



Operationalising the national ABS framework and piloting innovative genetic resource products and value chains to enhance benefit-sharing for sustainable rural development and biodiversity conservation

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID

10842

Project Type

MSP

Type of Trust Fund

GET

CBIT/NGI

CBIT No

NGI No

Project Title

Operationalising the national ABS framework and piloting innovative genetic resource products and value chains to enhance benefit-sharing for sustainable rural development and biodiversity conservation

Countries

Morocco

Agency(ies)

UNDP

Other Executing Partner(s)

Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment ? Department of Environment

Executing Partner Type

Government

GEF Focal Area

Biodiversity

Taxonomy

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

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation

Climate Change Mitigation 0

Climate Change Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation 0

Duration

60 In Months

Agency Fee(\$)

168,779.00

Submission Date

11/1/2021

A. Indicative Focal/Non-Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
BD-3-9	GET	1,776,620.00	2,050,000.00
Total Project Cost (\$)		1,776,620.00	2,050,000.00

B. Indicative Project description summary

Project Objective

To consolidate and operationalise the national ABS legal and institutional framework, including through the development of pilot ABS products and value chains, to enable appropriate access to genetic resources in Morocco and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their utilization, for sustainable rural development and the sustainable use of globally significant biodiversity and ecosystems.

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
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Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
1. Consolidating the national ABS framework and related capacity and knowledge	Technical Assistance	<p>1.1 Long-submitted national ABS Law adopted prior to project start or within first year of implementation</p> <p>1.2 Further required legal and regulatory texts submitted for adoption</p> <p>1.3 Technical and administrative capacity of key government agencies to implement the national ABS law enhanced</p> <p>1.4 ABS-TK registry consolidated and expanded</p> <p>1.5 Standardised ABS permit issuance and knowledge management and monitoring platforms established</p> <p>1.6 A national mechanism legally constituted and operationalised for receiving and sharing monetary and</p>	<p>1.1 Strategic advocacy programme defined and delivered to leverage final adoption of any pending ABS legal and institutional framework elements (NP ratification, ABS law, etc.)</p> <p>1.2 Multi-tier CNRG and then ABS NCA established and operational across the relevant sectors.</p> <p>1.3 Benchmarking studies, most notably on monetary and non-monetary benefit-sharing mechanisms and on maximising the benefits to biodiversity conservation under the ABS framework.</p> <p>1.4 Complementary legal and regulatory texts (e.g. directives for the application of the ABS Law, NCA interior regulations, TK protection system, benefit sharing mechanisms, biodiversity conservation benefits) prepared,</p>	GET	450,000.00	750,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
2. Development of new ABS products and value chains derived from genetic resources under national ABS law	Technical Assistance	<p><i>NB: details on ABS R&D and products cannot be made available for confidentiality reasons</i></p> <p>2.1 Number of private companies and cooperatives active in the bio-prospecting sector and number of ABS permit applications increased.</p> <p>2.2 At least two new ABS-based products developed through R&D and GR manipulation by private companies, from the following candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - on byproducts of the fruit of the Argan Tree <i>Argania spinosa</i>, under ABS exploration by SERDEX/ SEPPIC for cosmetics (based on fruit pulp) and by GREENTECH for food complement purposes (based on oil 	<p>2.1 In-depth consultations of relevant private sector stakeholders on the further design and implementation of the ABS framework.</p> <p>2.2 Trainings (workshops, simulations) for private companies, academics and cooperatives interested in ABS genetic resources and value chains, at national and regional levels, covering <i>inter alia</i> Nagoya Protocol, national ABS framework, ABS contracts and negotiation, benefit-sharing, sustainable resource use and ecosystem management.</p> <p>2.3 ABS-compliant information on genetic</p>	GET	500,000.00	620,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
3. Biodiversity governance and conservation strengthened through mainstreaming and benefit-sharing in three target regions	Technical Assistance	<p>3.1 Governance and capacity for biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration and ABS principles strengthened in Souss-Massa (SM) Marrakech-Safi (MS) and Beni Mellal-Khenifra (BMK) regions.</p> <p>3.2 ABS value chains comply with the requirements of sustainable resource use and benefits to resource-supplier communities and biodiversity/ecosystems.</p> <p>3.3 New resources mobilised for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration by HCEFLCD and other key agencies in SM, MS and BMK, to reduce dependency on ODA and domestic budgets.</p> <p>3.4 In the targeted sites supplying the</p>	<p><u>For the target areas in the Souss-Massa (SM), Marrakech-Safi (MS) and Beni Mellal-Khenifra (BMK) regions and the pilot ABS value chains:</u></p> <p>3.1 Biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration and ABS principles integrated in Regional Development Programmes.</p> <p>3.2 Regional committees on biodiversity and natural resources activated, engaging regional government and delegations of MEME, MAPMDRE F and HCEFLCD.</p> <p>3.3 Regional focal points of the National Biodiversity Committee emplaced, and regional committees</p>	GET	500,000.00	410,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
4. Safeguards, Gender & Knowledge Management	Technical Assistance	<p>4.1 All safeguards standards met throughout project</p> <p>4.2 >80% of Gender AP targets met</p> <p>4.3 >80% of KM Plan deliverables met</p>	<p>4.1 Training provided to key stakeholders on social and environmental safeguards risks and related UNDP and GEF standards and management requirements.</p> <p>4.2 Social and environmental safeguards risks mainstreamed across the work under Components 1-3, necessary management measures implemented and monitored.</p> <p>4.3 Gender Action Plan monitored and implemented</p> <p>4.4 Knowledge Management Plan implemented and products delivered</p>	GET	85,109.00	40,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
5. M&E	Technical Assistance	5.1 M&E duly implemented <i>Indicators: MTR, TE delivered on time; MTR TE and PIR quality ratings S or better</i>	5.1 Regular project monitoring delivered and informing adaptive management 5.2 Annual PIRs delivered in timely fashion 5.3 MTR and TE conducted with all tracking tools, core indicators and	GET	80,000.00	25,000.00
Sub Total (\$)					1,615,109.00	1,845,000.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)						
			GET		161,511.00	205,000.00
			Sub Total(\$)		161,511.00	205,000.00
Total Project Cost(\$)					1,776,620.00	2,050,000.00

C. Indicative 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	Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment	Grant	Investment mobilized	200,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,650,000.00
Private Sector	Green Tech	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	100,000.00
GEF Agency	UNDP Morocco	Loans	Investment mobilized	100,000.00
Total Project Cost(\$)				2,050,000.00

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

The \$200,000 of investment mobilised from Government will be made available specifically for the project in cash disbursements cost-shared via UNDP. UNDP will add \$100,000 of own resources for the project.

D. Indicative 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(\$)
UNDP	GET	Morocco	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	1,776,620	168,779	1,945,399.00
Total GEF Resources(\$)					1,776,620.00	168,779.00	1,945,399.00

E. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required **true**

PPG Amount (\$)

50,000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

4,750

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNDP	GET	Morocco	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	50,000	4,750	54,750.00
Total Project Costs(\$)					50,000.00	4,750.00	54,750.00

Core Indicators

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)
30000.00	0.00	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)
30,000.00			

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes that meets national or international third party certification that incorporates biodiversity considerations (hectares)

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

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

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

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

Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) loss avoided

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

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

Title	Submitted

Indicator 11 Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	1,500			
Male	1,500			
Total	3000	0	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

? SDG 1 (Targets 1.1, 1.4, 1.5 and 1.7): promote resource ownership and associated rights, justice and legal certainty, and local development and empowerment; ? SDG 2 (All targets): sustainable management of global genetic resources diversity contributing to food security, enhanced nutrition, sustainable agriculture and rural development; ? SDG 3 (Target 3.11): sustainable use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge contributing to use of traditional medicine and discovery of new medical treatment for overall human well-being and health care needs; ? SDG 8 (Targets 8.2, 8.3 and 8.6): promote new opportunities of productive employment, job creation, entrepreneurship and partnerships contributing to economic and social growth for all, including indigenous peoples; ? SDG 13 (Targets 13.2, 13.3 and 13.5): promote high diversity and climate appropriate genetic resources for climate change adaptation; ? SDG 15 (Target 15.10): promote additional financial resources and incentives for sustainable management of biodiversity and ecosystems; ? SDG 16 (Targets 16.3 and 16.6): strengthen legal and institutional frameworks contributing to effective and transparent partnerships and cooperation. ? Aichi Target 1 : raising public awareness to increase the value of biodiversity, its conservation and sustainable use; ? Aichi Target 2 : Biodiversity valuation and integration into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies; ? Aichi Target 7 : Promote sustainable management of genetic resources, sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and forestry to meet the need of present and future generations; ? Aichi Target 11, 12 and 13 : Maintain and safeguard genetic diversity and its effective and equitable management; ? Aichi Target 14 : Restore and safeguard ecosystem services for human wellbeing including women and indigenous and local communities; ? Aichi Target 15 : Promote opportunity for biodiversity and ecosystems restoration and contribute to climate adaptation; ? Aichi Target 16 : Promote entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol, set out core obligations on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits; ? Aichi Target 18 : Promote traditional knowledge innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities.

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

1) the global environmental problems and root causes that need to be addressed (systems description)

Biodiversity importance

1. Located on the north-western tip of Africa at the junction of three bio-geographic regions, Morocco is the second-most biodiverse country in the Mediterranean region, a biodiversity hotspot, and therefore holds a place of global importance in terms of biodiversity. The country has a diversity of bio-climatic regions, including important mountain ranges with large areas of bordering plateau, and rich coastal plains and valleys. The country's five major ecosystems provide habitat for more than 24,000 animal species (11% endemic) and 7,000 plant species (20% endemic). Forest and marine ecosystems are especially rich in biodiversity. The resulting high level of genetic diversity makes Morocco a particularly attractive country for bio-prospecting, especially given that there are approximately 800 known medicinal and aromatic plants, 600 of which have associated traditional knowledge (TK). Unfortunately, the general trend in the country is toward biodiversity degradation and loss, and a decline in biodiversity is observable in all ecosystems. This puts Morocco's genetic resources at serious risk, since many are rare or vulnerable.

Main threats to biodiversity in Morocco and general response by Government

2. Threats to biodiversity result from human activities leading to habitat loss (agricultural conversion, urbanization, infrastructure, soil erosion) as well as over-exploitation of renewable natural resources and related ecosystem degradation (forest degradation for timber and firewood, ubiquitous overgrazing by free-ranging livestock, unsustainable collecting of medicinal plants, excessive water extraction for agriculture, overfishing). Pollution and invasive alien species are secondary contributing factors. Rising temperatures and a reduction in precipitation due to climate change are likely to worsen the state of the natural environment and the availability of key resources (water, vegetation, crops) and ecosystem services (pollination), thus exacerbating the vulnerability of agricultural, range and forest lands and of the rural livelihoods that depend on them. It is thus imperative for the Kingdom to identify and establish alternative and more sustainable livelihoods and value chains to allow further economic development.

3. In response to the above threats, the Government of Morocco has affirmed its intention to actively work towards better environmental management through the ratification of international environmental agreements, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Protocols, consequently launched several national strategies and action plans to preserve its biological diversity and improve its sustainable development, and strengthened its national environmental legal framework.

4. The Government of Morocco has identified Sites of Biological and Ecological Interest (SIBE) and created a network of protected areas, and implemented various programs on the rehabilitation and

recovery of endangered species as well as a strategy on education and public awareness-raising in regard to environment and sustainable development. The Department of Forestry has launched an ambitious program to reverse deforestation trends through reforestation, improvement of sylvo-pastoral systems, integrated development of forest and peri-forested areas, establishment of cooperatives and the development of fair trade in relation to forest products. However, many challenges remain.

Root causes of biodiversity loss in Morocco

5. The root causes of biodiversity loss are

- insufficient recognition of the intrinsic and economic importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services at all levels of society (central and regional governments, rural and urban populations, private sector);
- weak environmental/biodiversity governance ? in terms of staffing numbers and technical capacity, fragmented yet also overlapping agency mandates, weak inter-agency coordination, excessively complex structures, weak central/regional coordination, decentralisation weaknesses, cross-sector policy consistency, outdated laws, weak regulations and fines and sanctions for non-compliance with environmental standards, and weak law enforcement, etc.;
- insufficient resourcing/financing for biodiversity conservation and sustainable management interventions;
- limited awareness of alternative, less biodiversity-harmful business models/livelihoods/practices.

The potential role of ABS

6. Ever since the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) came into effect in Morocco in 1995, most attention has been directed to the two first CBD objectives, being the conservation of biodiversity, and the sustainable use of its components. The third CBD objective ? the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources ? for long received less attention.

7. The emplacement of a fully functioning national Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) regime, based on the CBD's Nagoya Protocol adopted in 2010, would therefore be a key opportunity to strengthen biodiversity conservation and sustainable use through i) greater recognition of the economic value of biodiversity, ii) enhanced biodiversity governance through the strengthening of cross-sector and inter-regional platforms, iii) enhanced capacity at all levels for sustainable resource and ecosystem management and more biodiversity-friendly business models and livelihoods/practices, and iv) the provision of new financial resources for biodiversity conservation and sustainable management.

