relevant. The review will be carried out using a participatory approach whereby parties that may benefit or be affected by the project will be consulted. Such parties were identified during

the stakeholder analysis (see section 2 of the project document). The NPSC will participate in the mid-term review and develop a management response to the evaluation recommendations along with an implementation plan. It will be the responsibility of the UNEP Task Manager to monitor whether the agreed recommendations are being implemented.

In line with the GEF Evaluation requirements and UNEP?s Evaluation Policy, GEF Full-Sized Projects and any project with a duration of 4 years or more will be subject to an independent Mid-Term Evaluation or management-led Mid-Term Review at mid-point. All GEF funded projects are subject to a performance assessment when they reach operational completion. This performance assessment will be either an independent Terminal Evaluation or a management-led Terminal Review.

In case a Review is required, the UNEP Evaluation Office will provide tools, templates, and guidelines to support the Review consultant. For all Terminal Reviews, the UNEP Evaluation Office will perform a quality assessment of the Terminal Review report and validate the Review?s performance ratings. This quality assessment will be attached as an Annex to the Terminal Review report, validated performance ratings will be captured in the main report.

However, if an independent Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the project is required, the Evaluation Office will be responsible for the entire evaluation process and will liaise with the Task Manager and the project implementing partners at key points during the evaluation. The TE will provide an independent assessment of project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine the likelihood of impact and sustainability. It will have two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP staff and implementing partners. The direct costs of the evaluation (or the management-led review) will be charged against the project evaluation budget. The TE will typically be initiated after the project?s operational completion. If a follow-on phase of the project is envisaged, the timing of the evaluation will be discussed with the Evaluation Office in relation to the submission of the follow-on proposal.

The draft TE report will be sent by the Evaluation Office to project stakeholders for comment. Formal comments on the report will be shared by the Evaluation Office in an open and transparent manner. The project performance will be assessed against standard evaluation criteria using a six-point rating scheme. The final determination of project ratings will be made by the Evaluation Office when the report is finalized. The evaluation report will be publicly disclosed and will be followed by a recommendation compliance process. The evaluation recommendations will be entered into a Recommendations Implementation Plan template by the Evaluation Office. Formal submission of the completed Recommendations Implementation Plan by the Project Manager is required within one month of its delivery to the project team. The Evaluation Office will monitor compliance with this plan every six months for a total period of 12 months from the finalisation of the Recommendations Implementation Plan. The compliance performance against the recommendations is then reported to senior management on a six-monthly basis and to member States in the Biennial Evaluation Synthesis Report.

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[1]The detail definitions of each indicator and sub-indicators can be referred in the GEF 7 Core Indicators Guidelines https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Results_Guidelines.pdf

10. Benefits

Describe the socioeconomic benefits to be delivered by the project at the national and local levels, as appropriate. How do these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of global environment benefits (GEF Trust Fund) or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)?

The project will provide benefits globally, nationally and locally. This project will enhance the capacity for implementation of a robust framework to manage land and biodiversity degradation in Eswatini. By strengthening Eswatini?s strategies, mechanisms, and institutions for land restoration and natural resource management at the national level, globally significant biodiversity and landscapes will be protected, and livelihoods strengthened. The strengthening of land and biodiversity management will contribute to the development of social inclusion and gender equality, foster clear and transparent provisions and strengthen the capacity for local communities to benefit from their landscape and biodiversity, thereby generating opportunities for themselves. This will also have benefits to the local communities immediately impacted by land degradation, including those deriving livelihoods from forest, protected areas and agricultural ecosystems, directly through production, or indirectly such as through tourism and ecosystem services. Additional domestic benefits generated over the baseline case will be as a result of reduced impact of climate change on economic activity. Further benefits will accrue through replication of the approaches used at the pilot sites to other sites in the country. The approach used in the project as a whole will also provide lessons and opportunities for replication in other countries in Africa.

11. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

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

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification*

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

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

Elaborate on the types and risk classifications/ratings of any identified environmental and social risks and impacts (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and any measures undertaken as well as planned management measures to address these risks during implementation.

Measures to address identified risks and impacts are summarized in the table below and the details are n the attached SRIF

Safeguard Standard 1: Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Sustainable Natural Resource Management		
Would the project potentially involve or lead to:		
1.1 conversion or degradation of habitats (including modified habitat, natural habitat and critical natural habitat), or losses and threats to biodiversity and/or ecosystems and ecosystem services?	No	Project interventions directly address sustainable land management and restoration. The project will enhance natural habitats and biodiversity conservation, it will not contribute to degradation.
1.2 adverse impacts specifically to habitats that are legally protected, officially proposed for protection, or recognized as protected by traditional local communities and/or authoritative sources (e.g. National Park, Nature Conservancy, Indigenous Community Conserved Area, (ICCA); etc.)?	No	The project directly addresses improving the management and conservation of habitats that are legally protected and officially proposed for protection. It further targets conservation and protection of habitats and ecosystems across the whole basin landscape.
1.3 conversion or degradation of habitats that are identified by authoritative sources for their high conservation and biodiversity value?	No	The project focusses on improving the management and conservation of high biodiversity and conservation value both in protected areas and within participating communities.

1.4 activities that are not legally permitted or are inconsistent with any officially recognized management plans for the area?	No	The project enhances and strengthens management plans and strengthens legal and policy frameworks for conservation and protection of biodiversity.
1.5 risks to endangered species (e.g. reduction, encroachment on habitat)?	No	The project directly addresses improving the management and conservation of high biodiversity and conservation value.
1.6 activities that may result in soil erosion, deterioration and/or land degradation?	No	The project directly addresses soil conservation and the restoration of degraded areas through adopting the sustainable land management approach across all participating communities.
1.7 reduced quality or quantity of ground water or water in rivers, ponds, lakes, other wetlands?	No	The project addresses restoration of ecosystems and degraded areas and will therefore positively impact quality or quantity of ground water or water in rivers, ponds, lakes, other wetlands. Strengthened and enhanced preservation and protection of PAs in the landscape will directly benefit Hawane Dam (A Ramsar site).

1.8 reforestation, plantation development and/or forest harvesting?	Yes	The project addresses restoration through a range of interventions including reforestation and tree planting in areas being rehabilitated, which will include a combination of natural forests and plantations. The project will not contribute to deforestation or forest harvesting.
1.9 support for agricultural production, animal/fish production and harvesting	Yes	The project addresses sustainable land management through a range of interventions including agricultural production. It will not include expansion of agricultural production but rather improved production and diversification of existing areas.
1.10 introduction or utilization of any invasive alien species of flora and fauna, whether accidental or intentional?	No	The project will support control of IAS and not the introduction of invasive species
1.11 handling or utilization of genetically modified organisms?	No	The project will not involve the handling of GMOs.
1.12 collection and utilization of genetic resources?	No	The project will not involve the collection or utilization of genetic resources.
Safeguard Standard 2: Climate Change and Disaster Risks		
Would the project potentially involve or lead to:		

2.1 improving resilience against potential climate change impact beyond the project intervention period?	Yes	Ecological restoration and sustainable land management will contribute to improving resilience against potential climate change impact in the long term.
2.2 areas that are now or are projected to be subject to natural hazards such as extreme temperatures, earthquakes, extreme precipitation and flooding, landslides, droughts, severe winds, sea level rise, storm surges, tsunami or volcanic eruptions in the next 30 years?	No	Sustainable land management and environmental restoration will contribute to restoration of resilient ecosystems.
2.3 outputs and outcomes sensitive or vulnerable to potential impacts of climate change (e.g. changes in precipitation, temperature, salinity, extreme events)?	No	Sustainable land management and environmental restoration will contribute to restoration of resilient ecosystems and thereby enhance ecosystem-based adaptation and not vulnerability
2.4 local communities vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and disaster risks (e.g. considering level of exposure and adaptive capacity)?	No	Sustainable land management and environmental restoration will contribute to restoration of resilient ecosystems and thereby enhance ecosystem-based adaptation, which will reduce the vulnerability of communities.

2.5 increases of greenhouse gas emissions, black carbon emissions or other drivers of climate change?	No	Sustainable land management and environmental restoration interventions will not increase greenhouse gas emissions, black carbon emissions or other drivers of climate change. Improved forests and ecosystems will contribute to reduced GHGs emissions as they will act as sinks.
2.6 Carbon sequestration and reduction of greenhouse emissions, resource-efficient and low carbon development, other measures for mitigating climate change	Yes	Sustainable land management and environmental restoration will contribute to increasing carbon sequestration potential.
Safeguard Standard 3: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency		
Would the project potentially involve or lead to:		
3.1 the release of pollutants to the environment due to routine or non-routine circumstances with the potential for adverse local, regional, and/or transboundary impacts?	No	The project will not involve the release of pollutants to the environment.
3.2 the generation of waste (both hazardous and non-hazardous)?	No	The project will not include activities that will lead to the generation of significant waste.
3.3 the manufacture, trade, release, and/or use of hazardous materials and/or chemicals?	No	The project will not involve interventions relating to manufacture, trade, release, and/or use of hazardous materials and/or chemicals

3.4 the use of chemicals or materials subject to international bans or phase-outs? (e.g. DDT, PCBs and other chemicals listed in international conventions such as the Montreal Protocol, Minamata Convention, Basel Convention, Rotterdam Convention, Stockholm Convention)	No	The project will not involve interventions linked to the use of chemicals.
3.5 the application of pesticides or fertilizers that may have a negative effect on the environment (including non-target species) or human health?	No	The project will not involve interventions linked to the application of pesticides or fertilizers that may have a negative effect on the environment.
3.6 significant consumption of energy, water, or other material inputs?	No	The project will not involve significant consumption of energy, water, or other material inputs.
Safeguard Standard 4: Community Health, Safety and Security		
Would the project potentially involve or lead to:		
4.1 the design, construction, operation and/or decommissioning of structural elements such as new buildings or structures (including those accessed by the public)?	No	The project will not involve the design, construction, operation and/or decommissioning of structural elements such as new buildings or structures

4.2 air pollution, noise, vibration, traffic, physical hazards, water runoff?	Maybe	The project interventions do not involve activities that contribute to air pollution, noise, vibration, traffic, physical hazards, water runoff. Potential source of short term air and noise pollution will created be during rehabilitation of degraded areas where heavy machinery will be needed, but this pollution will be minimal. This will be mitigated by undertaking work during the day and keeping it to the shortest duration possible, and brush and stone packing to minimize run-ff from areas before vegetation is re-established. Therefore the risk rating is assessed to be low.
4.3 exposure to water-borne or other vector-borne diseases (e.g. temporary breeding habitats), communicable or non-communicable diseases?	No	The project interventions do not involve activities that involve exposure to water-borne or other vector-borne diseases, communicable or non-communicable diseases
4.4 adverse impacts on natural resources and/or ecosystem services relevant to the communities? health and safety (e.g. food, surface water purification, natural buffers from flooding)?	No	The project will enhance natural habitats, and agricultural production, and will therefore broadly contribute to human well-being and health.