8. Morocco is considered an important center of genetic diversity for several cultivated and endemic species, and has been historically explored by several European, Australian and American laboratories. The country continues to be regularly solicited for access to its genetic resources, but has not been able to give, to date, strict instructions on the formalities and conditions of access to its resources in line with the CBD's third objective. This legal void has resulted in the uncontrolled use of national resources and bio-piracy, resulting in a considerable loss of revenue for the State and the local populations supplying these resources, and with limited regard to the ecosystems that provide them.

Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol is an opportunity for the country to ensure effective protection of its genetic resources.

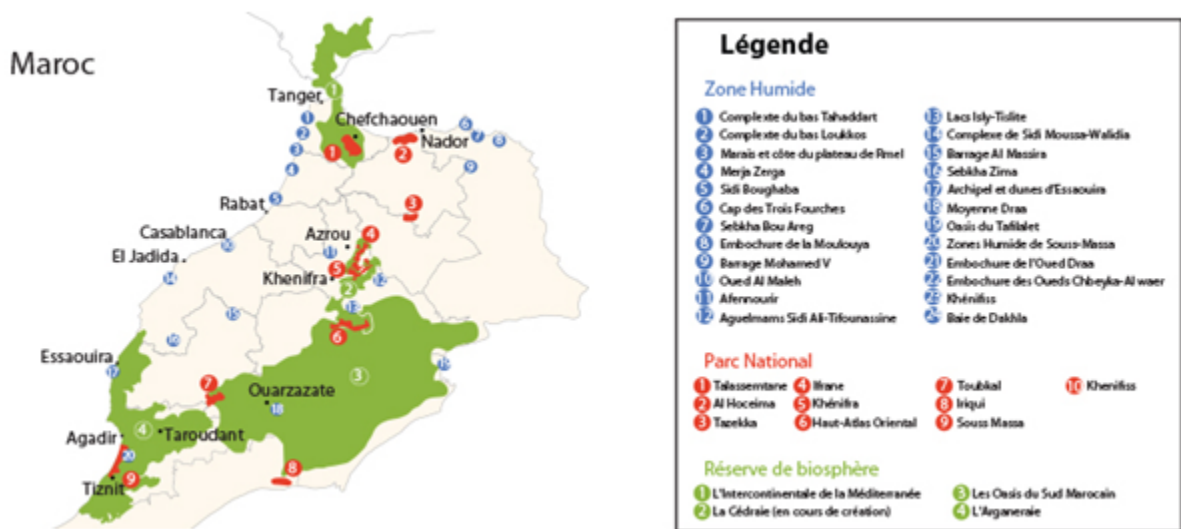
9. In the last decades, the government and local communities focused on efforts to develop value chains in agriculture and forestry sectors, but the main focus of these has been on improving local livelihoods based on exploitation of ecosystems, with too little importance paid to biodiversity preservation and conservation. However, recent field visits to cooperatives and local producers in 8 regions of Morocco have indicated that there is a strong interest to develop genetic resources value chains. A study on the economic potential of the establishment of ABS contract agreements has indicated that Morocco could receive additional revenues of \$37 million to \$146 million USD annually from the utilization of its genetic resources, if all access to these resources are subject to ABS agreements. There are thus strong incentives to establish and develop genetic resource-specific value chains, by developing pilot value chains in different regions, on key and emblematic resources.

The baseline of past interventions

10. *Environmental/biodiversity law and policy context:* The wider legal framework and policies most relevant to ABS relate to the environment, forests and protected areas, and include the following:

- The Framework Law 99-12 (2014) and National Charter on the Environment and Sustainable Development, the key overarching legislative reference on the environment, considered a turning point for the integration of environmental considerations into development policies.
- The Law on the Conservation and Exploitation of Forests, which dates back to 1917 and governs Forests, laying out the extent of public forests and subjects most forested land to oversight and management (e.g. public forests, community forests, afforested or reforested common land). As a result of this Law, commercial access to all forest resources found on public lands is regulated; certain species (e.g. Argan, dates and walnut) are subject to particular management regimes, and the exploitation of certain non-timber forest products is subject to prior consent.
- The Law on National Parks from 1934, on the basis of which 9 national parks were designated between 1942 and 2006 (Toubkal 1942, Tazekka 1950, Souss Massa 1991, Iriki 1994, Talassentane 2004, Ifrane 2004, Haut Atlas Oriental 2004, Al Hoceima 2004, Khenifiss 2006; total area c. 606,000 ha).
- The Protected Areas Master Plan of 1996, which identified 145 Sites of Biological and Ecological Interest (SIBE) representing most of Morocco's natural ecosystems and proposed the designation of 10 of these as national parks.
- Morocco's Law 22-07 on Protected Areas, adopted in 2010, which establishes a regime that limits the use of designated areas in accordance with a development and management plan; apart from customary uses, all activities that may negatively impact the state of a protected area are forbidden without the prior consent of the relevant authority.
- Law 29-05 of 2011 on the national implementation of CITES deals inter alia also with the collection and trade of genetic resources.

- Law 12-03 (2003) on Environmental Impacts Assessments, which forms the legal framework underpinning EIAs, required for every project that by the nature of its size or impact may have an impact on the environment.
- Law 31-05 of 2006 regarding the protection of industrial property lays down the framework also for intellectual property rights in Morocco.
- Law 25-06 of 2008 on the distinctive signs of origin and quality of food, agricultural and fishery products created the necessary legal framework for the recognition and protection of local products and the basis for related labelling.
- 3rd National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for 2016-2020 (NBSAP-3, 2015)



11. Specifically for ABS matters, Morocco signed the CBD's Nagoya Protocol on ABS in 2011/2012, and approved the ABS-NP in Law 13-12 promulgated in Law/Dahir 1-13-58 of 17 June 2013, followed by publication of the Law/Dahir approving the ABS-NP in the Official Royal Bulletin 6166 of 04 July 2013. Once the Royal Seal is affixed to the treaty, the instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the United Nations Treaty Section. However, since government entities involved in the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol operate under the 2013 ABS-NP law, the governance and application of ABS mechanisms are conducted as by any other Party that has ratified the Protocol.

12. Following signature of the ABS-NP, the Government of Morocco engaged in several projects and processes to advance the development of a national ABS framework. In 2011, the Government carried out two workshops to develop a roadmap and strategy for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in Morocco and organised the 5th Pan-African Workshop on Access and Benefit Sharing in Marrakech where African countries had the opportunity to exchange information on model national ABS frameworks and recommendations for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.

13. The subsequent UNEP-GEF project *Development of the National Clearing House Mechanism, Capacity Assessment for ABS and Taxonomy in Morocco, and Updating of the NBSAP* (GEF # 3008, closed in 2013) prepared an assessment and analysis of relevant laws and regulations in force, institutional arrangements, resources, and opportunities for ABS. This included a suggestion for an appropriate framework for the implementation of the Bonn Guidelines on ABS. The project also prepared a preliminary assessment of the state of knowledge regarding genetic resources, particularly regarding the exploitation of genetic resources at the national and international level; an assessment of the economic potential of Morocco's genetic resources; and a stocktaking of the roles of all pertinent stakeholders in the domain of ABS. Under the UNEP-GEF project the government in January and July 2012 also carried out two workshops on capacity building needs relating to the implementation of ABS in Morocco.

14. After these preliminary steps, the Government fully engaged in the development of a national strategy and legal and institutional framework for ABS with parallel support from i) GIZ under its programme *Adaptation to climate change / Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol (ACCN)*, and the UNDP/GEF/MEME project *Developing a National Framework on Access to and Benefit-Sharing of Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge as a Strategy to Contribute to the Conservation and Sustainable Use of biodiversity in Morocco* (GEF # 5605, 2014-2019). The outcomes of these parallel and coordinated efforts, which constitute the foundation for the present new project, are as follows:

- the strengthening of **ABS-specific awareness and capacity** amongst technical staff of key government agencies, academics and local communities in a limited number of targeted regions potentially supplying primary resources for ABS value chains the future.

- the preparation of a **dedicated, comprehensive legal and institutional framework on ABS in the form of a national law** (*Avant Projet de loi n° 56-17 sur l'accès aux ressources génétiques et le partage juste et équitable des avantages découlant de leur utilisation*), in line with the Nagoya Protocol adopted by all key stakeholders and involved governmental entities, and its submission in late 2017 to the General Government Secretariat for public consultation and final review prior to submission to the Parliament for adoption. **Adoption of the law remains pending.**

- the preparation of a first set of **regulations and application instruments (decrees) to implement the national ABS law**, approved by the National Biodiversity Committee and submitted to the Government General Secretariat in November 2019: i) on access to genetic resources and conditions for access to TK linked to genetic resources, and ii) the widely consulted and mutually agreed design of the ABS National Competent Authority (multi-tiered yet coordinated by the Environment Department, with a rotating presidency, and with resource access permits to be signed by whichever agency has the respective resource mandate) and Control Points. **Adoption of these decrees remains pending.**

- the definition of a **methodology to conduct/complete a national inventory on traditional knowledge (TK) relating to genetic resources.**

- the establishment of a **pilot registry and database for TK** relating to genetic resources, with a system for protecting confidential and non-confidential information, and with high value genetic resources identified for the establishment of future ABS value-chains.

- **strengthened overall biodiversity governance**, thanks to the reactivation and empowerment of the informal National Biodiversity Committee achieved in the context of ABS-related cross-sector consultations; this is reflected in the consequential creation by decree in 2020 of the National Committee on Climate Change and Biodiversity, which will have one sub-committee on Climate Change and another on Biodiversity, each with their respective working groups including one specifically for ABS.

- **mainstreaming of ABS in relevant national policy strategies and programs**, through coordinated efforts by the Environment Department and the High Commission for Water, Forests and the Fight against Desertification (HCEFLCD)

- a further **study of the economic benefits of ABS products / value chains**, identifying the most promising ones.

- the development of **ABS model agreements**.

15. However, numerous issues remain untackled leaving gaps and barriers such as

- ratification of the ABS-NP;

- approval of the national ABS law and the first set of application decrees;

- preparation of further application decrees;

- the piloting of ABS contracts and development of new ABS products;

- the operationalisation of monetary and non-monetary benefit-sharing mechanisms;

- a clear definition of biodiversity benefits including increased investments to emerge from the ABS framework, and how to achieve these; the economic study proposed to channel finances from ABS contracts to resource suppliers in areas of origin, to the administration of the NCA, and not a general biodiversity fund, however this is not considered so far under the proposed ABS law and regulations (where for now the largest monetary benefits go to ABS material resource suppliers while funding captured for Government is limited to the tax stamp (*prix de timbre*) channelled into treasury), but this issue can be reopened once the NCA is operational.

The long term solution

16. A **long-term solution for helping to address the threats and root causes of biodiversity loss in Morocco** would be to further consolidate the legal and institutional ABS framework in Morocco, complete outstanding decrees, innovate through the development of ABS products with the private sector companies under pilot ABS contracts, and fill remaining gaps on capacity, benefit-sharing and tangible returns for biodiversity sustainable use, conservation and restoration. The aim will be to activate the potential that Morocco's diverse genetic resources and traditional knowledge represent for generating economic benefits to the nation and key stakeholders, including local communities where appropriate, in the form of business, employment, technology transfer and capacity development. And

to raise greater awareness about and support for biodiversity conservation and to directly deliver enhanced ecosystem management. This is what the project here proposes.

2) the baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects and barriers remaining

17. To work towards the above long-term solution, the baseline situation is as follows:

18. The **coordinating lead agency is the Department of Environment in the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment (MEME-DE)**, which hosts the National ABS Focal Point. Under the Secretary General of the MEME-DE exists the

- Directorate for Climate Change and Biodiversity, with a Director (Rasi) and two divisions, namely i) the Division for Climate Change and Green Economy with 25 staff in Rabat HQ and ii) the Division for Biodiversity with 5 staff in Rabat HQ. The Directorate is represented in MEME-DE Regional Offices in each of the 12 region, with a Head of Service and at least one technician, yet normally with no dedicated staff for biodiversity; the regional staff also function as environmental police albeit several under-resourced.

- Directorate for Observation of Studies and Planning, with a Director and two divisions, each with one Head of Service and 2 technicians, altogether 7 staff, in addition to one Head of Service and one technician in each of the 12 MEME-DE Regional Offices.

19. There are very limited domestic operational budgets on top of the staffing cost in MEME-DE. The estimated investment in the above two Directorates in MEME-DE is therefore estimated to the staff costs of c. \$1,734,000 per year (average \$1,700/m^[1] * 12 mths * 85 staff). Of this amount, only the staff in the Biodiversity Division and the delegations in targeted regions are considered project baseline investment ? which is estimated to USD 250,000 per year i.e. USD 1,000,000 over the project duration of four years.

20. A further key agency is the **High Commission for Water, Forests and Combating Desertification (HCEFLCD)**, which inter alia counts with a Directorate for Desertification / Land Degradation and a Directorate for Biodiversity that includes a Division on Protected Areas and Biodiversity; all of which are represented in all 12 HCEFLCD Regional Offices with a Head of Service and technicians and the Directors for the respective National Parks/PAs.

21. The overall annual budget of HCEFLCD in recent years has been around 2 milliard de Dirham^[2] (USD 226 million), consisting in 70-90% of staff costs and 10-30% of operational/investment costs. The largest share of this amount falls to the forestry. Of this amount, only the investment under the Biodiversity Directorate and the delegations in the targeted regions are considered project baseline investment and estimated to USD 500,000 per year i.e. USD 2,000,000 over the project duration of four years.

22. Under the lead and coordination of the MEME-DE, the Government of Morocco would in absence of GEF investments:

- continue to push for the ratification of the ABS-NP;
- support the process of adoption of the ABS legal framework, developed in the predecessor UNDP/GEF/MEME project;
- in terms of governance, institutionalise the national biodiversity (sub)committee, strengthening coordination at the national level between institutions;

23. However, given the limited operational budget allocated to the MEME Division for Biodiversity, actions on the ground would be limited, especially in mobilising private sector actors and the support of cooperatives and local actors working on GR. This would hinder the development of ABS value chains and a favourable response to requests for access to GR by international users, due to a lack of knowledge of the sectors concerned (pharmaceuticals, cosmetics) and of negotiation techniques for ABS contracts. Raising awareness among decision-makers of the positive impacts, particularly socio-economic, of ABS applied to GR will be more difficult without "success stories" of promising value chains leading to applied ABS contracts with shared benefits.

24. In consequence, the following key barriers would remain impeding full achievement of the above long-term solution:

1. Gaps remain in the ABS legal and institutional framework and in technical capacity and knowledge	The ABS-NP has not yet been ratified and the ABS Law has not been approved. Some of the ABS Law application texts must still be done. The NCA is not yet operational and the internal regulations must still be defined. Technical capacity has been built but gaps still remain in key agencies on the implementation of the ABS framework (e.g. in some agencies that were not fully involved in the predecessor project but will have a role in the multi-tier NCA, e.g. INRA), including on more advanced issues such as ABS contract negotiation, private sector engagement, options for benefit-sharing and targeted tangible benefits to biodiversity and natural ecosystems, etc.. There is no online effective ABS permit application system. And the ABS TK registry is limited to a few regions only and needs to be extended both geographically and thematically (e.g. on marine genetic resources)
2. Insufficient private sector engagement and ABS product development	There are no products and value chains under development between government, communities and private sector that would meet the ABS framework requirements. Too few private sector companies are aware of the ABS framework being emplaced, of the permitting process and NCA, and while there is interest in ABS-related product development, progress is being stalled.
3. Gaps in biodiversity governance and benefits	While biodiversity governance and cross-sector coordination has been strengthened by the formalisation of the National Biodiversity (Sub)Committee, structural weaknesses remain, and the ABS framework is not sufficiently linked with attempts to deliver tangible biodiversity benefits, both at national and regional levels. Local communities are also not yet aware of the importance of more sustainable management/use of biological resources including under a scheme based on genetic resource exploitation.

3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project;

25. The here-proposed project will address the aforementioned barriers and achieve the proposed long-term solution through the workstreams described in the following, to be implemented in close coordination with the baseline activities.

Targeted regions and species of genetic resource origin

26. The project will work at national level and at regional/local levels. The regional/local work will focus on regions with the ecosystems providing the genetic resources targeted in the ABS product and value chain development under Component 2 below. These are:

27. The regions of **Souss-Massa (SM)** and **Marrakech-Safi (MS)** in west-central Morocco, which host the world's largest remainder of the Arganeraie open forest ecosystem dominated by Argan Tree *Argania spinosa* (Sapotaceae), a species historically endemic to the wider Maghreb. The Argan distribution area is dominated by arid and semi-arid climatic conditions with a gradient of decreasing humidity from north to south. Despite the environmental conditions, agriculture represents the main activity. The SM region is the country's most important for agricultural production (especially fruit and vegetables) given important groundwater resources. Furthermore, the regions are characterized by the unique "produits du terroir", which significantly contribute to the local livelihoods in the region and the national economy at large. Argan fruit and oil are of great importance for the livelihoods of local communities – it is estimated that around 3 million people depend directly or indirectly on Argan. Argan fruit are consumed by livestock as well as collected and pressed for their oil for culinary and cosmetic purposes. However the characteristic Argan open forest ecosystem is threatened by cutting, unsustainable agricultural practices, overgrazing, and increasingly intensive exploitation of the fruit, which is compounded by drought and desertification problems. It has been estimated that the overall cover of Argan forest was reduced by about 50% during the last 100 years and that an average of 600 ha still continue to be lost each year. The average stand density in traditionally exploited forest areas has dropped on average from 100 Argan trees/ha to an 30 Argan trees/ha^[3]. In the forest of Admine for example, formerly one of the richest Argan forests in Morocco, the density of Argan trees has been reduced to less than 10/ha while "irrigated crops have increased from 912 ha to about 9,000 ha^[4]". The most significant remaining patches of Argan forest are distributed in an area bordered by oued Tensift to the north, Tiznit and Tafraout to the south, the Siroua mountains to the east and the Atlantic ocean to the west.

28. Innovative approaches to ecosystem conservation are required as well as further capacity to overcome technical, institutional, policy and legal bottlenecks to bring current development on a more sustainable path. To halt the loss and degradation of Argan forests, the Government of Morocco with GIZ and UNESCO in 1988 created the 2.5 million ha Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve (RBA), which now contains 3 nature reserves and 11 SIBE; noting however that implementation of the RBA in terms of sustainable management is weak as is also the protection of the nature reserves and SIBE. Several further programmes – including by the EU, GIZ, UNDP-GEF and the Moroccan Agency for Social Development – were since implemented to promote the conservation and sustainable management of

the endangered Argan ecosystem. A large GCF project is currently working on Argan planting to regenerate the Arganeraie but also to enhance Argan oil production capacities and rural development.

29. Key further plant taxa associated with the Argan ecosystem include: *Periploca laevigata*, *Senecio anteuphorbium*, *Launaea arborescens*, *Warionia saharae*, *Acacia gummifera*, *Rhus tripartitum*, *Withania frutescens*, *Euphorbia officinarum beaumierana* and *E. o. echinus*, *Cytisus albidus*, *Ephedra altissima*, *Tetraclinis articulata*. Endemic taxa of tropical origin such as *Commelina rupicola* and *Dracaena draco ajgal*, represent some of the great rarities of the Moroccan flora. The Dragon tree Area within the ABR has been included in the tentative list of World Heritage sites by UNESCO (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1180/>).

30. The region of **Beni Mellal-Khenifra** (BMK) in central Morocco, to which the endemic Resin Spurge *Euphorbia resinifera* (Euphorbiaceae) is limited. The Resin Spurge is a shrub growing to 60 cm height and 2m width. It is known as a melliferous plant and its honey is considered as a terroir product with a Protected Geographical Indication. In addition, its dried latex (Euphorbium) has been used since ancient times as medicine ? it has high concentration of resiniferatoxin, an analog of capsaicin, the primary vanilloid compound found in hot peppers; it can interact with a vanilloid receptor on primary sensory neurons mediating pain (nociception) and neurogenic inflammation. Resiniferatoxin has been used as a starting point in the development of a novel class of analgesics, *inter alia* to relieve neuropathic pain treat pain with advanced cancer. Primary material sourcing is done by incision of the plant and collection of the dried latex.

31. The species? distributional range extends discontinuously between El Ksiba and Demnate in the Atlas piedmont yet scattered individuals occur from Demnate to Ait Ourir and into the central high Atlas valley up to 1900 m asl^[5]. It is currently not regarded as threatened, and occurs mainly on public forest lands (*domaine forestier*). The BMK region comprises the Khenifra and Ifrane National Parks as well as the Cedraie Biosphere Reserve. These are however all located to the northeast and only marginally (if at all) coincide with the range of *Euphorbia resinifera*.

32. In the case of Argan, numerous cooperatives already exist for fruit collection and oil extraction/marketing for food or cosmetic (biotrade) purposes, as well as for honey. In the case of the Resin Spurge, only honey cooperatives exist.

33. In the case of Argan, the local users (all or mostly Amazigh) enjoy a special status as right holders (*ayants droits*) under Moroccan law; there is no equivalent for users of the Resin Spurge.

34. In all targeted regions, specific intervention sites will be determined with the private sector companies, CSOs and local communities during the PPG. **The site selection criteria applied will include *inter alia*:**

- Possibility and infrastructure to allow access and presence by project and government

- Within or near a Site of Biological or Ecological Interest (SIBE)

- Within or near a Protected Area

- Within the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve in the case of Argan
- Existing relationships with NGOs and/or universities and/or private sector companies regarding the natural resource and genetic resource targeted
- Favourable linkages with prior relevant interventions
- Openness of and ownership by local communities and cooperatives to sustainability interventions and to working with government and private sector
- Relative importance of the targeted site(s) for the distribution and conservation of the targeted resources: Euphorb in Beni Mellal-Khenifra and Arghan in Souss-Massa Marrakech-Safi
- Potential for conservation and/or restoration of vulnerable and important ecosystems and biodiversity
- Potential for success of pilot and replication potential

Project Objective

35. To consolidate and operationalise the national ABS legal and institutional framework, including through the development of pilot ABS products and value chains, to enable appropriate access to genetic resources in Morocco and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their utilization, for sustainable rural development and the sustainable use of globally significant biodiversity and ecosystems.

Component 1 ? Consolidating the national ABS framework and related capacity and knowledge

36. This Component will deliver the following Outcomes:

- 1.1 Long-submitted national ABS Law adopted prior to project start or within first year of implementation
- 1.2 Further required legal and regulatory texts submitted for adoption
- 1.3 Technical and administrative capacity of key government agencies to implement the national ABS law enhanced
- 1.4 ABS-TK registry consolidated and expanded
- 1.5 Standardised ABS permit issuance and knowledge management and monitoring platforms established
- 1.6 A national mechanism legally constituted and operationalised for receiving and sharing monetary and non-monetary benefits from ABS agreements, for the benefit of local communities/ resource suppliers and biodiversity conservation
- 1.7 National/regional NGOs working on sustainable ABS value chains strengthened

37. To achieve this, the project will under this Component, first of all, define and deliver a strategic advocacy programme to leverage the adoption of any still pending elements of the ABS legal and institutional framework ? such as the Nagoya Protocol ratification, the adoption of the ABS law and already-submitted outstanding regulations. It will then establish and operationalise the multi-tier National Commission for Genetic Resources (CNRG) and ABS National Competent Authority across the relevant sectors. The project will prepare any missing benchmarking studies, most notably on monetary and non-monetary benefit-sharing mechanisms and on maximising the benefits to biodiversity conservation under the ABS framework; and based on this prepare outstanding complementary legal and regulatory texts such as directives for the application of the ABS Law, NCA interior regulations, TK protection system, benefit sharing mechanisms, biodiversity conservation benefits), to be validated by the National Biodiversity Committee and submitted to General Government Secretariat for adoption. Monetary and non-monetary benefit-sharing mechanism(s) will be established and operationalised, under the ABS law and/or ABS contracts, with an equitable distribution of benefits for supplier communities/ women and biodiversity management, as well as penalties in case of non-compliance with sustainability clauses (depending on the newly agreed benchmarked formula, this may require a reframing of the ABS Law that stipulated that monetary benefits will be sent primarily to local resource suppliers; it may also require specifications for any flow of resources from ABS agreements, defining if they go through Treasury, the Ministry, the Environment Department, the ANC or a separate dedicated fund).

38. In terms of capacity development under this component, the project will organise training and certification workshops for relevant national government agencies (environment, agriculture, fisheries, water and forestry, scientific research, etc.) on technical and administrative implementation of the ABS legal and institutional framework, including inter alia PIC, MAT, ABS contract negotiations, business models of industries (pharmaceutical, cosmetics, agriculture, etc.) that use genetic resources and their implications on benefit-sharing models, ABS permit granting process, ABS control points and GR use monitoring, benefit-sharing mechanism and biodiversity benefits, online platform for ABS access requests, IRCC procedure, ABS CHM, etc. The project will also develop a guide to negotiating ABS contracts adapted to Moroccan and international ABS legislation, and provide training to key national/regional NGOs (FM6PE, FM6RSA, Ibn El Baytar) and relevant local stakeholders on technical issues (biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, ecosystem restoration, ABS, PES, etc.) and management issues (fundraising, communication, strategy).