4.5 transport, storage use and/or disposal of hazardous or dangerous materials (e.g. fuel, explosives, other chemicals that may cause an emergency event)?	No	Project interventions will not create a risk of an emergency event.
4.6 engagement of security personnel to support project activities (e.g. protection of property or personnel, patrolling of protected areas)?	No	The project will not engage security personnel to support project activities.
4.7 an influx of workers to the project area or security personnel (e.g. police, military, other)?	No	The project will not contribute to an influx of workers or security personnel to the project area.
Safeguard Standard 5: Cultural Heritage		
Would the project potentially involve or lead to:		
5.1 activities adjacent to or within a Cultural Heritage site?	No	Project activities will not take place in or adjacent to Cultural Heritage sites.
5.2 adverse impacts to sites, structures or objects with historical, cultural, artistic, traditional or religious values or to intangible forms of cultural heritage (e.g. knowledge, innovations, practices)?	No	Project activities will not have adverse impacts to sites, structures or objects with historical, cultural, artistic, traditional or religious values or to intangible forms of cultural heritage.
5.3 utilization of Cultural Heritage for commercial or other purposes (e.g. use of objects, practices, traditional knowledge, tourism)?	No	Project activities do not involve utilization of cultural heritage resources.
5.4 alterations to landscapes and natural features with cultural significance?	No	Project activities do not involve alterations to landscapes and natural features with cultural significance.

5.5 significant land clearing, demolitions, excavations, flooding?	No	The project involves environmental restoration and will not involve land clearing, demolitions, excavations, flooding. Areas with severe soil erosion (dongas) may be re-landscaped using heavy machinery but this will be on a limited scale and the areas will be revegetated and rehabilitated.
5.6 Identification and protection of cultural heritage sites or intangible forms of cultural heritage	Maybe	Project activities do not directly involve identification and protection of cultural heritage sites or intangible forms of cultural heritage. However by its nature, environmental conservation and restoration could enhance the protection of cultural heritage sites or intangible forms of cultural heritage.
Safeguard Standard 6: Displacement and Involuntary Resettlement		
Would the project potentially involve or lead to:		
6.1 full or partial physical displacement or relocation of people (whether temporary or permanent)?	No	Project activities do not involve temporary or permanent displacement or relocation of people.

6.2 economic displacement (e.g. loss of assets or access to assets affecting for example crops, businesses, income generation sources)?	Maybe	Project activities do not involve economic displacement or relocation of people. Where the restoration interventions, such as restrictions to the harvesting of natural resources for craft work or invasive alien species control, involves species that are potentially used for economic purposes by local stakeholders, the project inception phase will include consultation with the stakeholders to inform decision making and planning, and the necessary mitigation identified.
6.2 involuntary restrictions on land/water use that deny a community the use of resources to which they have traditional or recognizable use rights?	Maybe	Where restoration interventions such as restrictions to the harvesting of natural resources or changes to water allocations, affect the use of resources to which communities have traditional or recognizable use rights, the project inception phase will include consultation with the stakeholders to inform decision making and planning, and the necessary mitigation identified.
6.3 risk of forced evictions?	No	Project activities do not involve the risk of forced evictions

6.4 changes in land tenure arrangements, including communal and/or customary/traditional land tenure patterns (including temporary/permanent loss of land)?	No	Project activities do not involve changes in land tenure arrangements, including communal and/or customary/traditional land tenure patterns.
Safeguard Standard 7: Indigenous Peoples		
Would the project potentially involve or lead to:		
7.1 areas where indigenous peoples are present or uncontacted or isolated indigenous peoples inhabit or where it is believed these peoples may inhabit?	No	Project activities do not involve areas where indigenous peoples are present or uncontacted or isolated indigenous peoples inhabit or where it is believed these peoples may inhabit.
7.2 activities located on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?	No	Project activities are not located on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples.
7.3 impacts to the human rights of indigenous peoples or to the lands, territories and resources claimed by them?	No	Project activities will not impact to the human rights of indigenous peoples or to the lands, territories and resources claimed by them.
7.4 the utilization and/or commercial development of natural resources on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?	No	Project activities will not involve the utilization and/or commercial development of natural resources on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples.

7.5 adverse effects on the development priorities, decision making mechanisms, and forms of self-government of indigenous peoples as defined by them?	No	Project activities will not have adverse effects on the development priorities, decision making mechanisms, and forms of self-government of indigenous peoples as defined by them.
7.6 risks to the traditional livelihoods, physical and cultural survival of indigenous peoples?	No	SLM and environmental restoration will not pose risks to the traditional livelihoods, physical and cultural survival of indigenous peoples.
7.7 impacts on the Cultural Heritage of indigenous peoples, including through the commercialization or use of their traditional knowledge and practices?	No	SLM and environmental restoration will not impact on the Cultural Heritage of indigenous peoples, including through the commercialization or use of their traditional knowledge and practices.
Safeguard Standard 8: Labor and working conditions		
8.1 Will the proposed project involve hiring or contracting project staff ?	Yes	The project will involve hiring or contracting of project staff
If the answer to 8.1 is yes, would the project potentially involve or lead to:		

8.2 working conditions that do not meet national labor laws or international commitments (e.g. ILO conventions)?	No	Activities proposed in the project will be undertaken in compliance with National labour policy and legal frameworks, which ensure the rights, safety and equality of workers in the workplace, and which align with ILO conventions.
8.3 the use of forced labor and child labor?	No	The project will not use forced or child labour.
8.4 occupational health and safety risks (including violence and harassment)?	No	No interventions that would be associated with occupational health and safety risks are planned for the project.
8.5 the increase of local or regional unemployment?	No	The project will not contribute to unemployment.
8.6 suppliers of goods and services who may have high risk of significant safety issues related to their own workers?	No	Project activities will not involve suppliers of goods and services who may have high risk of significant safety issues related to their own workers

8.7 unequal working opportunities and conditions for women and men	No	The project implementation adopts a rights based approach and ensures that the rights of all people are respected, including the provision of equitable working opportunities for women and men. The project sets targets of a minimum of 50% participation by women in order to achieve equal working opportunities and conditions for women.

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title	Module	Submitted
Appendix 10 - Safeguard Risk Identification Form	**CEO Endorsement ESS**	
SRIF Eswatini Mbuluzi river basin - signed by Yunae	**Project PIF ESS**	

ANNEX A: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK (either copy and paste here the framework from the Agency document, or provide reference to the page in the project document where the framework could be found).

Result Framework (Logical framework)

Project Objective *Lasting and significant changes to which the project is expected to contribute*	**Objective level Indicators** *How contributions the objective will be measured including quantity, quality, time*	**Baseline** *Initial Baseline for Objective indicator(s)*	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**		**Means of Verification** *How the information required to measure the indicator will be collected, when, and by whom*	**Assumptions & Risks** *Assumptions and Risks that affect objective level*	**UNEP MTS reference*** *The Subprogramme under which the project objective can be fitted*
			Mid-Term *Mid-Point Target*	**End of Project** *End of project Target*			
To promote ecosystem restoration for a productive Mbuluzi River landscape and effectively managed protected areas providing critical ecosystem goods	Extent and use of updated and enabling policy, institutional and legal frameworks for SLM and ecosystem management in Mbuluzi river landscape	Mbuluzi landscape is currently managed under outdated policies; fragmented, conflicting and competing mandates; with no clear articulation of priority actions on SLM and ecosystem management	Operational gaps in the existing policy, institutional and legal frameworks established and measures to address them identified	SLM and ecosystem restoration policy, institutional and legal frameworks in place and under implementation	End of project report, PIR reports, progress reports, monitoring reports, minutes of meetings, policy documents, institutional and legal frameworks, protected area management strategies,	**<u>Assumptions:</u>** ? Government is fully committed to the restoration and effective management of the Mbuluzi river basin ? Stakeholders and development partners are committed to biodiversity	

and services	Extent of use of innovative SLM technologies in productive landscapes across the Mbuluzi River Basin	Inadequate demonstrated experiences in SLM approaches due to lack of capacity	Operational gaps in utilization of SLM technologies in the Mbuluzi river basin established and measures to address them identified	Innovative landscape level SLM technologies in place and operational in the Mbuluzi river basin		conservation and SLM ? Existing cornerstone of livelihoods **Risks:** ? Potential delay in the approval of SLM strategies and plans would delay their operationalization ? Lack of consensus of roles and responsibilities for institutional and	
	Effectively managed protected areas (Malolotja Nature Reserve, Mlawula nature reserve and Hawane Dam (Ramsar site) in the basin	Ineffective wildlife protection and management of protected areas on the ground.	Strategies and programs for effective management of Malolotja Nature Reserve, Mlawula nature reserve and Hawane Dam are identified	Malolotja Nature Reserve, Mlawula nature reserve and Hawane Dam are under effective management			

	Level of women and youth engagement in management of biodiversity and land degradation	Insufficient documentation of knowledge and lessons on biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management	Tools for documentation of best practices and lessons learned developed	Best practices and lessons learned documented and shared among relevant sectors and actively being utilized by women and youth in management of biodiversity and land degradation		governance systems ? Health risk for staff, partners and communities in the pilot sites, including disruption and/or suspension of activities; and spread of COVID-19 among targeted communities ? State of capacity for uptake of	

		Low participation of youth and vulnerable groups in biodiversity conservation and SLM; Women participation in biodiversity and SLM is high but is low at decision-making level.	Gender and social safeguards for participation in biodiversity conservation and SLM identified; Public awareness is undertaken	Women, youth and vulnerable groups (including persons living with disabilities) are strongly and actively participating in biodiversity conservation and SLM; Women are strongly and actively participating in decision making in biodiversity conservation and SLM		SLM technologies is unknown ? Cultural and society norms	
Project Outcome *Capacity or behavioral changes to which the project is expected to contribute*	**Outcome Indicators** *How the outcome will be measured including quantity, quality, time*	**Baseline** *Initial Baseline for Outcome Indicators*	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**		**Means of Verification** *How the information required to measure the indicator will be collected, when, and by whom*	**Assumptions & Risks** *Assumptions and Risks that affect processes by which outcomes contribute to objectives*	**UNEP MTS reference*** *The Expected Accomplishment under which the project outcome can be fitted*
			Mid-Term *Mid-Point Target*	**End of Project** *End of project Target*			

Outcome 1: The Government of Eswatini adopts and starts enforcing an updated policy, institutional and legislative framework for SLM and ecosystem restoration	Institutional and legislative frameworks for SLM and ecosystem restoration in the Mbuluzi landscape are in place and operational	Inadequate legal, regulatory and institutional framework for Integrated Natural Resource Management	Three institutional frameworks (National Environment Policy, Flora Protection Act of 2000 and Forest Bill of 2016) updated Three regulatory frameworks (Integrated Natural Resources Strategy and Action Plan, National Forest Regulations and Forest Management Regulations) developed	Three institutional frameworks (National Environment Policy, Flora Protection Act of 2000 and Forest Bill of 2016) in place and operational Three regulatory frameworks (Integrated Natural Resources Strategy and Action Plan, National Forest Regulations and Forest Management Regulations) in place and operational	Approved National Environment Policy, Flora Protection Act, Forest Act, Integrated Natural Resources Strategy and Action Plan, National Forest Regulations and Forest Management Regulations; Progress reports; Project reports; Official correspondences, Meeting minutes, reports	**Assumptions**: ? Eswatini government is committed to address gender responsiveness. ? Chiefdom Sustainable Development Plans exist in all chiefdoms ? There is expertise in CDPs development (e.g., ESWADE) ? Communities are committed to SLM projects - **Risks**: ? It takes a long time to formulate

	Existence and use of gender responsive governance system (strategy and action plan) for sustainable land management	Inadequate governance systems leading to unsustainable land management practices	Gender responsive Integrated Sustainable Land Management Strategy and Action Plan for the Mbuluzi landscape is in place and operational	Gender responsive Integrated Sustainable Land Management Strategy and Action Plan for the Mbuluzi landscape is in place and operational	Minutes of reports, proportion of women in operating communities and decision making.	legislative frameworks ? Pandemics such as COVID may further delay the process ? Limited understanding of gender ? Lack of gender sensitivity in socio cultural norms and practices as

	Ecosystem restoration is mainstreamed and being implemented by the Chiefdom Sustainable Development Plans	Sustainable Land Management and ecosystem restoration are currently not strong and adequately mainstreamed in the Chiefdom Sustainable Development Plans	There is a framework to align SLM projects to chiefdom development plans and existing projects.	Chiefdom Sustainable Development Plans are actively being used to implement SLM and ecosystem restoration in the Mbuluzi Basin	? Progress reports, end of project reports	well as economic, legal and political systems may draw back an gains made ? Unequitable distribution of wealth and decision making among the recognized gender categories ? Potential delay in mainstreaming ecosystem restoration due to lack of chiefdom development plans. ? Lack of consensus on which communities to target first. ? Lack of collaboration, commitment and ownership from the community	

Outputs: 1.1: Institutional and legislative frameworks for SLM and ecosystem restoration in the Mbuluzi landscape revised, enacted, implemented and enforced and monitored to ascertain their effectiveness 1.2: An Integrated Land Management Strategy and Action Plan for the Mbuluzi landscape developed in a participatory and gender responsive manner and implemented. 1.3: SLM and ecosystem restoration mainstreamed into Chiefdom Sustainable Development Plans and implemented to scale up their adoption in the basin, using participatory approaches							
Outcome 2: Reduced Land degradation through capacity strengthening for innovative SLM technologies in productive landscapes across 50,700 ha of the Mbuluzi	Tools for sustainable land management and ecosystem restoration are in place and are actively being used for rehabilitation and investment in the Mbuluzi basin	Basin specific tools for ecosystem restoration are only sectoral rather than holistic in nature	The state of the ecosystems, ecological values, forests, and productive areas for restoration through SLM and ecosystem restoration identified.	Assessment and restoration tools such as forest and wildlife maps for the Mbuluzi basin are in place and used for landscape-scale ecosystem and land use assessment and restoration	? Maps, assessment reports, lists of productive areas in the landscape, project reports, meeting minutes, official correspondences	**Assumptions**: ? There is technical capacity to conduct regular assessments and to produce maps. ? Government is willing to hire more extension officers ? Communities are committed	

River Basin	Percentage of agriculture extension workers able to deliver SLM practices and technologies to sub-national level institutions and local communities	Inadequate extension officers) and not well capacitated on SLM practices.	50% of agricultural extension officers from MoA, parastatals, agencies and NGOs able to deliver SLM practices and technologies to sub-national level institutions and local communities	100% of agricultural extension officers from MoA, parastatals, agencies and NGOs able to deliver SLM practices and technologies to sub-national level institutions and local communities	? Progress reports, Training reports; Project reports; Training evaluation reports; M&E reports	to put some of their land to SLM projects ? There is technical capacity to compute GHG emissions **Risks:** ? Government does not have adequate financial resources and resources to replenish human resources (extension officers) ? Potential delay in having adequate extension officers due to lengthy recruiting process. ? Potential delay in
	Number of SLM trainers available at local community levels and chiefdoms	Inadequate SLM trainers in Mbuluzi landscape	50 agricultural extension officers from MoA, parastatals, agencies and NGOs trained as trainers of SLM practices to local communities and chiefdoms	100 agricultural extension officers from MoA, parastatals, agencies and NGOs trained as trainers of SLM practices to local communities and chiefdoms	? Progress reports from Project Managers ? Number of SLM trainers ? Adoption rate of SLM practices	

	Number of Famer Field Schools (FFS) and SLM demonstration sites established for training of farmers and farmer groups	Inadequate farmer field schools available for training communities and farmers in SLM	5 Famer field schools and SLM demonstration sites established and actively training and demonstrating SLM practices to farmers	10 Famer field schools and SLM demonstration sites established and actively training and demonstrating SLM practices to farmers	Number of farmer field schools established Active farmer field schools	having SLM trainers due to lengthy recruiting process. ? SLM practices may have low priority if benefits-cost ratio are not realized by the communities ? Potential delay in restoring riverine areas due to negotiations with existing land users ? Chiefdom disputes and conflicts between communities . ? GHG emissions not very accurate due to missing livestock records
	Area of agricultural land under Integrated Land Management	Inadequate ILM practices due to lack of finances	10,000 ha of agricultural land across the Mbuluzi river basin are under Integrated Land Management	20,000 ha of agricultural land across the Mbuluzi river basin are under Integrated Land Management	Area under ILM will be monitored and recorded by ENTC every 6 months through sentinel 2 images (remotely sensed data) and verified through field visits	
	Area of landscapes under sustainable management in maize and legume production systems for improved food security and livelihoods	Inadequate SLM practices due to lack of finances	15,000 ha of landscape across the Mbuluzi river basin are under sustainable land management on maize and legume production systems	30,000 ha of landscape across the Mbuluzi river basin are under sustainable land management on maize and legume production systems	Area under SLM will be monitored and recorded by ENTC every 6 months through sentinel 2 images (remotely sensed data) and verified through field visits	

	Area of degraded communal lands and riverine areas restored through tree planting to promote biodiversity conservation	There is high deforestation due to excessive harvesting of forests and land degradation through unsustainable practices in the Mbuluzi basin	300 ha of Indigenous forests and woodlands of social and cultural significance restored for biodiversity conservation.	700 ha of Indigenous forests and woodlands of social and cultural significance restored for biodiversity conservation	Restored areas will be tracked and recorded by ENTC, Forestry (MTEA), EEA, MoA, NGOs and RBA every 6 months through sentinel 2 images (remotely sensed data) and verified through field visits.		
	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated	GHG emissions high due to high degradation through unsustainable land management	-1,000,000 metric tons of CO?e sequestered or avoided	-5,469,132 metric tons of CO?e sequestered or avoided	FAO EXACT tool will be used to track GHG emissions.		