39. Regarding the use of traditional knowledge and the facilitation and monitoring of access to genetic resources, the project will conduct additional TK surveys on potentially interesting ABS value chains and genetic resources, addressing thematic and geographic gaps. The pre-existing offline ABS-TK registry will be further developed and expanded to include TK from other thematic areas and geographic regions of Morocco ?the Government intends to emplace a new approach to database management, to build the capacity of the different biodiversity stakeholders in terms of "market intelligence" to analyse market trends in key bioprospecting sectors, like the pharmaceutical and cosmetic niches, as well as facilitate the identification of appropriate and suitable intellectual property linked to attractive genetic resources that present high potential for product development (patenting and licensing) in and for Morocco ? inter alia to ensure that key stakeholders like government departments and research agencies are well equipped and organized to promote the establishment of effective ABS agreements along ABS compliant value chains.

40. Moreover, a mechanism (digital platform) will be developed for harmonizing and coordinating information on biodiversity to facilitate access to genetic resource information and ABS access procedures. To facilitate good compliance with the ABS framework, a standardised online permit application system will be developed for use across across relevant national institutions, to provide efficient access to genetic resources by national, regional and international bioprospectors. Finally, the mechanism will allow the monitoring of the utilisation of genetic resources. The project will thus create a 'one-stop shop' for bioprospectors to request access, considering the complex and diverse access procedures from the different departments constituting the national competent authority, the project will ease the access process and at the same time encourage the harmonization of technical processes among the departments in charge of the various ecosystems.

Component 2 ? Development of new ABS products and value chains derived from genetic resources under national ABS law

41. *It should be noted that details on ABS-related R&D and products by the private companies to work with the project cannot be made available for confidentiality reasons.*

42. This Component will deliver the following Outcomes:

2.1 Number of private companies and cooperatives active in the bio-prospecting sector and number of ABS permit applications increased

2.2 At least two new ABS-based products developed through R&D and GR manipulation by private companies, from the following candidates: on byproducts of the fruit of the Argan Tree *Argania spinosa*, under ABS exploration by SERDEX/ SEPPIC for cosmetics (based on fruit pulp) and by GREENTECH for food complement purposes (based on oil press cake); on latex of the CITES-listed Resin Spurge *Euphorbia resinifera*, under ABS exploration by INDENA for medicinal purposes.

2.3 At least two new ABS-based value chains established sustainably sourcing raw materials from the Argan Tree (SM, MS regions) and Resin Spurge (BMK region).

43. To achieve this, the project will under this Component first of all conduct and continue in-depth consultations of relevant private sector stakeholders on the further design and implementation of the ABS framework. It will organise trainings (workshops, simulations) for private companies, academics and cooperatives interested in ABS genetic resources and value chains, at national and regional levels, covering a wide range of topics including most notably the Nagoya Protocol, national ABS framework, ABS contracts and negotiation, benefit-sharing, sustainable resource use and ecosystem management. The project will disseminate ABS-compliant information on genetic resources and ABS value chains at national and international levels to promote sustainable bio-prospecting investment opportunities.

44. Under the project, at least two comprehensive ABS contracts will be signed that include inter alia bioprospecting permits, PIC, MAT, material transfer agreements with measures for sustainable use, and benefit-sharing for community benefit and ecosystem conservation. It is expected that at least two Internationally Recognized Certificates of Compliance (IRCCs) will be registered and submitted to the CBD Secretariat's ABS Clearing House (ABSCH). Under each ABS contract, R&D and GR manipulation will be triggered towards the development of new ABS products. The following details the tentative private sector companies to work with the project and the targeted ABS products and value chains:

	Product/Value Chain 1	Product / Value Chain 2	Product / Value Chain 3
Species	Argan Tree <i>Argania spinosa</i>		Resin Spurge <i>Euphorbia resinifera</i>
Primary material	Argan fruit pulp	Argan fruit oil press cake	Latex
Targeted regions	Souss Massa (SM) and Marrakesh-Safi (MS)		Beni Mellal-Khenifra (BMK)
R&D	(Confidential)	(Confidential)	(Confidential)
Private sector company	SERDEX/ SEPPIC	GREENTECH	INDENA
Potential Product / Industry	Cosmetics	Food complement	Pharmaceutics

45. The private companies involved in the project will conduct research and development on the genetic and/or biochemical composition of the genetic resources in accordance with the national ABS law (once approved) and the Nagoya Protocol. Moreover, there is an understanding that the companies intend to work with research teams in universities in Morocco, most notably the University Mohammed V in Rabat; this will favour professional exchanges, capacity development and technology transfer. To further promote ABS product development in Morocco, the project will conduct a study on the feasibility and usefulness of a Morocco ABS Product Label.

46. With regard to the biological resources at the origin of the targeted genetic resources, the project with its private sector partners will operationalise the ABS-product raw material supply chain from resource suppliers, emplacing the required control points and guaranteeing sustainable sourcing including through the training of local primary material suppliers.

Component 3 ? Biodiversity governance and conservation strengthened through mainstreaming and benefit-sharing in three target regions

47. Building on components 1 and 2, work under this component will focus on the pilot ABS value chains and sites in the targeted regions of Souss-Massa (SM), Marrakech-Safi (MS) and Beni Mellal-Khenifra (BMK).

48. The Component will deliver the following Outcomes:

3.1 Governance and capacity for biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration and ABS principles strengthened in Souss-Massa (SM) Marrakech-Safi (MS) and Beni Mellal-Khenifra (BMK) regions.

3.2 ABS value chains comply with the requirements of sustainable resource use and benefits to resource-supplier communities and biodiversity/ ecosystems.

3.3 New resources mobilised for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration by HCEFLCD and other key agencies in SM, MS and BMK, to reduce dependency on ODA and domestic budgets

3.4 In the targeted sites supplying the primary matter to the ABS value chains (Argan Forests SIBE, High Atlas SIBE, etc.), 30,000 ha are under improved practices contributing to the sustainable use, conservation and restoration of habitats through agreements, partnerships and funding facilitated by the project.

49. To achieve this, the project will under this Component work to ensure the integration of biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration and ABS principles in Regional Development Programmes. Regional committees on biodiversity and natural resources will be activated, engaging regional government and delegations of MEME, MAPMDREF and HCEFLCD. In addition, regional focal points of the National Biodiversity Committee will be emplaced, with regional committees integrating CNB sub-committees as appropriate. The project will provide training for key stakeholders in regional government and ministerial delegations on biodiversity, ecosystems and ABS. Governance, mechanisms and processes will be further detailed and emplaced, with the aim of enhancing biodiversity conservation benefits under the ABS framework (incl. benefit-sharing for resource supplier communities, sustainable resource extraction, ecosystem conservation and restoration, and related monitoring and law enforcement). New resources will be mobilised via the ABS benefit-sharing mechanism for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration by HCEFLCD and other key agencies, and HCEFLCD and other key government agencies, as well as newly created local management authorities, further partners and ABS resource suppliers, will be engaged in the sustainable use, conservation and restoration of habitats.

Component 4 ? Safeguards, Gender & Knowledge Management

50. This Component will deliver the following Outcomes:

4.1 All safeguards standards met throughout project

4.2 >80% of Gender AP targets met

4.3 >80% of KM Plan deliverables met

51. To achieve this, the project will under this Component ensure that training on social and environmental safeguards risks and related UNDP and GEF standards and management requirements is provided to key stakeholders, that social and environmental safeguards risks are mainstreamed across the work under Components 1-3, and that the necessary management measures are duly and constantly implemented and monitored. The mainstreaming of safeguards issues should for instance ensure that the work under Component 2 on the development of ABS value chains and private sector engagement will ensure that suppliers, communities, indigenous peoples, and others who may be affected are duly consulted and engaged and aware of their rights and obligations. Similarly, the upstream policy, planning and strategic work under Component 1 should integrate support on safeguards, most notably elements emerging from the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA).

52. In addition, the project will under this Component ensure that that a Gender Action Plan is fully implemented and monitored and that the processes and products defined in a Knowledge Management Plan are implemented and delivered.

Component 5 ? M&E

53. This Component will deliver the following Outcomes:

5.1 M&E duly implemented

54. To achieve this, the project will under this Component ensure that the project delivers regular monitoring of its progress and that gaps and weaknesses inform adaptive management. This includes but is not limited to the preparation of quality and timely annual PIRs, and full transparent support to the independent Mid Term Review and Terminal Evaluation with all required tracking tools, core indicators and financial indicators provided.

Project design: integration of lessons learnt from past projects and filling gaps left by these

55. As was outlined in ?12, following the signature of the Nagoya Protocol there have been several projects on ABS in Morocco that gradually built the capacity and framework to where it currently stands. All of these were implemented under or together with the same team of the Department of Environment in the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment that also includes the National ABS Focal Point. This team together with the UNDP team, a leading technical expert on ABS in the National Biodiversity Committee and ? most importantly ? the Project Manager of the predecessor MEME-DE/UNDP/GEF-5 project (# 5605), designed the project after further due consultations. The gaps identified reflect the current situation and remaining gaps, as well as the most promising ABS value chains.

56. Regarding the legal and regulatory framework, the project proposes a consolidation and amendment to integrate the emplacement of a mechanism for the sharing of monetary and non-monetary benefits, and with a more explicit focus on biodiversity benefits to complement the rural community benefits, which was a gap in the first regulatory texts.

57. The communication and awareness raising as well capacity development activities that were considered highly successful in the predecessor project will be continued and expanded to include more beneficiaries at regional and national level.

58. On ABS value chains, Argan emerged as the primary low-hanging fruit in an economic assessment of potential ABS value chains conducted during this predecessor project, which is one of several reasons this value chain was chosen. Another key lesson was the need to engage government at more influential and higher levels in this new project, which is why the Mohammed VI Foundation for the Protection of the Environment and Mohammed VI Foundation for the Research and Safeguarding of the Argan Tree (with its President) were engaged during project design to finally secure the long-standing approval of the ABS Law and ratification of the ABS Nagoya Protocol. In addition, since the end of the predecessor project (# 5605), the formerly informal National Biodiversity Committee was legally formalized by a 2020 decree creating the National Committee on Climate Change and Biodiversity, offering more political leverage.

59. In this context, a further lesson was to engage the private sector players more decisively to promote the ABS framework and ensure better alignment of their plans with the emerging ABS framework, where the preceding projects had only limited success. Several discussions were held with the private sector, including but not limited to the companies listed in the PIF (SERDEX/SEPPIC,

GREENTECH and INDENA, and the Union for Ethical BioTrade where a former ABS Senior Programme Officer of the CBD Secretariat works). These companies confirmed the relevance of Argan in the ABS context and added *Euphorbia resinifera* as a further relevant source of one or several potential ABS value chains. The application by the private sector companies of the legal framework after its approval will fill another key gap, as will be the signing of NP-compliant ABS contracts between these companies and local providers of genetic resource materials.

60. Under Component 3, the project will address further gaps by working on the ABS and wider biodiversity governance at regional level (in Souss-Massa, Marrakech-Safi and Beni Mellal-Khenifra), given that prior projects focused on the governance at national level. Finally, at local level, the project will in this project go beyond capacity development and aim to enhance the management of the ecosystems that provide the resources for the ABS value chains targeted by the project.

4) alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies

61. The project falls entirely under the GEF-7 Programme 3-9 *Implement the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing* under the Objective *BD-3 Further develop biodiversity policy and institutional frameworks*.

5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF and co-financing AND 6) global environmental benefits (GEFTF)

62. The project is timely as the increased investments that took place in the past 5 years contributed to establishing a foundation on which this project aims to build in synergy with ongoing interventions to facilitate enhanced biodiversity governance and financing.

63. The baseline and alternative scenarios are juxtaposed in the following table. The principal baseline interventions that can be considered here are the activities that the relevant Government agencies (most notably MEME-DE, HCEFLCD) are able to implement with domestic resources and donor funding.

Baseline Scenario	Alternative Scenario
Component 1. Consolidating the national ABS framework and related capacity and knowledge	

Without GEF support, the Government would continue to push for the ratification of the ABS-NP and the adoption of the ABS law developed and submitted in the predecessor UNDP/GEF/MEME project, however with no guarantee of success; institutionalise the national biodiversity (sub)committee and ANC, strengthening coordination at the national level between institutions.

However, the capacity at central level in the practical application of the ABS law would remain limited, especially in departments beyond the Environment Department, there would be no further benchmarking of missing elements in the framework, key legal regulations would remain unaddressed, and there would be limited cross-sector cooperation on ABS issues amongst government agencies. The TK registry would remain incomplete and not very operational, and there would be incomplete monitoring of the use of genetic resources. There would be a very limited benefit-sharing mechanism, if any, and any benefit-sharing would focus on rural populations with limited linkages to better natural resource and ecosystem management and biodiversity conservation. National NGOs would remain with limited staffing and ambition and continue laudable yet small-scale work at local levels.

Raising awareness among decision-makers of the positive impacts, particularly socio-economic, of ABS applied to GR will be more difficult without "success stories" of promising value chains leading to applied ABS contracts with shared benefits.