Outputs:

2.1: Landscape-scale ecosystem and land use assessment conducted for Mbuluzi Basin

2.2: Capacity of agriculture extension workers in SLM and all staff in relevant ministries and departments strengthened

2.3: Training of trainers at local community levels including chiefdoms conducted

2.4: Famer Field Schools (FFS) and SLM demonstration sites established for farmer groups and farmer open field-days organized

2.5: SLM practices implemented in communities to improve soil fertility and reduce land degradation for improved food security and livelihoods targeting maize and legumes for crops and livestock

2.6: Tree planting in degraded communal lands and along riverine areas promoted to reduce land degradation

Outcome 3: Capacity strengthening for Effective management of the three nature reserves of (Malolotja Nature Reserve, Mlawula nature reserve and Hawane Dam (Ramsar site) in the basin is undertaken	A protected Area network (PAN) Conservation Strategy for the Mbuluzi landscape in place and operational	PAs already have environmental management plans that govern their operations and a Game Ranchers Association.	Draft PAN conservation strategy for the basin for the Mbuluzi landscape developed	PAN conservation strategy for Mbuluzi landscape that incorporate both PAs and CFs approved and fully operational	Reports of consultative meetings with ENTC; Bilateral agreements; Minutes of meetings and consultations; Validated PAN conservation strategy	**Assumptions:** ? Participating PAs and communities will be fully committed to the strategy that will be developed. ? It is assumed participating PAs and communities will be fully committed to the strategy that will be developed. ? **Risks:** ? Lack of buy-in from all members
	Management plans, frameworks and governance models for PAs in place and operational	Currently, PAs have individual environmental management plans. So, a comprehensive landscape-wide strategy will require the PAs to review and revise their plans.	Draft management frameworks and governance models for PAs in place	Approved management plans aligned to the PAN conservation strategy and validated governance models in place and operational	Minutes of meetings and consultations, management frameworks and governance models for PAs, validated revised and aligned plans to the PAN conservation strategy	

	Number of Protected Area Management (PAM) staff actively enforcing the provisions and obligations of the PAN, Management frameworks and governance models	Capacity and personnel remain limited, especially from an enforcement standpoint.	20 PAM staff are able and actively participating in enforcement of the protected Area network (PAN) Conservation Strategy, management frameworks and governance models	47 PAM staff are able and actively participating in enforcement of the protected Area network (PAN) Conservation Strategy, management frameworks and governance models	Staff training workshops reports Minutes of meetings Capacitated PAM staff on PAN conservation strategy Training manuals Certificates issued	of the network ? Lack of buy-in from all members of the network ? Lack of resources and personnel from understaffed EFS and NDMA authorities

	Number of Protected Area Integrated Fire Management Systems in place and under implementation	Currently, adhoc fire management networks exist in Eswatini, especially common among forest plantations and their neighboring communities. Existing PAs already have environmental management plans that govern their operations. National fire management committee exist	Draft integrated fire management system with inputs from local communities is in place A draft handbook developed on fire and its management	Approved protected area integrated fire management system that incorporate both PAs and CFs is in place and operational for Mbuluzi landscape A fire management handbook in place	Minutes of consultative meetings; Bilateral agreements; Minutes of meetings and consultations between PAs, communities and the institutions (ENTC, NDMA, EFS, etc.); Validated integrated fire management systems being implemented.		
	Area of terrestrial protected areas under improved management for conservation and sustainable use in the Mbuluzi landscape	32,676 ha of protected areas in the Mbuluzi basin are under dire need of improved management for effective conservation and sustainable use	15,000 ha of protected areas are under improved management for conservation and sustainable use	32,676 ha of protected areas are under improved management for conservation and sustainable use	Landscape maps Annual monitoring outputs and reports documenting status of the biodiversity		

Outputs:

3.1: A protected Area network (PAN) Conservation Strategy for the Mbuluzi landscape developed and implemented

3.2: Management frameworks and governance models for PAs including Management plans revised, aligned with the PAN and implemented

3.3: Capacity of Protected Area Management (PAM) staff strengthened to implement the PAN, enforce provisions and obligations of Management frameworks and governance models on good governance systems

3.4: Protected Area Integrated fire management systems, that include participation of local communities, developed and implemented for Biodiversity and ecological infrastructure enhancement in Mbuluzi landscape

3.5: Management Effectiveness of Mbuluzi landscape PAs monitored and tracked

4: Women and youth engagement strategy on biodiversity and land degradation developed and implemented.	M&E reports based on actual data that show trends in adoption of SLM and ecosystem based approaches	Current M&E reports do not show trends in adoption of SLM and ecosystem based approaches	M&E reports based on actual data showing trends in adoption of SLM and ecosystem based approaches	All the tikhundla in the project implementation area producing M&E reports based on actual data showing trends in adoption of SLM and ecosystem based approaches	PIR report, Annual progress reports, monitoring reports, minutes of meetings, informant interviews, questionnaire administration	**Assumptions**: ? Selected tikhundla are cooperative and committed to improved E&M for progress reporting, learning and adopting SLM and ILM practices.	

Project supported communities, tikhundla and protected area management replicating shared best practices and lessons learned at landscape, national and regional levels	There is limited adoption of best practices and lessons learned from projects and other government interventions at landscape, national and regional level	At least 4 project-supported entities (communities, tikhundla, protected area management) adopting / replicating best practices and lessons learned at landscape level	At least 10 project-supported entities (communities, tikhundla, protected area management) adopting / replicating best practices and lessons learned at landscape level	PIR report, Annual progress reports, monitoring reports, minutes of meetings, informant interviews, questionnaire administration	? There is ownership and uptake of best practices by communities, tikhundla and protected area management ? Stakeholders across the range of sectors required are willing to participate in the multi-stakeholder platforms and make them effective ? There is acceptance of changes to social and cultural practices to accommodate the empowerment of women and youth to equitably participate in decision making and benefit sharing from project interventions at all levels. **Risks:** ? Capacity and resources
Landscape level African Forests Landscape Restoration (AFR) 100 multistakeholder platforms in place and championing SLM practices	Although multistakeholder platforms exist at landscape level, they are not specifically established to champion ILM under the AFR100 platform	At least one landscape level multi-stakeholder platform (AFR100) in place and actively championing ILM practices in the Mbuluzi basin	At least two landscape level multi-stakeholder platform (AFR100) in place and actively championing ILM practices in the Mbuluzi basin	PIR report, Annual progress reports, monitoring reports, minutes of meetings, informant interviews, questionnaire administration	
An engagement strategy to mainstream women and youth participation project activities is in place and operational.	There is usually an unequitable participation of women, youth and other marginalized and vulnerable groups in many investment projects	Project protocols and strategy for gender and youth mainstreaming in project activities are developed	Project protocols and strategy for gender and youth mainstreaming in project activities are validated and operational	PIR report, Annual progress reports, monitoring reports, minutes of meetings, informant interviews, questionnaire administration	

	Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender directly benefiting from GEF interventions	Past GEF interventions in the country have usually involved a sizeable number of beneficiaries in their interventions	100,000 beneficiaries (50,000 women and 50,000 men) are actively participating in GEF interventions	100,000 beneficiaries (50,000 women and 50,000 men) are actively participating and benefiting from GEF interventions	Project reports, Meeting minutes, local committee memberships	constraints limit the achievement of the targets and implementation of the M&E system. ? There is limited local level ownership/buy-in of project activities by stakeholders that limits up scaling of the M&E system ? Partnerships are limited with key institutions/ champions to drive the behavior change that is required ? Poor equitable representation and participation of social groups ? Social and cultural barriers inhibit equitable participation by women and youth.	

Outputs:

4.1: Systems established for monitoring progress and outcomes of the project

4.2: Documentation, publication and dissemination of best practices and lessons learnt

4.3: Multi-stakeholder platforms (AFR 100) to champion INRM practices in the country established

4.4: Women and youth engagement protocol adopted for the project

ANNEX B: 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).

Response to GEF Council Comments for Eswatini

GEF Council Review Comments

GEF Council Comments	Response

Canada Comments Canada notes that the proposed project will promote the adoption and application of integrated sustainable land management and ecosystem restoration technologies, and enhance management of three protected areas within the Mbuluzi River Basin, a major source of water for agricultural activities as well as rural and urban water supplies. The desired outcome is the creation of an eco-resilient and highly productive Mbuluzi River landscape and effectively managed protected areas providing critical ecosystem goods and services, which will ultimately contribute to improved rural livelihoods and national, regional, and global environmental benefits. It is complementary to the UNFCCC, the UNCCD, and the CBD and the Aichi targets.	NA
Germany Comments Germany approves the following PIF in the work program but requests that the following comments are taken into account: - Germany welcomes the project?s focuses on LDN targets to mainstream landscape approaches into existing structures, practices and policy, while targeting activities at catchment level and recognizing local communities as the custodians of landscapes and biodiversity, with their crucial role in conservation and LDN. Germany requests that the following requirements are taken into account during the design of the final project proposal:	NA
? Synergies with CBD and UNFCCC targets could be further materialized through project activities, e.g. soil mapping can contribute to the countries NDCs.	The synergies with CBD and UNFCCC are described in the last paragraph of section 6 of the CEO ER. Activity 2.1.1 which will focus on identify degraded areas and initiate restoration and protection planning will include soil mapping as a contribution to NDCs of the country.
? Clarification on the land ownership is needed: Who owns the project land and under which of the country?s three main land categories does it fall?	The following clarification has been made; ?Since the project aims to enhance the most affected areas, all the project sites in the communities are categorized as communal land (Swazi Nation Land - SNL tenure system) while the project sites in protected areas which are categorized as Title Deed Land (TDL)?. This has been clarified in the CEO ER under Annex E that describes the project implementation sites.

? Germany requests further elaboration on the contribution of the project towards the Trans-Frontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) (border to Mozambique).	The Trans Frontier Conservation Areas is mentioned in section 1.2.2 (Associated baseline projects) as being implemented by COSPE. In addition, an elaboration of the contribution of the project towards the Trans-Frontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) (border to Mozambique) is given in the introduction to Component 3 and the application of lessons learnt is addressed in Activity 3.1.3 of Output 3.1.
? Germany requests to include reference to international processes, namely the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and to include fringe effects in the monitoring of the 700 ha reforested land. Otherwise, 700 ha do not seem to be ambitious enough.	The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration is cited in the CEO ER under section 1.6.3 part 2 as a pillar to the country?s NDP and the success of the proposed project. The overall goal of the project is landscape restoration through 3 approaches i.e. 700 ha through reforestation, 20,000 ha through integrated land management techniques, and another 30,000 ha through sustainable land management.
? Germany requests to include capacity development activities that may improve the barriers 2 and 4 of underdeveloped capacity for SLM. E.g., by setting up a country to country (peer-to-peer) learning program with a neighboring country like South Africa (through the likes of e.g., Hoedspruit Hub ? also supported by GIZ SA program E4D).	The project has included capacity development and knowledge sharing in Outputs 2.2 (Activities 2.2.1 and 2.2.2), Output 2.3. (Activities 2.3.1 and 2.3.2) Output 2.4 (Activity 2.4.1), Output 2.7 (Activities 2.7.1 and 2.7.2), Output 3.3 (Activities 3.3.1 and 3.3.2), Output 3.4 (Activities 3.4.5 and 3.4.6) and Output 4.1 (Activity 4.1.4). The peer-to-peer learning program is envisaged and has been included in Output 4.3 (Multistakeholder platforms).
? Germany recommends to cooperate with the Wilderness Foundation Africa, working on protected areas to develop innovative finance and policy structures (www.conservationmag.org), in order to create synergies and avoid duplication.	We welcome the suggestion for cooperation with the Wilderness Foundation Africa. We will proactively engage with WFA and similar stakeholders. A full list and modus operandi of such cooperation will be fully completed during inception.
? Emphasize on eSwatini remaining a net carbon sink through project outcomes.	The project emphasizes eSwatini?s focus on remaining a net carbon sink and therefore contributing to SDG 13 as documented in Core Indicator 6.
? Financing aspects should find stronger consideration in the current proposal in order to contribute to the sustainability of the project and its activities.	We have been able to mobilize a total of USD 31,760,400 as co-financing commitments for the project. This indicates the strong consideration for this project both from the government and non-governmental/civil society organizations.

Response to STAP comments

Part I: Project Information	Response		Response by project proponents
GEF ID	10695		
Project Title	Restoration of ecosystems, integrated natural resource management and promotion of SLM in Mbuluzi River Basin of Eswatini		
Date of Screening	May 28, 2021		
STAP member screener	Graciela Metternicht		
STAP secretariat screener	Guadalupe Duron		
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	**Minor issues to be considered during project design**		
	STAP welcomes UNEP?s project ?Restoration of ecosystems, integrated natural resource management and promotion of SLM in Mbuluzi River Basin of Eswatini?. The project aims to address land and forest degradation and biodiversity loss.		NA
	STAP encourages the project developers to define the landscape approach that will be applied to address the drivers of degradation and biodiversity loss. Currently, it is unclear whether a Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) approach will be used as the framework that will underpin the land use plans, integrated landscape management activities, to address the set objectives on land, forest, and biodiversity.		The landscape approach has been defined in section 3.1 of the ProDoc (Project rationale, policy conformity and expected global environmental benefits) as well as Component 2 in the ProDoc and CEO ER. The innovativeness of the LDN approach is included in section 3.7 of the ProDoc and section 1.6.1 of the CEO ER.

	Additionally, it would be useful the project considers trade-offs between biodiversity conservation, agricultural productivity, and ecosystem restoration. Addressing trade-offs will make the land use plans more robust, and could reduce potential conflicts over land use.		The identification of trade-offs during the process of land use planning will be done during implementation of Activity 2.1.1 of Output 2.1 (see Output 2.1 in the ProDoc and CEO ER)
	STAP notes that Eswatini and the project sites are experiencing drought. To make the project interventions enduring to long-term drivers, such as drought, STAP recommends ensuring the causal pathways identified are sufficient to deal with these risks.		The project has identified sufficient causal pathways to the environmental problems, including drought in the problem tree (Figure 10 in the CEO ER) and Theory of Change (Figure 12 in the CEO ER). These are elaborated in the text found in sections 1.1.2, 1.1.3 and 1.1.4 of the CEO ER.
	STAP further notes that more research is needed in the PPG phase to capture a wealth of lessons published from previous non-GEF projects implemented in Eswatini, as well as published science-based evidence on challenges around community based participatory project planning. Including lessons from previous projects that had similar objectives of reducing land degradation, conserving ecosystem services, while maintaining and diversifying livelihoods of the rural communities will bring innovation to this proposed project.		A broad range of studies and lessons drawn from other GEF and non-GEF projects were explored and documented for this project. These are include and/or cited throughout the project proposal (e.g. see section 1.2.2 of the CEO ER).

	STAP encourages uptake of past lessons in co-operated agribusiness, cooperative public private partnerships, market-based instruments that have demonstrated the capacity to avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation at landscape level while providing opportunities for sustainable livelihoods to youth and women, a highly vulnerable sector of the population ?as stated in the project.		
	STAP notes that less than 10% of the budget is committed to Knowledge management, sharing and monitoring and evaluation. Sufficient funding for dissemination, communication and monitoring of activities is key to ensure sustainability of the proposed outputs and outcomes, and the realization of the expected GEBs (which can take beyond the four years of funding sought).		The budget committed to knowledge management, sharing (including training), monitoring and evaluation (including review meetings) stands at slightly above 16%. This has been committed as follows: Component 4 ($260,351), M&E ($205,851), Dissemination and sharing through meetings under budget line 3302 in Components 1 and 2 ($72,500) and knowledge sharing through training under budget line 3201 ? 3203 in component 2 ($72,110). We believe that this is adequate to build momentum and ensure sustainability of project outputs and outcomes.
Part I: Project Information **B. Indicative Project Description Summary**	**What STAP looks for**	**Response**	
Project Objective	Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?	Yes, the objective is clearly defined.	N/A

Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project?s objectives?	Yes, the planned activities support the project objectives.	N/A
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits?	Yes, the outcomes focus on reduced land degradation, and improved management of three nature reserves that are expected to enhance biodiversity.	N/A
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Yes, with good monitoring, evaluation, and learning, and a good theory of change.	N/A
Outputs	A description of the products and services which are expected to result from the project. Is the sum of the outputs likely to contribute to the outcomes?	Yes.	N/A
Part II: Project justification	A simple narrative explaining the project?s logic, i.e. a theory of change.		
1. Project description. Briefly describe: 1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)	Is the problem statement well-defined?	Yes, the problem statement is well defined. Problems include deforestation as a result of conversion of land for agriculture and settlements, extraction of timber and non-timber forest products. The project also will focus on overexploitation of rangelands, which has occurred as a result of unsustainable grazing and unsustainable crop production.	N/A

	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Yes, the barriers are well described. Barriers include: lack of capacity to design and implement integrated land management plans; values of ecosystem goods and services are not embedded into land management plans; lack of experience on sustainable land management at the landscape scale; and ineffective management of protected areas (i.e. valuing and managing ecosystems are secondary to wildlife tourism).	N/A
		STAP encourages the project team to research outcomes of past projects (non-UNEP, non-GEF) that have identified how to effectively address some of the barriers and challenges this PIF identifies.	The project team has done research on related projects (GEF and non-GEF) and these, including the lessons drawn from them, have also been cited throughout the project document. These will continue to provide strong lessons during project implementation.
	For multiple focal area projects: does the problem statement and analysis identify the drivers of environmental degradation which need to be addressed through multiple focal areas; and is the objective well-defined, and can it only be supported by integrating two, or more focal areas objectives or programs?	Yes, the drivers of degradation need to address by investments in sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation. The project objective can only be reached by integrating sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation, using a landscape approach and linking the proposed interventions to the national plan for LDN.	N/A
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Yes, the baseline narrative describes initiatives on land use planning, and biodiversity conservation in Eswatini.	N/A

		While the narrative describes past GEF projects and current projects of partners, there are significant omissions of past projects funded by the likes of the African Development Bank, others implemented by ILRI (e.g. The Swazi Beef project:successes, challenges and lessons learned). STAP encourages a thorough desktop search and review of past projects conducted in Eswatini to avoid the potential of duplicating efforts funded by past projects, and to learn from those interventions valuable lessons on successes and failures.	The project has been developed with a diverse collection of stakeholders. Past projects have been elaborately documented in the project proposal. At some point, stakeholders agreed on the most relevant projects to document and list in the project proposal. To avoid duplication, as suggested by the reviewer, the review of relevant projects, past and present, that have been or are being implemented in Eswatini will continue to be documented at inception as well as during implementation.

	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project?s benefits?	Yes ? and suggest defining a quantitative baseline on land and forest degradation, and biodiversity conservation during the PPG. It is unclear whether the LDN targets will be used as the baseline.	A quantitative baseline has been determined as 700 ha of communal land and riverine areas currently degraded, 20,000 ha of agricultural land currently degraded, -827,477 tCo2e currently sequestered, 32,676 ha of protected area under current management. The approach to define the landscape approach is based on the National Voluntary Targets on LDN which seek to avoid, minimize and/or reverse land degradation; reduce current annual loss of forest to cropland; increase forest cover through afforestation and agroforestry programmes; increase land productivity; increase the amount of land set aside for nature and wildlife conservation; rehabilitate degraded and abandoned land for crop production.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Yes.	N/A
	For multiple focal area projects:		
	are the multiple baseline analyses presented (supported by data and references), and the multiple benefits specified, including the proposed indicators;	Yes, the baseline narrative describes efforts on land management and biodiversity conservation. It is expected that baseline indicators will be identified during the PPG.	The baseline indicators have been identified during the PPG phase (see Annex A: Results Framework and Annex F: GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet)

	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	Yes.	N/A
	How did these lessons inform the design of this project?	Suggest describing how lessons learned, or best practices, from the baseline initiatives will inform this project. STAP appreciates the link made between the GEF 5 project on protected areas and this initiative.	The lessons learnt or best practices from the associated projects and how they will inform this project has been elaborated in section 1.2.2 of the CEO ER