With GEF support, with piloting of promising value chains leading to applied ABS contracts, there is greater chance of convincing decision-makers of the positive impacts, particularly socio-economic, of ABS and of biodiversity value more generally.

Capacity at central level in the practical application of the ABS law including the negotiation of ABS agreements will be enhanced, especially in departments beyond the Environment Department, and there will be cross-sector cooperation on ABS issues amongst government agencies. Key missing elements in the ABS framework would be added, on the basis of benchmarking. The TK registry will be expanded and become operational, and monitoring of the use of genetic resources will be strengthened. There will be a monetary and non-monetary benefit-sharing mechanism, and benefit-sharing would benefit rural populations and at the same time more specifically natural resource and ecosystem management and biodiversity conservation. National NGOs working on ABS would be strengthened and expand their activities on conjunction with government and private sector.

Component 2. Development of new ABS products and value chains derived from genetic resources under national ABS law

Without GEF support, there would be limited constructive cooperation between government and private sector, which would hinder the development of ABS products and value chains and a favourable response to requests for access to GR by international users, due to a lack of knowledge of the sectors concerned (pharmaceuticals, cosmetics) and of negotiation techniques for ABS contracts. The rollout of NP-compliant ABS value chains would be delayed and left more in hand of existing negotiation channels between rural suppliers and user companies.

With GEF support, at least two new ABS products and value chains are fully operationalised under the project (including PIC, MAT, IRCC, material transfer, and benefit sharing at different levels). Such cooperation between government and private sector on ABS value agreements will set a precedent and open clear routes for other companies to follow in accessing genetic resources in Morocco in compliance with the NP.

Component 3. Biodiversity governance and conservation strengthened through mainstreaming and benefit-sharing in three target regions	
Without GEF support, given the limited operational budget allocated to the MEME Division for Biodiversity, actions on the ground would be limited, especially regarding the support of cooperatives and local actors working with biological resources containing key genetic resources. Capacity on ABS matters and biodiversity mainstreaming at regional levels in areas with promising genetic resources would remain poor. There would be very limited capacity development in the In addition, monetary and non-monetary benefit-sharing would be less prone to generate sustainable resource use and wider biodiversity benefits.	With GEF support, biodiversity governance will be strengthened in the three target regions ? regional development programmes will integrate biodiversity and ABS, regional-level capacity on these matters will be enhanced, and regional government delegations will cooperate. Cooperatives and local actors working with biological resources containing key genetic resources will benefit from capacity development on ABS and sustainable resource management. Monetary and non-monetary benefit-sharing will generate more sustainable resource use and wider biodiversity benefits.
Component 4. Safeguards, Gender & Knowledge Management	
Without GEF support, the Governments? work on ABS would not be accompanied by efforts focused on gender and social and environmental safeguards, and to a far lesser extent on knowledge management	With GEF support, the project will accompany national counterparts and fully implement its gender strategy, ensuring good participation by women in decision-making platforms, employment by project and government, trainings, and sustainable livelihood diversification. The project will also ensure that social and environmental risks are well managed and do not unduly escalate. Under the KM work the project in terms of lessons sharing and result dissemination, the project will disseminate its results via Morocco?s CBD clearing house mechanism, and via global ABS knowledge sharing platforms of UNDP and GIZ.
Component 5. M&E	
Without GEF support, the Governments? work on ABS would only in a very limited manner be accompanied by efforts in M&E	With GEF support, the M&E plan will be implemented to provide regular assessment of progress viz the stipulated targets in the results framework and GEF core indicators

64. The global environmental benefits generated under the above incremental alternative scenario are linked to the project?s indicator framework. The primary GEB is the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources in Morocco. The secondary benefit is the sustainable use of a component of globally significant biodiversity, most the two targeted endemic resource species, Argan Tree *Argania spinosa* and Resin Spurge *Euphorbia resinifera*. The third GEB is enhanced management and conservation of the natural ecosystems that harbour these resource species in their respective areas of distribution, noting that these represent important and vulnerable parts of Morocco?s share in the Mediterranean Biodiversity Hotspot.

65. Regarding the BD focal area, the project will deliver improved practices in altogether 30,000 ha of landscape in the three targeted regions.

66. Moreover, the project will contribute to the following SDGs and CBD Aichi Targets:

- SDG 1 (Targets 1.1, 1.4, 1.5 and 1.7): promote resource ownership and associated rights, justice and legal certainty, and local development and empowerment;
- SDG 2 (All targets): sustainable management of global genetic resources diversity contributing to food security, enhanced nutrition, sustainable agriculture and rural development;
- SDG 3 (Target 3.11): sustainable use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge contributing to use of traditional medicine and discovery of new medical treatment for overall human well-being and health care needs;
- SDG 8 (Targets 8.2, 8.3 and 8.6): promote new opportunities of productive employment, job creation, entrepreneurship and partnerships contributing to economic and social growth for all, including indigenous peoples;
- SDG 13 (Targets 13.2, 13.3 and 13.5): promote high diversity and climate appropriate genetic resources for climate change adaptation;
- SDG 15 (Target 15.10): promote additional financial resources and incentives for sustainable management of biodiversity and ecosystems;
- SDG 16 (Targets 16.3 and 16.6): strengthen legal and institutional frameworks contributing to effective and transparent partnerships and cooperation.
- Aichi Target 1 : raising public awareness to increase the value of biodiversity, its conservation and sustainable use;
- Aichi Target 2 : Biodiversity valuation and integration into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies;
- Aichi Target 7 : Promote sustainable management of genetic resources, sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and forestry to meet the need of present and future generations;
- Aichi Target 11, 12 and 13 : Maintain and safeguard genetic diversity and its effective and equitable management;
- Aichi Target 14 : Restore and safeguard ecosystem services for human wellbeing including women and indigenous and local communities;
- Aichi Target 15 : Promote opportunity for biodiversity and ecosystems restoration and contribute to climate adaptation;

- Aichi Target 16 : Promote entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol, set out core obligations on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits;

- Aichi Target 18 : Promote traditional knowledge innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities.

7) innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up.

67. *Innovation.* The project will introduce innovative approaches to solving long-enduring issues in biodiversity governance and management, sustainable financing and on the ground action in the targeted areas and ecosystems, through :

- Operationalisation of the ABS National Competent Authority in Morocco, already institutionalized by the national ABS law currently with the Cabinet for adoption;

- Strengthening of coordinating units and entities between the departments governing ecosystems and biological resources in Morocco, including the multi-sector National Biodiversity Committee, which is expected to have wider implications for biodiversity governance and provide entry points for further future improvements;

- Establishment of a "one-stop shop" for bio-prospectors and investors in genetic resources, streamlining the different access procedures of the different departments in charge of agriculture, forestry, marine resources and micro-organisms and the harmonization of biodiversity databases for easier "marketing" of the genetic resources of Morocco;

- The involvement of green funds, sustainable trade approaches and ecosystemic service payments (within ABS contractual clauses) to motivate private sector investment in the long-term and create sustained sources of income for the production and transformation of genetic resources in ABS value-chains.

68. These practices will also be integrated to regional development plans in order to ensure continued sustainable practices that create revenue and protect local ecosystems simultaneously.

69. *Sustainability.* The project will achieve sustainability through: the final setup of the ABS framework; growing existing links private sector companies interested in ABS genetic resource value chains and benefit sharing; the establishment of a benefit sharing mechanism benefitting both rural populations and government agencies responsible for biodiversity/ecosystem management (HCEFLCD, ANDZOA, etc.); and integration of ABS value chains, principles and benefit-sharing in regional development plans, as part of the government's biodiversity mainstreaming strategy and in line with the COP13 Cancun declaration.

70. *Upscaling.* The outcomes of the project will be scaled up through the dissemination of project results, lessons learned and experiences including demonstration of best practices in the development of ABS contracts, products, products and value chains. This will be achieved through making project information available in a timely manner through different mechanisms including the CHM, and by proactive outreach to companies engaged in ABS-related R&D. Finally, the project will also encourage South-South cooperation to build capacity and share knowledge with other African countries.

[1] 15,000 dirham per month for technician

[2]

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiGvYCD363uAhUCixoKHX02DxkQFjABegQIBhAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.courdescompes.ma%2Fupload%2F_ftp%2Fdocuments%2F49_Gestion%2520budg%25C3%25A9taire%2520et%2520comptable%2520du%2520Haut.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3_aPscPdGRPxxgAeDyTHy-T

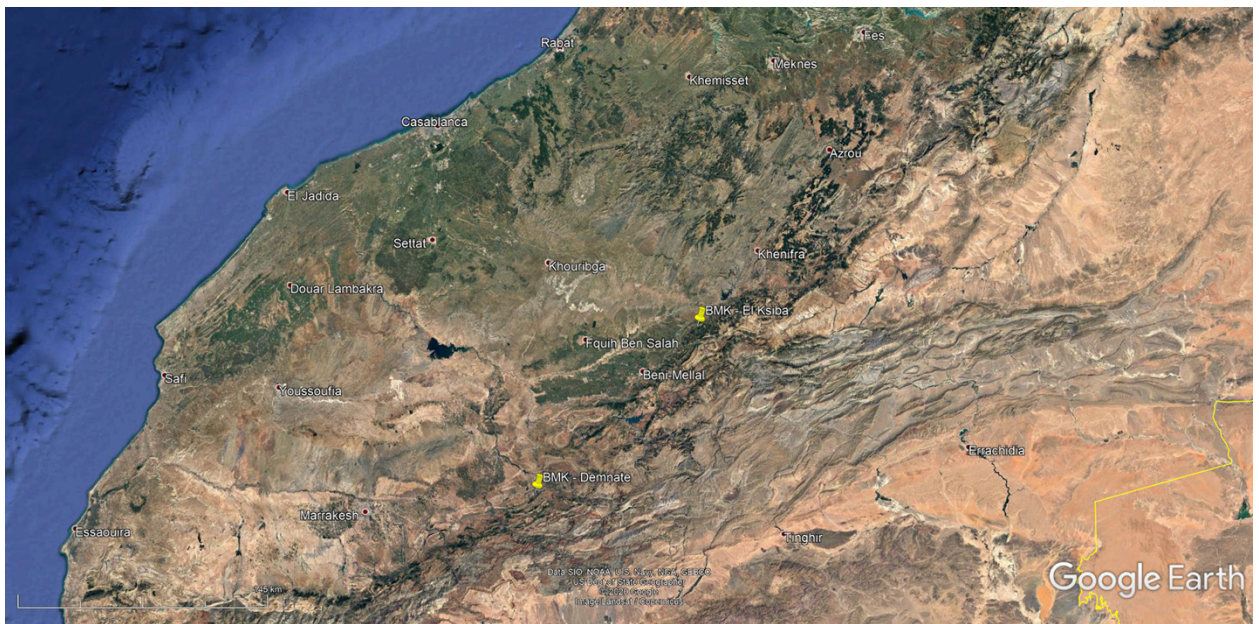
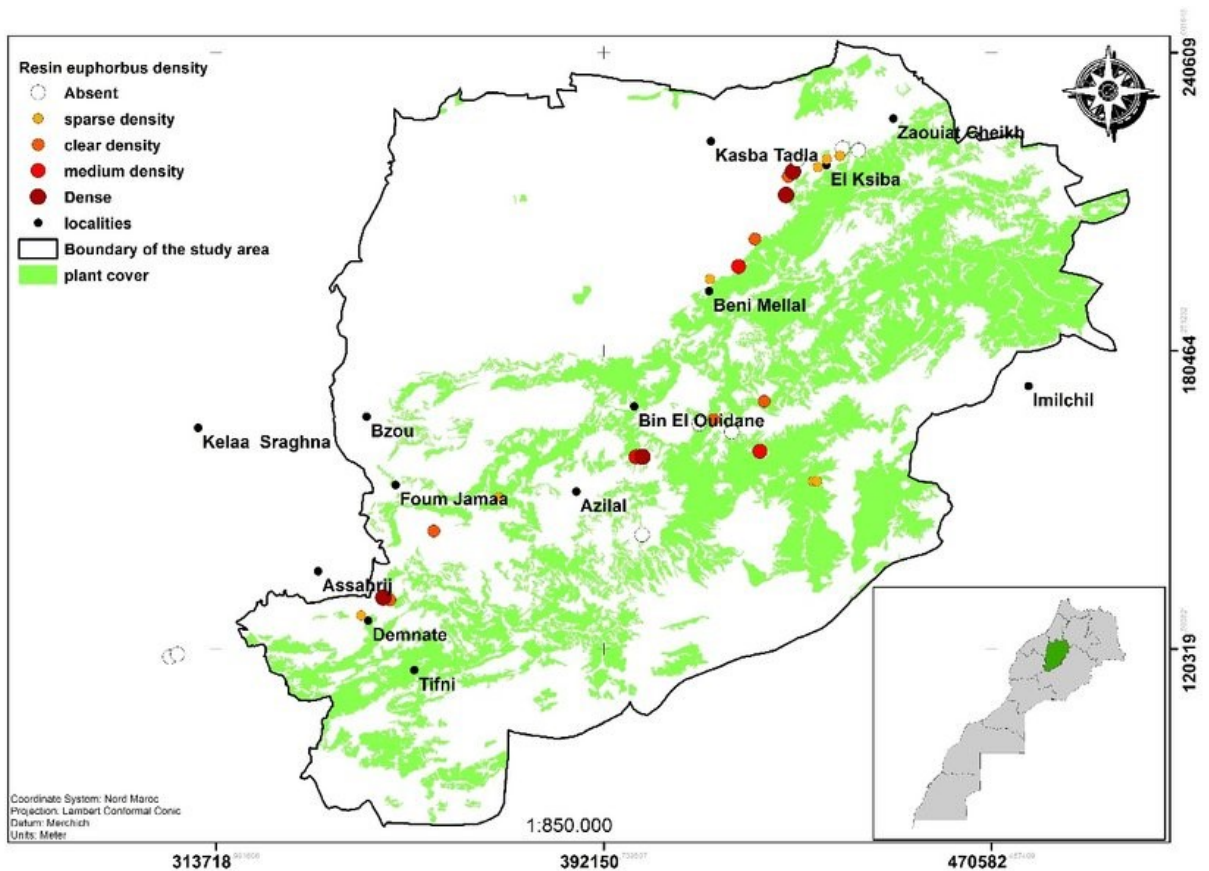
[3] L'ecosystème de l'Arganeraie. Alifriqui, M. Rabat : Actes sud (2004).