3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	A narrative description and theory of change figure is provided in an annex. A brief summary of the theory of change is: ?The project will promote integrated sustainable land management and ecosystem restoration to safeguard the integrity of key ecosystems in the Mbuluzi Catchment in Eswatini. The project will ensure that the sustainable management of ecosystem goods and services is fully integrated into national and local level development planning. It will also build upon the strong commitment by the Government of Eswatini to promote productivity through improved biomes and productive ecosystems in the Mbuluzi catchment. The project is fully aligned with Eswatini?s National Voluntary Targets on Land Degradation Neutrality. The Targets were defined during a LDN Target Setting Process, and seek to avoid, minimize and reverse land degradation; reduce current annual loss of forest to cropland; increase forest cover through afforestation and agroforestry programmes; increase land productivity in all the country?s four regions through SLM practices; increase the amount of land set aside for nature and wildlife conservation; rehabilitate degraded and abandoned land for crop production. The project	N/A

		will be implemented through four components that strengthen policy frameworks; enhances ecosystem restoration through SLM; effective management of three protected areas; and monitoring, evaluation and learning to enhance knowledge.	
		STAP notes that some outcomes and outputs are dependent on ?behavior change? and therefore encourages the team to apply the advice provided in theSTAP workpresented in the December 2020 Council (Why behavior change matters to the GEF and what to do about it), and its related review ofliterature and projectsthat have included behavioral change.	This advice by STAP was seriously considered during PPG. The project outcomes, outputs and activities were elaborated based on stakeholders? insights. This will continue to be the practice as described in Appendix 12 (Stakeholder Engagement Plan). In addition, due consideration was given to the fact that Eswatini is a monarchy and therefore cultural and traditional values are given considerable attention. Therefore, the outcomes and outputs were elaborated with this is mind. Women and the youth are singled out in Outcome 4 as a special group for active engagement in ILM and Biodiversity conservation given their present status in decision making
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	See above.	The sequence of events that will lead to the desired outcomes are given in Appendix 6 - Key Deliverables and Benchmarks

	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project?s objectives?	See above.	The set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project?s objectives are provided in detail in Appendix 4 - Results Framework and graphically in summary in the CEO ER as Figure 12 ? Theory of Change
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Suggest better identifying the assumptions, risks (external and internal to the project) that underlie each of the four outcomes. The underlying assumptions of the theory of change that ?Government is fully committed to the conservation and sustainable use of the Mbuluzi river basin (pg. 40) is very general, and vague to an extent?. The project team is encourage to familiarize with the STAP Primer on Theory of Change, and to develop well-informed underlying assumptions.	The assumptions that underlie each outcome are presented elaborately in Annex A (Results Framework). At the ToC level, the general assumption presented as ?Government is fully committed to the conservation and sustainable use of the Mbuluzi river basin? is meant for impact or result level.

	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	Unclear. Suggest considering what adaptations will be needed as the theory of change is applied, and outcomes are being monitored and evaluated.	As the Theory of Change is being applied, the different adaptations that will be required during project implementation are elaborated in Output 4.1, including the design and development of an M&E system at the very outset of project implementation, and explained through activities 4.1.1 to 4.1.5. in addition, best practices and lessons learnt will be documented on a rolling basis (Output 4.2). Further adaptations to be applied during project implementation are also described in sections 6(c) and 9 of the CEO ER.
5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEF trust fund, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing	GEF trust fund: will the proposed incremental activities lead to the delivery of global environmental benefits? LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	Possibly. The main thrust of the project is to strengthen landscape management to address land and forest degradation, and enhance ecosystem services. To track progress in achieving the global environmental outcomes, STAP recommends complementing the GEF?s core indicators by identifying metrics to monitor landscape management in the target sites. Additionally, suggest identifying metrics that can track this project?s contribution to the Aichi Target 12. In this regard, STAP recommends the PPG adopts the targets to be approved through the post-2020 global biodiversity framework that will supersede the Aichi Targets.	The comment is noted and efforts to track global environmental outcomes, especially through the post-2020 global biodiversity framework will be re-examined at inception, since the GBF is still under negotiation. We hope that by the time of project inception, perhaps the GBF will have been adopted by CBD COP15. As already indicated in Output 4.1, an elaborate M&E system will be developed at inception and this will consider the issue of monitoring of global environmental outcomes.

6) global environmental benefits (GEF trust fund) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)	Are the benefits truly global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits, and are they measurable?	Yes, the global environmental benefits stated are valid. As the project is developed, STAP recommends defining further the landscape management activities, including the SLM and SFM activities that will contribute to land productivity across the four sites. Currently, these SLM activities do not appear to be defined in the proposal. Similarly, it would be valuable for the project to detail the biodiversity conservation activities that will help improve species conservation in the three selected protected area sites. Providing further details on SLM, SFM, and species conservation will help balance the afforestation and fire management activities described in component 2 and component 3. To this end the STAP strongly recommends the project proponents to become acquainted with the Scientific Conceptual Framework of land degradation neutrality and the Guidelines for LDNinterventions within GEF funded projects.	The SLM and biodiversity conservation activities are now defined in detail in Outputs 2.1-2.7 and 3.1 ? 3.5. The development of the activities, especially for SLM was strongly based on the National Voluntary Targets on LDN which seek to avoid, minimize and/or reverse land degradation; reduce current annual loss of forest to cropland; increase forest cover through afforestation and agroforestry programmes; increase land productivity; increase the amount of land set aside for nature and wildlife conservation; rehabilitate degraded and abandoned land for crop production.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Possibly. Recommend developing a separate theory of change on scaling to achieve the project?s goal of ?supporting the country?s transformational agenda to achieve greater environmental and economic security?. Refer to point #7 below for further advice on scaling.	We believe that the scale of the project benefits is proportional to the expected investment. In addition, a plan for scaling up the project benefits is presented in section 1.6.3 of the CEO ER. However, the separate theory of change for scaling up will be developed at inception.

	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits explicitly defined?	Yes, the global environmental benefits are defined.	N/A
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	Core indicators are provided on protected areas under improved management, area of land restored, area of landscape under improved practices, and areas of landscape under sustainable land management in production systems.	N/A
		ExAct was used to calculate GHG emissions from agricultural systems (maize and beans). The project team might also consider the UNCCD?s SPImethodology to calculate the carbon benefits.	We used the FAO Ex-Act tool to calculate GHG emissions and were satisfied that this was adequate. During the computation, we used several metrics that are specific to the Mbuluzi landscape and its management (which are contained in Appendix 16).
		Additionally, the project could usefully identify metrics for landscape management, which target environmental and social benefits. Metrics should be specific to the landscape context encompassing the monitoring and evaluation of agricultural production, biodiversity conservation, social and institutional variables (activities affiliated with components 1, 2, and 3).	We agree. This will be done at inception.

		It also would beneficially for stakeholders to identify trade-offs and synergies in their respective land use plans between sustainable land management, biodiversity conservation, and other social benefits. Trade-offs and synergies will be better managed if they are identified in the design of land use plans.STAP?s guidelines on LDNwould usefully assist in developing land use plans bearing in mind trade-offs related to LDN.	The identification of trade-offs during the process of land use planning will be done during implementation of Activity 2.1.1 of Output 2.1 (see Output 2.1 in the ProDoc and CEO ER)
		STAP notes that Component 2 needs to include an assessment of ?land potential? (see LDN guidelines).	An assessment of ?land potential? will be part of the land use assessment which will be conducted at the outset of the project as output 2.1
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project?s resilience to climate change?	Disaster risk and management plans will be developed for certain sites. Although STAP welcomes this effort, it suggests better framing and the application of theGEF guidelines for climatechange screeningto ensure activities proposed will decrease vulnerability to climate change and increase resilience of people and the landscapes.	We welcome the STAP advice and this will be taken into account when developing the disaster risk and management plans at the inception of the project.

7) innovative, sustainability and potential for scaling-up	Is the project innovative, for example, in its design, method of financing, technology, business model, policy, monitoring and evaluation, or learning?	The project is innovative within its context ? that is, building capacity to design and implement landscape approaches for land and forest management, and biodiversity conservation. The project could, however, apply further innovation in the design of activities leading to expected outputs and outcomes. The STAP suggests review of literature and past projects that have been led in the region, pursuing similar outputs and outcomes. Some examples of ideas that are innovative, have been applied in the region and are not mentioned in this PIF: co-operated agribusiness; cooperative public and private partnerships. Science-based evidence also exists for other innovative ways to achieve LDN while conserving biodiversity and enhancing livelihoods: market-based instruments for LDN, Indigenous Protected Areas, and community based management of national parks. The aforementioned instruments are mentioned as example of interventions that can avoid, reduce or reverse land degradation (see the LDN Conceptual framework for more guidance).	We welcome this advice provided by STAP. We engaged several stakeholder meetings to discuss areas of innovativeness. Consensus was developed around the areas described in the project and summarized in section 1.6.1 of the CEO ER. Several past and ongoing projects with similar objectives, provided lessons during PPG as explained in section 1.2.2, component 4 and section 8 of the CEO ER. A full context analysis was undertaken in the case of gender and youth mainstreaming resulting in the Appendices 11 (Gender analysis) and 12 (Stakeholder analysis). In case of any further dynamics, it is proposed that further consultations will be undertaken during inception.

		STAP wishes to note that while a multi-sectoral approach can be seen innovative, the LDN conceptual framework ?expects? that interventions be multi-sectoral.	We agree with this. The project will undertake a multi-sectoral strategy driven by the LDN approach to biodiversity conservation and land restoration and use.
		Lastly, in regard to innovation, STAP recommends the PPG phase conducts context analysis around education and preferred means of women and youth to access materials for learning and capacity building. The PIF states ?*Innovation through use of audio-visual, social media and interactive materials on conservation issues for education, awareness and advocacy will be developed, involving community-based organizations and building their capacities to reach out to the communities.?* However, these means may not be suitable to the context (e.g. what is the internet capability, do women use social media, do they have access to smartphone or other type of devises that can cater for these audio-visuals proposed?)	The PPG phase conducted a context analysis in the areas of education, women and youth. These are included in the Appendix 11 - Gender Analysis and Action Plan

	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	The project could usefully develop a separate theory of change on scaling to achieve its ultimate goal of ?supporting the country?s transformational agenda to achieve greater environmental and economic security?. Developing a theory of change for transformation involves developing credible causal pathways that address scaling ? including its barriers and enablers. Scaling often will involve multiple forms of innovation and alignment between local sociocultural needs and values and global environmental outcomes. The project team should be cognizant, therefore, of the barriers and enablers, for scaling focused on social-cultural values, needs, and rules. Refer to STAP?s advice on transformation (Upcoming as a paper to GEF council in June 2021) and theory of change primer.	We believe that the scale of the project benefits is proportional to the expected investment. In addition, a plan for scaling up the project benefits is presented in section 1.6.3 of the CEO ER. However, the separate theory of change for scaling up will be developed at inception.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	It is likely that both, incremental, and transformational, change will be required to maintain resilience of the targeted social-ecological systems. Suggest using the theory of change to generate knowledge and learning by monitoring the outcomes while looking for opportunities to adapt (incremental change) or transform more fundamentally its pathway.	We welcome this advice from STAP. This will be taken into consideration right from inception into project implementation.

1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		The PIF includes several maps of the Mbuluzi river basin. One of the maps possibly focuses on the target sites, but this is unclear. Suggest providing a better maps of the target sites and their land uses in the final project document. STAP?s advice on the use of earth observationmight also be useful to the project team as land use plans are developed.	Better maps have now been included in the CEO ER, including a separate map for each target site, land use, livelihoods, soils, protected areas.
2. Stakeholders. Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase: Indigenous people and local communities; Civil society organizations; Private sector entities. If none of the above, please explain why. In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement.	Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?	Yes. It would be good to revisit the stakeholders as the projects is designed and developed. This will ensure a stakeholder engagement process that is ongoing and linked to the project needs.	Stakeholder will be engaged during the inception phase of the project to review and update the stakeholder engagement plan.
		During the consultation processes, STAP highly recommends for the project activities to be formulated based on stakeholders? socio-cultural values and needs. Paying close attention to the socio-cultural context and values during the project design and implementation will assist in understanding stakeholders? motivations for behavioral change.	The emphasis on participatory approaches will aim to build trust and legitimacy, which will strengthen the projects capacity to bring about the desired behavior change. STAP?s advice on behavior change will be considered during stakeholder engagement during the inception phase.

		Furthermore, the project proponents should aim to build trust and legitimacy during the stakeholder engagement process. Such efforts establish relationships that facilitate the uptake of behavioral change interventions, which are linked to scaling and transformational change. STAP?s advice on behavioral changewould be useful to consider during stakeholder consultations.	The participation of stakeholders is fundamental to the project, with the emphasis on capacity building and the transfer of roles and responsibilities for SML and biodiversity conservation to stakeholders at national, landscape and local levels. Stakeholder engagement and participation of therefore central to the design and implementation of the project. Approaches will include a range of participatory tools and techniques such as social learning and community based monitoring, taking into consideration gender responsiveness and the inclusion of youth.
	What are the stakeholders? roles, and how will their combined roles contribute to robust project design, to achieving global environmental outcomes, and to lessons learned and knowledge?	Please address question to the left during the project design.	These were addressed during the design of the project.

3. Gender Equality and Women?s Empowerment. Please briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis). Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment? Yes/no/ tbd. If possible, indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality: access to and control over resources; participation and decision making; and/or economic benefits or services. Will the project?s results framework or logical framework include gender sensitive indicators? yes/no /tbd	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	Yes. The PIF identifies the gendered differentiated risks and opportunities, along with preliminary response measures. As the project is developed, STAP recommends paying close attention to power dynamics, and other social factors (e.g. culture, ethnicity, age) influencing interactions between men and women within the stakeholder group. The STAP recommends the project team consider experiences on women empowerment reported in: Kunene, N. A. "The role of rural development projects on women empowerment in Eswatini: a case study of the Lower Usuthu Development Project (Lusip) Phase 1." PhD diss., University of the Free State, 2020. And for better inclusion of youth: Okwusi, M. C. "Youths attitude to rural development projects in Ogba communities of Rivers state, Nigeria." *Global Approaches to Extension Practice: A Journal of Agricultural Extension* 4, no. 1 (2008): 11-19. And these publications as reference for participatory planning in general: Musyo ki, Benjamin Mang'atu, John Bosco Kisimbii, and Dorothy Ndunge Kyalo. "Participatory Project Planning Approaches:	The consideration of key issues such as power relations and social dynamics is recognized as key to the project design and will be considered and incorporated at all stages of the project. Reference to the key reports and literature if noted with thanks, and will be incorporated during the inception phase.

		Reflections from Community Development Initiatives in Low Resourced Countries." Journal of Entrepreneurship & Project management 4, no. 5 (2020): 51-67. Dlamini, Marietta P., Welcome M. Mkhaliphi, and Sibusiso T. Mbingo. "Impact of Microprojects Program on Poverty Alleviation in Rural and Periurban Eswatini/Swaziland." Asian Journal of Agricultural Extension, Economics & Sociology (2019): 1-10.	
	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?	Please address question to the left during the project design.	The Gender Action Plan (Appendix 11) recognizes the constraints to the participation of women, and presents a range of project approaches to address these including introducing elements of dualism and empowerment. Furthermore the development of a gender and youth strategy for the project is one of the four project components, and the focus of this component will develop detailed actions to ensure effective participation of women and youth.

5. Risks. Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design	Are the identified risks valid and comprehensive? Are the risks specifically for things outside the project?s control? Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project? For climate risk, and climate resilience measures: ? How will the project?s objectives or outputs be affected by climate risks over the period 2020 to 2050, and have the impact of these risks been addressed adequately? ? Has the sensitivity to climate change, and its impacts, been assessed? ? Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these be dealt with? What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will be needed to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures?	The risks are identified in the PIF along with mitigation responses. STAP recommends paying close attention to climate variability (mentioned as natural hazards in the risk section), given the incidence and extent of drought in the country, and target sites. In addition to considering the questions stated on the left during project design and implementation, STAP suggests developing two, or three, alternative pathways. This scenario planning will help the project manage and respond to long-term drivers, such as drought, economic slow-down, and others (e.g. COVID, AIDS). Refer to STAP?s advice on theory of changeand durabilityfor assistance on scenario planning. The following paper also may be useful for thinking about scenario planning: Moallemi, E. A., et al. "Evaluating Participatory Modeling Methods for Co?creating Pathways to Sustainability." Earth's Future 9.3 (2021): e2020EF001843.	The risks and their mitigation measures have been elaborately described in Appendix 10 as well as in Table 4 of the CEO ER
6. Coordination. Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other related initiatives	Are the project proponents tapping into relevant knowledge and learning generated by other projects, including GEF projects?	Yes. However, STAP recommends to continue tapping into relevant knowledge from other non-GEF funded projects in the area (e.g. African Dev Bank, ILRI, etc.).	We welcome the advice from STAP and will do so accordingly

	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	Partly. Lessons learned from some initiatives are described, but not for others. Suggest adding a table listing the projects, specifying the lessons, and how these lessons will inform the design of this project.	The lessons from previous (and ongoing) projects, although not tabulated, have been listed for each project in section 1.2.2 of the CEO ER. These lessons were very informative during the PPG.
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	See above.	The lessons from previous (and ongoing) projects, although not tabulated, have been listed for each project in section 1.2.2 of the CEO ER. These lessons were very informative during the PPG.
	How have these lessons informed the project?s formulation?	See above.	The lessons from previous (and ongoing) projects, although not tabulated, have been listed for each project in section 1.2.2 of the CEO ER. These lessons were very informative during the PPG.
	Is there an adequate mechanism to feed the lessons learned from earlier projects into this project, and to share lessons learned from it into future projects?	Yes, component 4 and the theory of change.	N/A
8. Knowledge management. Outline the ?Knowledge Management Approach? for the project, and how it will contribute to the project?s overall impact, including plans to learn from relevant projects, initiatives and evaluations.	What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?	The project will rely on South-South cooperation, systematic analysis of lessons learned from past projects for sharing information, and scaling results.	N/A

		STAP recommends connecting component 4 on monitoring to the theory of change. This will ensure that the theory of change is adapted according to the knowledge and learning gained during monitoring and evaluation.	Agreed. This will be further developed during inception phase.
		STAP recommends reviewing the budget to ensure that the less than 10% of the funding requested is enough to ensure KM that is sustainable overtime. STAP recommends explicit plan in the PPG to show how the knowledge generated will be shared with the community beyond Eswatini (e.g. using the WOCAT as a repository of best practice in SLM that empower women and youth in projects with objectives like the ones proposed in this PIF).	The budget committed to knowledge management, sharing (including training), monitoring and evaluation (including review meetings) stands at slightly above 16%. We believe that this is adequate to build momentum and ensure sustainability of project outputs and outcomes.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	Suggest describing plans for disseminating results and lessons. This appears to be missing in the PIF. For scaling, suggest referring to the advice described above on this topic.	Output 4.2 of component 4 focusses on publications and dissemination of best practices and lessons learned. The Appendix 14 Sustainability Plan and Exit Strategy also addresses this. The landscape level AFR 100 platforms also provide an important mechanisms for disseminating lessons and upscaling.

Below, STAP offers further advice on these issues.

Notes

STAP advisory response	Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed
1. Concur	STAP acknowledges that on scientific or technical grounds the concept has merit. The proponent is invited to approach STAP for advice at any time during the development of the project brief prior to submission for CEO endorsement.
	* In cases where the STAP acknowledges the project has merit on scientific and technical grounds, the STAP will recognize this in the screen by stating that ***?STAP is satisfied with the scientific and technical quality of the proposal and encourages the proponent to develop it with same rigor. At any time during the development of the project, the proponent is invited to approach STAP to consult on the design.?***
2. Minor issues to be considered during project design	STAP has identified specific scientific /technical suggestions or opportunities that should be discussed with the project proponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. The proponent may wish to:
	(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised;
	(ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development, and possibly agreeing to terms of reference for an independent expert to be appointed to conduct this review.
	The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.
3. Major issues to be considered during project design	STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical methodological issues, barriers, or omissions in the project concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. The proponent is strongly encouraged to:
	(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised; (ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development including an independent expert as required. The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.