[4] La dégradation forestière dans le Sud Marocain : exemple de l'Arganier d'Admine (Souss) entre 1969 et 1986. Yousfi, S.M.. Mémoire de 3^{ème} cycle (1988).

[5] Ettaqy Abderrahim (HCEFLCD), Taha Abdelhakim (Université Ibn Tofail), El Ghiouane Aziz & El Khou Anas (2020): New data on the ecological distribution of *Euphorbia resinifera* O.Berg in the Beni Mellal-Khenifra region. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343394952>

1b. Project Map and Coordinates

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



2. Stakeholders

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

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Yes

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Private Sector Entities Yes

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

1. The table below details the involvement of key stakeholders for the project's implementation:

Entity	Mandate and role in the project
UNDP	UNDP will act as the GEF Implementing Agency and in this role will provide technical and administrative oversight (incl. on social and environmental safeguards) as well as co-financing.
Government at central level	
<i>MEME-DE ? Minist?re de l'Energie, des Mines et de l'Environnement ? Departement de l'Environnement</i> Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment ? Department of Environment	The main functions of MEME-DE are to facilitate, promote and coordinate with other departments all government action to protect the environment and monitor its implementation. MEME-DE will be the project Implementation Partner/Executing Agency in Morocco, nominate a senior staff as National Project Director, head the PSC, and host the PMU. MEME-DE will therefore be key for all project interventions at national level and at the regional level in the targeted via its regions delegations. It will be responsible to lead international partners such as the CBD Secretariat. MEME-DE is the lead government agency on ABS in Morocco and hosts core ABS-NCA.
<i>CNB ? Comit? National pour la Biodiversit?</i> National Committee on Biological Diversity	In May 2020, the Comit? National sur les Changements Climatiques et la Biodiversit? was eventually officially institutionalised. It comprises two technical ?sub-committees?, one on climate change and another on biodiversity, each supported by an administrative/operational sub-committee. The biodiversity sub-committee comprises two Working Groups, one on CBD Protocols (ABS, Cartagena), and one Science (IPBES). The CNB will will have a central role in project implementation and governance, including in the PSC, and will therefore be key in project monitoring and strategic guidance. Given its multi-sector nature it will play a major role in mobilising stakeholders (other ministries, academia, NGOs, private sector, etc.)

<p><i>CNRG - Commission nationale des ressources genetiques</i></p> <p>National Commission on Genetic Resources</p>	<p>The CNRG will be created under the ABS Law and is expected to become the ABS National Competent Authority. It comprises ministerial representatives from fisheries, agriculture, forestry, water as well as research institutes etc.</p> <p>Once established, the CNRG/ANC should assume a role in project governance similar to that of the CNB.</p>
<p><i>MAPMDREF-DA ? Minist?re de l'Agriculture, de la p?che maritime, du d?veloppement rural et des eaux et for?ts ? Departement de l'Agriculture</i></p> <p>Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests ? Department of Agriculture</p>	<p>MAPMDREF-DA is a key government agency as it oversees and supports all public and private agricultural lands including all those that are not public forest areas. MAPMDREF-DA engages in projects on natural resources important to the two targeted ABS value chains, and will therefore be key to support new value chain development in the targeted regions. MAPMDREF-DA will be on the PSC.</p>
<p><i>INRA ? Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique du Maroc</i></p> <p>National Institute for Agricultural Research of Morocco</p>	<p>INRA is a public institution whose mission is to undertake research for agricultural development. The strategic axes of research at INRA cover i) Characterisation, preservation and enhancement of natural resources; ii) Improving the productivity, competitiveness and sustainability of agricultural production ; iii) Improving the quality, value and diversification of plant and animal production ; iv) Analysis of the social demand for production systems and agricultural policies related to regional and local development. The conservation of genetic diversity is an important pillar at INRA. Despite the interest generated by the Argan tree and the multitude of research carried out on this tree, no approach to genetic improvement of the Argan tree has been envisaged. A new vision has emerged at INRA that aims at making the Argan tree a fruit tree and establishing Arganiculture, for which INRA has initiated a selection programme to create Argan varieties. Random samples were taken from different regions of Morocco. The analysis of the database compiled through the results of the genetic diversity studies allowed the selection of trees for crossing and the determination of their adaptation type. The results of the determination of the effects of the environment on adaptation, quality and productivity, allow the determination of the trees best suited for extension to other regions.</p> <p>INRA is one of the main beneficiaries of the project and will be able to intervene as an institution that covers research projects related to the conservation and restoration of biological/genetic resources as well as overseeing thematic programmes with a national scope that have more of a horizontal connotation serving all agrosystems and production chains.</p>

<p><i>HCEFLCD ? Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et For?ts et ? la Lutte Contre la D?sertification</i></p> <p>High Commission for Water, Forests and the Fight against Desertification</p>	<p>HCEFLCD is a key semi-autonomous government agency, under MAPMDREF, responsible for the development and implementation of government policies regarding the conservation and sustainable use of public forest lands, hunting, inland fishing, protected areas and biodiversity management, sustainable collection of wild medicinal and aromatic plants, and the fight against desertification. It issues and controls collecting permits and arranges for rangeland set-asides by paying resource users a fee.</p> <p>HCEFLCD oversees c 70-80% of the lands and resources for both the targeted species and regions (Argan in Souss-Massa and Marrakech-Safi, Euphorb in Beni Mellal-Khenifra). HCEFLCD will therefore be key on all the project?s aspects related to the sustainability of the value chain and resource collection. The precise scope and modality of the engagement of HCEFLCD will be defined during the PPG ? this will consider <i>inter alia</i> the design of the benefit sharing mechanism, the signing of ABS contracts for resources overseen by HCEFLCD, the issuance of GR access permits, oversight of PIC and MAT, and the emplacement of improved ecosystem/biodiversity management in the targeted regions. HCEFLCD will be on the PSC.</p>
<p><i>MENFPESRS ? Minist?re de l?Education nationale, de la Formation professionnelle, de l?Enseignement sup?rieur et de la Recherche scientifique</i></p> <p>Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research</p>	<p>MENFPESRS oversees all educational matters and public scientific research in Morocco. As such, the MENFPESRS coordinates the national research system, a set of bodies and structures belonging to the public and private sector whose actions and interactions make it possible to design and implement national research policy. This system is made up of the following bodies and structures: i) The public authorities that formulate national research policy through legislation, regulation, coordination, guidance, planning, programming, funding and evaluation of research activities; ii) The structures for implementing the national research policy, namely universities, non-university establishments and public research establishments; iii) The structures for promoting the results of research activities planned within the framework of the national research policy, namely the structures of university-business interfaces, incubators for the creation of innovative businesses, centers of expertise, incubators for companies, clusters, innovation cities, technopoles, etc.; iv) The structures for internal and external evaluation of research activities.</p> <p>MENFPESRS is home to the Scientific Institute in Rabat, which is part of the national research system and the entity responsible for development of scientific research in several fields, such as meteorology, geology, geophysics, geomorphology, remote sensing, zoology, botany, phytopathology and parasitology. As such they are the key (and only) public institution involved in research on genetic resources from micro-organisms. The Scientific Insitute is part of the National Committee on Genetic Resources (CNRG - future Competent National Auhtority under the new ABS law), responsible for monitoring the use of and research into genetic resources of micro-organisms and hence of related ABS access requests.</p> <p>MENFPESRS will be on the PSC.</p>

<p><i>MAE ? Ministre des Affaires ?trang?res, de la Coop?ration africaine et des Marocains r?sident ? l'?tranger</i></p> <p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccans Abroad</p>	<p>Donor coordination, monitoring and international cooperation. MAE will be on the PSC.</p>
<p><i>MICIEN ? Minist?re de l'Industrie, du Commerce, de l'Investissement et de l'?conomie Num?rique</i></p> <p><i>OMPIC ? Office Marocain de la Propri?t? Industrielle et Commerciale</i></p> <p>Ministry of Industry, Trade, Investment and the Digital Economy</p> <p>Moroccan Office for Industrial and Commercial Property</p>	<p>MICIEN-OMPIC is the office responsible for the protection of industrial and intellectual property (trademarks, patents, industrial designs) and for keeping the central commercial register in Morocco. As most commercial R&D processes involving genetic resources aim to develop and register patents in the pharmaceutical, cosmetic or biotechnology sectors, OMPIC is an important entity for ABS in Morocco, having contributed to the study on registering genetic resources-based patents in Morocco in 2018, and having a role in the filing of ABS-related patents. OMPIC would be one of the checkpoints in the ABS mechanism in Morocco.</p>
Government at regional level	
<p>Regional Delegations of MEME-DE in Souss-Massa, Marrakech-Safi and Beni Mellal-Khenifra</p>	<p>The delegations will provide coordination and leadership at regional and local levels in the two targeted regions holding the ABS resources and value chains (<i>Argania spinosa</i> and <i>Euphorbia resinifera</i>)</p>
<p>Regional Councils of Souss Massa, Marrakech-Safi and Beni Mellal-Khenifra</p>	<p>Key functions include: (i) the development of economic and social development plans for the region; (ii) the collection of taxes, fees and other charges levied on behalf of the region; (iii) promoting private investment; (iv) taking all measures to protect the environment; and (v) adopting measures to streamline the management of water resources.</p>

ANDZOA ? Agence Nationale pour le D?veloppement des Zones Oasiennes et de l?Arganier

<http://andzoa.ma/fr/andzoa/missions/>

Created under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fishing in 2010, under instructions of HM King Mohammed VI.

ANDZOA's mission is to draw up, in coordination with the government authorities, a comprehensive development programme for the areas in which it operates, to ensure its implementation, monitoring and evaluation, within the framework of sustainable development at the economic, social, cultural, environmental and human levels in accordance with the guidelines and strategies decided upon. To carry out these tasks, the Agency shall take all necessary measures, in particular :

- Carrying out the necessary technical, socio-economic and environmental studies; Drawing up, in coordination with the ministerial departments and bodies concerned, of socio-economic programmes, in particular those relating to the construction of infrastructure and basic facilities in the fields of education, culture, vocational training, health, housing, tourism, crafts and services, in particular through the conclusion of programme contracts or agreements; Participation in the preparation and implementation of local development projects aimed at improving the living conditions of the populations of these areas and encouraging them to organize their activities with a view to developing their production and improving their income; Propose to the government any legislative and regulatory measures to encourage and support all initiatives for the development of these areas; Organization of communication, sensitization and information campaigns in favour of investors and the various stakeholders for the realization of the development programs of these zones.

- And specifically for the Arganeraie: Ensure the preservation, protection and development of Argan tree areas, particularly through the implementation of socio-economic projects; Carry out operations to extend the Argan tree stands in accordance with the legislative and regulatory provisions relating to forestry; Carry out or supervise the implementation of projects for the development, marketing, promotion and labelling of argan tree products, particularly in the framework of programme contracts or agreements to be concluded with the Agency; Structure the production and marketing of argan products in the context of partnerships with the various stakeholders and in particular the populations concerned; Encourage scientific research relating to the protection and development of the argan tree and the promotion of its products.

ANDZOA's role in the project will be decided during the PPG. It could have a role in the development of legal regulations and capacity development in the Argan distribution area in the Souss Massa and Marrakech-Safi regions, and could potentially be tasked with Arganeraie conservation/restoration under the RBA-ABS benefit-sharing scheme. ANDZOA could also participate in one of the projects governance bodies.