ANNEX C: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG). (Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:

Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

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

PPG Grant Approved at PIF:			
Project Preparation Activities Implemented	***GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount ($)***		
	Budgeted Amount	***Amount Spent To date***	***Amount Committed***
Project Design Expert / international consultant	45,450	45,450	0
Biodiversity national expert	20,000	20,000	0
Sustainable Land Management (SLM) national expert	20,000	20,000	0
social safeguards and gender consultant	10,000	10,000	0
PPG National consultant	20,000	20,000	0
Travel	5,000	5,000	0
meetings/workshops/consultations	29,550	29,550	0
Total	150,000	150,000	0

ANNEX D: Project Map(s) and Coordinates

Please attach the geographical location of the project area, if possible.

The map below is for areas of project implementation in the Mbuluzi river basin.

Figure 14. Areas of the project implementation in the Mbuluzi river basin

The coordinates of each specific site of project implementation are indicated below

Please refer to the following figures in the attached CEO endorsement for all the maps with their coordinates including the actual sites.

Figure 15. Msengeni area (latitude -26.018745? and longitude 32.028895?) under Lomahasha inkhundla.

Figure 16.Sifundza area (latitude -26.055561? and longitude 32.038918?) under Lomahasha inkhundla.

Figure 17. Mliba area (latitude -26.201003? and longitude 31.589460?) under Mkhiweni inkhundla.

Figure 18.Mbelebeleni area (latitude -26.277368? and longitude 31.456129?) under Mkhiweni inkhundla.

Figure 19.Epulazini area (latitude -26.232642? and longitude 31.093152?) under Motshane inkundla.

Figure 20.Hawane area (latitude -26.195898? and longitude 31.103484?) under Motshane inkhundla.

ANNEX E: Project Budget Table

Please attach a project budget table.

From:	2023							
To:	2026		Expenditure by project component/activity						
UNEP Budget Line			**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**M&E**	**PMC**	**Total**
10	**PERSONNEL COMPONENT**								
	1100	**Project personnel**							
	1101	Project Manager						76,800	**76,800**
	1102	Sustainable Land Management Officer		64,800					**64,800**
	1103	Biodiversity and Conservation Officer			64,800				**64,800**
	1104	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer					52,800		**52,800**
	1105	Finance and Administration Officer						48,000	**48,000**
	1106	Driver						28,800	**28,800**
	1199	**Sub-total**	**-**	**64,800**	**64,800**	**-**	**52,800**	**153,600**	**336,000**
	1200	**Consultants**							
	1201	Policy and legal expert to update SLM institutional and legislative frameworks	40,000	-	-	-	-	-	**40,000**
	1202	Strategic planning expert to develop ILM Strategy and Action Plan	40,000	-	-	-	-	-	**40,000**
	1203	Strategic Planning expert to develop a PAN strategy	-	-	30,000	-	-	-	**30,000**
	1204	Fire management expert to develop Protected Area Integrated Fire Management System	-	-	40,000	-	-	-	**40,000**
	1205	M& E expert to develop a system for tracking SLM, PAM and Gender inclusiveness	-	-	28,000	-	-	-	**28,000**
	1299	**Sub-total**	**80,000**	**-**	**98,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**178,000**
	1600	**Travel on official business**							

	1601	National travel	10,000	10,000	10,000	48,500	-	-	**78,500**
	1602	International travel	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	-	-	**48,000**
	1699	**Sub-total**	**22,000**	**22,000**	**22,000**	**60,500**	**-**	**-**	**126,500**
1999	**Component total**		**102,000**	**86,800**	**184,800**	**60,500**	**52,800**	**153,600**	**640,500**
20	**SUB-CONTRACT COMPONENT**								
	2100	**Sub-contracts (MOUs/LOAs for cooperating agencies)**							**-**
	2101	**MTAD -** Mainstream SLM and ecosystem restoration into Chiefdom Sustainable Development Plans and implement them to scale up their adoption in the basin (Output 1.3)	303,000	-	-	-	-	-	**303,000**
	2102	**MoA** - Assess landscape-scale ecosystem and land use, and strengthen staff capacity in SLM; initiate measures such as donga restoration and removal of Invasive Alien Plants (Outputs 2.1 & 2.2); Implement SLM practices in communities to improve soil fertility and food security (Output 2.5)		537,869	-	-	-	-	**537,869**
	2103	**World Vision -** Establish Farmer Field schools & Demo sites, Disseminate best practices & lessons; Develop women and youth engagement protocol (Outputs 2.3, 2.4, 4.2 & 4.4)	-	535,487	-	-	-	-	**535,487**

	2105	**Forest Department -** Promote tree planting in degraded communal lands and along riverine areas; Establish & strengthen Community Forestry Associations; and Establish AFR100 Multistkaholder platforms (Outputs 2.6, 2.7 & 4.3)	-	285,183	-	-	-	-	**285,183**
	2106	**ENTC -** Strengthen effective management of Malolotja Nature Reserve, Mlawula nature reserve and Hawane Dam (Ramsar site) (Outputs 3.1 - 3.5)			1,004,199				**1,004,199**
	2199	**Sub-total**	**303,000**	**1,358,539**	**1,004,199**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**2,665,738**
2999	**Component total**		**303,000**	**1,358,539**	**1,004,199**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**2,665,738**
30	**TRAINING COMPONENT**								
	3200	**Group training**							
	3201	Train extension workers and provide refresher courses	-	20,000	-	-	-	-	**20,000**
	3202	Training of trainers at Community level on SLM	-	24,710	-	-	-	-	**24,710**
	3203	Farmer field schools	-	27,400	-	-	-	-	**27,400**
	3204	Training of pilot site communities to implement community based M&E using citizen science tools and techniques				30,000			**30,000**
	3205	Exchange visits and exchanges between stakeholders at pilot sites				24,000			**24,000**

	3206	Capacity development and empowerment of women, youth and vulnerable groups to participate in decision making and implementation, and share in benefits				20,000			**20,000**
	3207	Workshops to identify gender and youth sensitive mechanisms and initiatives for the effective participation and benefit sharing				30,000			**30,000**
	3299	**Sub-total**	**-**	**72,110**	**-**	**104,000**	**-**	**-**	**176,110**
	3300	**Meetings/Conferences**							
	3301	Project Inception Workshop					20,000		**20,000**
	3302	Project Steering Committee meetings	27,500	17,500	27,500	17,500	20,000		**110,000**
	3399	**Sub-total**	**27,500**	**17,500**	**27,500**	**17,500**	**40,000**	**-**	**130,000**
3999	**Component total**		**27,500**	**89,610**	**27,500**	**121,500**	**40,000**	**-**	**306,110**
40	**EQUIPMENT AND PREMISES COMPONENT**								
	4100	**Expendable equipment**							
	4101	Citizen science tools and equipment for community based M&E at 6 pilot sites	-	-	-	10,000	-	-	**10,000**
	4102	Office equipment (computers, printers, etc)						12,400	12,400
	4199	**Sub-total**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**10,000**	**-**	**12,400**	**22,400**
	4200	**Non-expendable equipment**							
	4201	4x4 double cabin pickup vehicle for field work \	15,000	16,000	16,000	15,000		-	62,000
	4299	**Sub-total**	**15,000**	**16,000**	**16,000**	**15,000**	**-**	**-**	**62,000**
4999	**Component total**		**15,000**	**16,000**	**16,000**	**25,000**	**-**	**12,400**	**84,400**
50	**MISCELLANEOUS COMPONENT**								

	5100	**Operation and maintenance of equipment**							
	5101	O&M of office and field equipment and tools	-	-	-	-	-	20,000	**20,000**
	5199	**Sub-total**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**20,000**	**20,000**
	5200	**Reporting costs**							
	5201	Develop and publish a fire management handbook			38,500				**38,500**
	5202	Analyse community M&E data and report progress on outcomes (including gender responsiveness)	-	-	-	23,851	-	-	**23,851**
	5203	Publish and disseminate project materials on a quarterly basis	-	-	-	-	42,851		**42,851**
	5204	Implement a communication and environmental awareness programme				20,000	-	-	**20,000**
	5299	**Sub-total**	**-**	**-**	**38,500**	**43,851**	**42,851**	**-**	**125,202**
	5500	**Evaluation**							
	5501	Mid-Term evaluation	-	-	-		35,000	-	**35,000**
	5502	Terminal Evaluation	-	-	-		40,000	-	**40,000**
	5599	**Sub-total**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**75,000**	**-**	**75,000**
5999	**Component total**		**-**	**-**	**38,500**	**43,851**	**117,851**	20,000	**220,202**
99	**GRAND TOTAL**		**447,500**	**1,550,949**	**1,270,999**	**250,851**	**210,651**	**186,000**	**3,916,950**

ANNEX F: (For NGI only) Termsheet

Instructions. Please submit an finalized termsheet in this section. The NGI Program Call for Proposals provided a template in Annex A of the Call for Proposals that can be used by the Agency. Agencies can use their own termsheets but must add sections on Currency Risk, Co-financing Ratio and Financial Additionality as defined in the template provided in Annex A of the Call for proposals. Termsheets submitted at CEO endorsement stage should include final terms and conditions of the financing.

ANNEX G: (For NGI only) Reflows

Instructions. Please submit a reflows table as provided in Annex B of the NGI Program Call for Proposals and the Trustee excel sheet for reflows (as provided by the Secretariat or the Trustee) in the Document Section of the CEO endorsement. The Agencys is required to quantify any expected financial return/gains/interests earned on non-grant instruments that will be transferred to the GEF Trust Fund as noted in the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy. Partner Agencies will be required to comply with the reflows procedures established in their respective Financial Procedures Agreement with the GEF Trustee. Agencies are welcomed to provide assumptions that explain expected financial reflow schedules.

ANNEX H: (For NGI only) Agency Capacity to generate reflows

Instructions. The GEF Agency submitting the CEO endorsement request is required to respond to any questions raised as part of the PIF review process that required clarifications on the Agency Capacity to manage reflows. This Annex seeks to demonstrate Agencies? capacity and eligibility to administer NGI resources as established in the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy, GEF/C.52/Inf.06/Rev.01, June 9, 2017 (Annex 5).