Multilateral and bilateral agencies

<p>GIZ ? German Agency for International Cooperation</p>	<p>GIZ in Morocco runs a large programme working on 5 pillars, including one on Environment and Climate Change, which is based at the MEME-DE and comprises relevant interventions, most notably the <i>Project on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services</i> (USD 4.7m, 2018-2022): quantification and economic valuation of ES (ValueLinks, Natural Capital Accounting), mainstreaming into regional and sectoral development plans, emplacing economic mechanisms and incentives such as PES and PPP for private sector participation, and work on value chains. GIZ has chosen 2 pilot regions for their project, Souss-Massa and Beni Mellal-Khenifra, which overlap with those here proposed.</p> <p>ABS being a key ecosystem service (providing valuable GRs), the new project could look to build upon GIZ's work by integrating clauses of payments for ecosystem services within ABS agreements for GRs from pilot value chains. GIZ maintains regional offices with personel that are working on this project and who can provide insight and support to the here-project future activities in the target regions, especially for liaising with local authorities and mobilizing local stakeholders.</p> <p>The project will hence coordinate and exchange lessons closely with GIZ and their ongoing and any follow-up projects.</p>
<p>NGOs</p>	
<p><i>FM6PE ? Fondation Mohammed VI pour la Protection de l'Environnement</i></p> <p>Mohammed VI Foundation for the Protection of the Environment</p> <p>www.fm6e.org</p>	<p>The mission of FM6PE is the promotion of environmental protection and the improvement of living conditions. This is done via: Raising awareness and educating all audiences about sustainable development, especially the youngest ones; The mobilisation of all the actors concerned (international institutions, national and regional administrations, businesses, civil society) around innovative education and awareness programmes on sustainable development; The training of these actors and the strengthening of their capacities to take charge of these programmes.</p> <p>At the same time, the work of FM6PE on biodiversity is limited (management of botanical gardens, coordination of IUCN representatives in Morocco); and does not include any on the ABS topic or on the two targeted ABS resources and value chains targeted by the project. However, it could provide support at national level for communication and capacity-building, given it is an important player in terms of advocacy and outreach (political, media, etc). The PPG will also clarify whether the FM6PE could act as an umbrella for FM6RSA in a tripartite MOU with the MEME-DE, which will be explored further during the PPG,</p>

<p><i>FM6RSA ? Fondation Mohammed VI pour la Recherche et la Sauvegarde de l'Arganier</i></p> <p>Mohammed VI Foundation for the Research and Safeguarding of the Argan Tree</p> <p>Directrice Prof. Katim Alaoui, Laboratoire de Pharmacologie et Toxicologie, Facult? de M?decine et Pharmacie, Universit? Mohammed V, Rabat</p>	<p>Association with c 40 members, created in May 2004 in Essaouira, out of a research group at the University Mohammed V in Rabat. Its objectives are Coordination of scientific research on the Argan tree; Development and protection of natural balances; Legal protection of the exploitation of Argan forests; Improvement of the living standard of populations in the Arganeraie; Quality assurance of Argan tree products; Continuous updating of data on the Argan tree. FM6RSA focuses mainly on an intervention area around Essaouira (Marrakech-Safi) in the northwestern region of the Argan distributional area. FM6RSA plays a major role in the channelling of laws on Argan.</p> <p>FM6RSA with its political and academic links will help on several fronts: high level support for the ratification of the ABS-NP and the adoption of the legal and institutional framework including of all new work emerging under this new 2nd ABS project; identification of international bioprospecting companies, academic partners and new potential Argan-based ABS value chains; identification of the most suitable intervention areas and types in the targeted regions and communities in the Arganeraie; engagement of local Amazigh communities and cooperatives active in the Arganeraie.</p> <p>FM6RSA receives no regular budget but fundraises for projects, for Arga tree planting with HCEFLCD, the promotion of solar cookers, PV electricity. It could benefit from the project to help build its capacity, yet has not yet shown interest in intensifying and expanding its work.</p>
<p><i>AIAB ? Association Ibn Al Baytar</i></p> <p>www.facebook.com/AssolbnalbaytarMA</p> <p>President Prof. Zoubida Charouf, Universit? Mohammed V, Rabat</p>	<p>Like FM6RSA, AIAB was created out of a research group at the University Mohammed V in Rabat. AIAB focuses on research and conservation of the Argan tree, with a focus on supply chain and market development, empowerment of Amazigh communities especially women, and Argan forest protection and restoration working with communities and the HCEFLCD through planting and rangeland set-asides. AIAB focuses much of its work on the area of Essaouira (Marrakech-Safi).</p> <p>AIAB with its academic links will help on several fronts: identification of international bioprospecting companies, academic partners and new potential ABS value chains including beyond Argan-based ones; identification of the most suitable intervention areas and types in the targeted regions and communities; engagement of local Amazigh communities and cooperatives active in the Arganeraie.</p> <p>The project will also help build the foundation?s capacity and explore avenues for intensifying and expanding its work.</p>

<p><i>RARBA ? Réseau des Associations de la Réserve de Biosphère Arganaie</i></p> <p>Network of Associations of the Argan Biosphere Reserve</p>	<p>Founded in 2002 with the aim of ensuring sustainable development in the Arganaie, RARBA's key functions include: (i) supporting community action for the preservation and proper management of natural resources, (ii) maintaining and enhancing cultural heritage, (iii) enabling and operationalising the Argan Biosphere Reserve (ABR), (iv) technical and institutional support to member associations.</p> <p>RARBA's relevance and role in the project will be defined during the PPG. RARBA could contribute to the training and promotional efforts on ABS with local populations managing and depending on key natural resources.</p>
<p><i>ASMEL RBA ?</i></p> <p><i>Association Marocaine de l'Écolabel de la Réserve de Biosphère de l'Arganaie</i></p>	<p>Recently created under the UNDP/GEF/MAMA project <i>A Circular Economy Approach to Agro-Biodiversity Conservation in the Souss Massa Draa Region of Morocco</i> (GEF # 3989), this platform advances a single bundled PES pilot scheme for the Arganaie, linked to premium price labelling under the RBA label and conditional on enhanced management of the Arganaie.</p> <p>Role in project. To be decided during the PPG and project implementation. ASMEL could potentially be tasked with Arganaie conservation/restoration under the RBA-ABS benefit-sharing scheme, given that ultimately ABS is a PES mechanism too. However, it is not yet institutionalised by decree and cannot therefore represent government, so cannot play a role in governance. Also it must still prove its value.</p>
<p>Further NGOs/CSOs working on key genetic resources (TBD in PPG)</p>	<p>TBD in PPG</p>
<p>Regional project committee in Souss-Massa & Marrakech-Safi</p>	<p>The following local institutions/NGOs could be considered:</p> <p>The Souss Massa Regional Council; The Federation of Argan Grove Rights Owners; The Regional Network of Associations of the Arganaie Biosphere Reserve (RARBA); The Souss Massa Hydraulic Basin Agency; The Regional Land Use Planning Inspectorate; Ibn Zohr and Cadi Ayyad Universities; The Regional Tourism Delegation; The Regional Delegation of Culture; FIMARGANE; Provincial Tourism Delegation of Essaouira; The provincial delegation of culture of Essaouira; The Provincial Directorate of Agriculture of Essaouira; The Regional Rural Tourism Development Network; The Souss Massa Regional Tourism Council; The sustainable tourism development company;</p>
<p>Private sector, professional associations, cooperatives: GENERAL</p>	

<p>UEBT Union for Ethical BioTrade[1]</p>	<p>UEBT is a non-profit association that promotes ethical biotrade ? sourcing with respect, working to regenerate nature and secure a better future for people through ethical sourcing of ingredients from biodiversity. UEBT aims to contribute to a world in which all people and biodiversity thrive, setting good practices for how companies and their suppliers source specialty ingredients for the food, cosmetics and natural pharmaceutical sectors.</p> <p>UEBT organises trainings in support of companies involved in ABS, to clarify international procedures and how to liaise with national competent authorities for access to resources according to the standards of the Nagoya Protocol.</p> <p>UEBT has a partnership with the CBD Secretariat and recently launched their own ?UEBT ethical sourcing system certification?.</p> <p>UEBT has been involved in several ABS activities/ projects, especially in Africa, given their strong networks of private companies who have sustainability/eco-friendly/green departments. UEBT have already expressed interest in collaborating on ABS projects in Morocco given that the country is of ?strategic value to private companies?. Given the importance of the private sector participation to this project, they could help identify ideal candidates for the establishment of pilot ABS agreements who are interested in key Moroccan GRs and are willing to meet PIC/MAT conditions. Also, given their experience in working with African countries and the private sector, they could also train national and/or local stakeholders on ABS-relevant matters. Finally, UEBT could function as or offer to create an ABS-specific private sector engagement platform. Details will be further discussed during the PPG.</p>
<p>Private sector, professional associations, cooperatives: ARGAN</p>	
<p>SERDEX / SEPPIC</p> <p>www.seppic.com</p>	<p>Based in France, SEPPIC and its subsidiary SERDEX are Air Liquide Healthcare companies. SEPPIC has been designing, manufacturing, and marketing unique ingredients for over 75 years. These ingredients are used by consumers, patients, and professionals, for health, well-being, and beauty. SEPPIC?s vision is to help everyone enjoy a healthy life in a healthy environment.</p> <p>SERDEX specializes in the botanical extraction of cosmetic and pharmaceutical active ingredients.</p> <p>SERDEX/SEPPIC was identified as a potential project partner regarding a new ABS value chain based on Argan.</p> <p>SERDEX/SEPPIC is one of the companies engaged in R&D that cannot be made available due to confidentiality issues.</p>

<p>GREENTECH</p> <p>www.greentech.fr</p>	<p>A pioneer in plant biotechnology, GREENTECH develops and produces for cosmetic, pharmaceutical and nutraceutical fields high-tech active ingredients from plant, marine and microbial worlds.</p> <p>GREENTECH was identified as a potential project partner regarding a new ABS value chain based on Argan.</p> <p>GREENTECH works with women cooperatives mainly and could share best practices they have developed to ensure equitable sharing of benefits to the local population, as well as integrate new biodiversity preservation clauses (reforestation, financing of conservation activities) as part of a new ABS agreement sanctioned by national authorities.</p> <p>GREENTECH is one of the companies engaged in R&D that cannot be made available due to confidentiality issues.</p>
<p>Argan Cooperatives & Groupements d'intérêt économique (GIE)</p>	<p>Professional associations of Argan product collectors, manufacturers and traders, often buying Argan from individual users.</p> <p>They are main beneficiaries at regional and local community levels, in terms of capacity development, resource users/suppliers/managers and benefit sharing, and could play a role in disseminating information, supporting capacity-building initiatives to local cooperatives working with the private sector on ABS and asking local officials for the integration of biodiversity and ABS components in the regional development plans.</p>
<p><i>FIMARGANE ? Fédération Interprofessionnelle Marocaine d'Argane</i></p>	<p>FIMARGANE brings together ANCA, FNADUA, AMIGHA, ANCUAD and AMSPA. FIMARGANE is a signatory with ANDZOA of the programme contract for the development and preservation of the Arganeraie. Its objectives are to facilitate coordination and consultation between the various partners active in the Argan sector.</p> <p>In the project, FIMARGANE could support the coordination, training and mobilisation of stakeholders on ABS, sustainable exploitation and ecosystem management. The role will be clarified during the PPG.</p>

<p><i>ANCA ? Association Nationale des Coop?ratives d?Argane</i></p> <p>HQ in the Chamber of Agriculture, Souss Massa Region</p>	<p>ANCA was created in 2004, under an EU funded projet, by a group of cooperatives operating in the Argan sector. Today ANCA has 60 cooperatives with a total of 3,000 women Argan oil producers throughout the territory of the Arganeraie. ANCA?s mission is to organise cooperatives operating in the Argan value chain, to support member cooperatives and defend their interests before national and international administrative bodies. ANCA?s objectives are to: Support the upgrading of Argan cooperatives; strengthen organizational and managerial capacities of Argan cooperatives; support Geographical/AOC labelling; communicate around the cooperatives and the Arganeraie; raise awareness about the problem of Argan tree conservation (organization of workshops, information days, etc.).</p> <p>In the project, ANCA could support the training and mobilisation of cooperatives including on ABS, sustainable exploitation and ecosystem management. The role will be clarified during the PPG.</p>
<p><i>FNADUA ? F?d?ration Nationale des Associations Provinciales des Ayants Droits Usagers de l?Arganeraie</i></p>	<p>FNADUA?s aims are inter alia to propose and encourage research, training, development and supervision programs with the aim of improving the sector's profitability and introducing modern technologies to improve product quality; and encouraging and implementing annual programs for the succession and planting of the Argan Tree; and establishing and encouraging a policy of consultation, coordination and contracting between the various actors.</p> <p>In the project, FNADUA could support the training and mobilisation of local right holders (indigenous people) including on ABS, sustainable exploitation and ecosystem management, and safeguards issues. The role will be clarified during the PPG.</p>
<p><i>AMIGHA ? Association Marocaine de l?Indication G?ographique de l?huile d?Argane</i></p>	<p>AMIGHA is made up of ANCA, 4 GIEs, 2 Unions, 5 private companies, the Souss Massa Regional Council and the Souss Massa Chamber of Agriculture; it has registered the Argan IGP and is in charge of its follow-up, promotion and defense. Any role in the project will be clarified during the PPG.</p>

<p><i>ANCUAD ? Association Nationale des Commerçants et Utilisateurs de l'Argane et ses Dérivés</i></p>	<p>Created in 2011, the objectives of ANCUAD are: Representing traders and producers of Argan oil and its derivatives before FIMARGANE; ensuring the quality of services provided and the conditions for product evaluation; strengthening and evaluating the professional links in the work sector. ANCUAD seeks to implement the directions that have been set for the development of the Argan tree sector, built around five strategic objectives: i) Rehabilitating 200,000 hectares of Argan forest; ii) domestication of the Argan tree and the expansion of its cultivation with modern technologies to more than 5,000 hectares; iii) supporting promotion with the aim of creating uniqueness for all its products and derivatives in the international market; iv) Increasing the production of Argan oil to reach 10,000 tons annually by 2020; v) establishing projects within the framework of the "Green Morocco Plan" for the effective evaluation and integration of Argan products.</p> <p>Within the context of a UNIDO project, ANCUAD worked with FIMARGANE and others in the past on the establishment of sustainable Argan value chains and the development of economic activities in the Argan Biosphere Reserve. Yet in practice, ANCUAD has mainly focused on improving market access (national and export) and the socio-economic conditions of Argan oil operators.</p> <p>Given that Argan-based ABS products would be considered derivatives of Argan, ANCUAD will be targeted for awareness raising about ABS and for potential inclusion of ABS under its remit on derivatives.</p>
<p><i>AMSPA ? Association Marocaine des Sociétés de Production d'Argane</i></p>	<p>The mandate of AMSPA is similar to that of ANCUAD, as an association for commercial entities who sell Argan-related products directly to market. Its role in the project will be limited, and likely focused on awareness raising about ABS.</p>
<p>Private sector, professional associations, cooperatives: EUPHORB</p>	
<p>Groups working on Euphorb, in Beni Mellal-Khenifra: Euphorb Honey Cooperatives</p>	<p>The only agricultural cooperatives in the region, which would also benefit from a better protection of the Euphorb ecosystem, they will be key beneficiaries of the project, in terms of training and potentially as resource providers and land managers.</p>

INDENA	<p>Headquartered in Milan, Indena is a company dedicated to the identification, development and production of high quality active principles derived from plants, for use in the pharmaceutical and health food industries. Backed up by almost a century of botanical experience, the company holds more than 100 primary patents, has published more than 1000 scientific studies and co-operates with the world's most prestigious universities and private research institutions. Indena employs about 800 staff, investing a significant amount of its annual turnover in research, making this activity the key to its success.</p> <p>INDENA is the primary tentative project partner regarding a new ABS value chain and ABS agreement based on the Resin Spurge <i>Euphorbia resinifera</i>, given their research on the species in the Beni-Mellal region conducted in partnership with Prof. Zoubida Charrouf. INDENA has also expressed interest in contributing to the protection and rehabilitation of the Euphorbe ecosystem in the region.</p> <p>INDENA is one of the companies engaged in R&D that cannot be made available due to confidentiality issues.</p>
Academia	
UM5 ? University Mohammed V, Rabat	<p>One of the major universities in Morocco, home to key faculties for scientific research in Morocco. It also hosts the Scientific Institute, member of the National Biodiversity Committee, and the only academic institution that proposes programmes and research in the fields of zoology, botany, phytopathology and parasitology.</p> <p>Both Prof. Alaoui (FM6RSA) and Prof. Charrouf (AIAB) are at UM5. As such, the university will be a prime candidate for partnerships on R&D (knowledge and technology transfers, implication of students, etc.), including in work with private companies.</p>

2. A broad consultation process was carried out during the project identification phase involving key stakeholders, including:

- Numerous meetings and exchanges with the National Biodiversity Committee, which integrates key institutional stakeholders including MEME, MAPMDREF-DA, HCEFLCD, MENFPESRS, MICIEN, INRA, and OMPIC.

- Bilateral meetings and/or video calls with NGOs and Academia, including:

o AIAB, represented by its President Prof. Charrouf, based at University Mohammed V, who supports research and biotechnological development on genetic resources and considers the project as a real opportunity to emplace the ABS national framework;

o FM6RSA, represented by its President and Advisor to the Royal Palace Andr? Azoulay, and its Director Prof. Alaoui who is equally based at University Mohammed V; FM6RSA fully supports the project and will play an important role in mobilising high-level political support.

o FM6PE, which has shown its interest in supporting the project, particularly on communication, awareness-raising and capacity-building.

- Bilateral meetings and/or video calls with GIZ Morocco.

- Several bilateral meetings and/or video calls with private sector representatives, including UEET Union for Ethical BioTrade, SERDEX/SEPPIC, GREENTECH and INDENA, to understand their plans on ABS-related work in Morocco and interest in working with the project.

- Consultations led by MEME-DE with the regional governments and ministerial delegations.

- Consultations and views of local communities and associations in the target areas were conveyed and represented by the MEDD-DE and its regional delegations, as well as by NGOs and academic groups and ongoing projects/initiatives with existing working relationships. For the Argan ecosystem this was especially AIAB and FM6RSA (both anchored in the University Mohammed V), the GIZ programme as well as the ongoing project *A Circular Economy Approach to Agro-Biodiversity Conservation in the Souss Massa Draa Region of Morocco* (GEF-4 # 3989) with its relations with ANDZOA, RARBA, ASMEL RBA and others.

3. During project implementation, local communities will be key beneficiaries of the project as the Nagoya Protocol is further implemented, in reflection of the strong regionalization process taking place in Morocco. Focusing on pilot programmes to integrate biodiversity in local policies as well as ABS practices in the use of genetic resources, the project will ensure that local populations are involved on a continuous basis to help shape the local strategies and practices of local governing bodies and streamline biodiversity protection in their policies.

4. Civil Society organizations will have a key role to play in continuing to promote and defend local populations rights, especially providers of genetic resources, and support the capacity-building efforts in the field. Civil society will also be key in guiding mobilization and communication efforts to accelerate the implementation of the ABS framework in Morocco and finalize its ratification promptly. Given their high media visibility and heavy presence in rural areas, they will be an important factor in ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the pilot and future ABS value chains in Morocco.

5. Local communities and CSOs in the targeted regions will be involved in project preparation by different means: engagement through already-established relations of the regional delegations of MEME-DE, MAPMDREF-DA, in addition to those of Association Ibn Al Baytar and FM6RSA; and engagement by the national and international PPG team during field missions;

6. Local communities and CSOs in the targeted regions will be moreover involved in project implementation through local project committees in the two targeted regions.

7. The project will also seek to integrate young professionals into project staffing under new work modalities, to build careers.

[1] www.ethicalbiotrade.org

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis).

Institutional framework for gender equality in Morocco

1. Morocco has implemented major gender equality reforms over the past two decades. Actions confirming the desire to root egalitarian values between the sexes in institutions and within Moroccan society have multiplied and accelerated, while being part of a coherent and converging framework.

2. The main institutional advances relating to the implementation of gender-sensitive public policies, particularly in the sustainable development sector and considering the regional dimension were:

3. The adoption in 2006 of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and Equity by integrating the gender approach into development policies and programs. A circular from the Prime Minister of March 2007 confirmed the legitimacy of this national strategy by asking the ministries, Walis and governors to proceed with the integration of gender in all policies and in sectoral and regional development programs. Several ministries have embarked on a process of institutionalizing the integration of gender equality in their respective sectors through the development, adoption and implementation of medium-term programs for the institutionalization of gender equality.

4. The implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy in all national policies was boosted by the adoption of the 2011 Constitution. This Constitution reaffirms Morocco's commitment to human rights as they stand, are universally recognized, thus paving the way for broadening the normative frame of reference in matters of equality and law. It guarantees gender equality and extends it to the economic, social, cultural and environmental fields[1].

5. The ministerial department responsible for sustainable development presented its Strategy for institutionalizing the integration of gender equality in 2018. This strategy offers an appropriate operational framework for setting up projects aiming at equitable access to the right to a healthy environment, while respecting the provisions of the Finance Law in terms of the application of an efficient approach sensitive to gender[1].

6. This strategy (2018-2021) is structured around two axes: (i) Creation and development of a lasting institutional capacity to ensure the anchoring of gender equality in the sustainable development sector, and (ii) Integration of the gender approach in the planning, implementation and monitoring of programs and projects in the sustainable development sector. This second axis is broken down into three

projects, one of which consists of "the development and implementation of a methodological guide and a training program for executives of the Department of Sustainable Development in gender analysis and its use in the design, planning and implementation of environmental protection projects". To date, this project has not yet been implemented, besides generally speaking, the projects of this strategy when they are implemented, they are implemented at the central level while they remain little known at regional level.

7. The Advanced Regionalization Project has pronounced itself in a precise and relevant manner on the issue of gender equality, from its "General Conception", through its "Gender Equity" section through an *"affirmative action in favor of a greater participation of women in the management of regional and local affairs"*. *"The gender approach will be systematically integrated into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, strategies and governance at the regional level"*, and *"gender-sensitive budgeting, currently being tested at the national level and municipal, will be introduced at regional, prefectural and provincial level"*.

8. The 2009 Municipal Charter also saw the introduction of new provisions such as: (i) the establishment in each municipality of consultative committees for parity and equal opportunities, and (ii) the need to develop the communal development plan (PDC) according to a gender-sensitive participatory approach.

9. In addition, it should be noted that the High Commission for Water and Forests and the Fight against Desertification (HCEFLCD) has set up, since 2006, a national strategy for the development and management of urban and peri-urban forests. This strategy is based on the preservation and sustainable enhancement of the precious role that these spaces play for the well-being of city dwellers and for the enhancement of the landscapes of our cities. In fact, urban women are also involved in planning the development of urban and peri-urban forests, knowing that these natural spaces are places of visit and leisure for families in all its components (women, men and children).

Regarding the project

10. Women, men, youth and elderly interact with their natural environments in different ways. Women play a significant role in the utilization of biological and genetic resources and as custodians of traditional knowledge, they tend not to fully benefit from the benefits arising from their utilization and are not fully involved or empowered to the extent where they can for instance influence the negotiations for Prior Informed Consent and Mutually Agreed Terms. While the involvement of women and men and other social groups including minorities and the most vulnerables communities tend to vary based on the power dynamics in each and

every specific context, Morocco is no exception to the need to address the drivers of gender inequalities and ensure that the project intervention along ABS value chains will not exacerbate the existing inequalities but enable all the social groups involved to equally benefit from its planned interventions.

11. The project will therefore highlight the importance of the gender issue and embrace various opportunities and measures to promote women empowerment. The empowerment of rural women is an important consideration in the development of rural areas in Morocco. **The recent evolution of the national and decentralised legal framework on gender, as outlined above, supports this endeavour.**

12. In order to do so, the project will during the PPG phase conduct a gender analysis using the MIND Your Step! Gender Tool to map the different roles played by women and men along ABS value chains, identify the social determinants explaining why such roles are assigned to each, notice the interlinkages between gender equality and the overall performance of an ABS value chain. Based on the findings the project will design gender-smart ABS value chains and identify entry points and actions for gender mainstreaming such as assigning 30% quotas for women in ABS-related committees, using gender-sensitive language in ABS regulations and community protocols, and by empowering women to fully benefit from the added value created downstream by ABS value chains. It is expected that many ABS agreements in Morocco will generate benefits through value chains in which rural women play a major role; women will therefore be specifically targeted under the ABS benefit sharing mechanism. This has already been demonstrated in traditional agricultural/biotope Argan value chains, especially through associations and rural cooperatives, and a similar outcome is expected under ABS value chains.

13. To promote gender issues throughout implementation, the project will hire a Safeguards, Community and Gender Officer.

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; and/or Yes

generating socio-economic benefits or services for women. Yes

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

Yes

4. Private sector engagement

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

Please briefly explain the rationale behind your answer.

1. Both domestic and foreign private sector companies, especially from the pharmaceutical, cosmetics and biotechnology sectors, are the main users of genetic resources for commercial purposes, and are therefore critical in the project and in the implementation of the Morocco's ABS framework more widely.
2. Selected companies, most notably those working on the R&D of the targeted new ABS products and value chains, will be involved in project preparation and in project implementation: as cofinanciers; as beneficiaries of the ABS framework and of technical assistance; to help define adequate access procedures; to test the new legal framework; as ABS contract holders sharing benefits for communities and ecosystem conservation, developing new ABS products and sourcing from the new value chains.
3. It is critical to proactively engage with the private sector through bio-discovery partnerships to stimulate investments in Morocco's bio-economy based on genetic resources. In the alternative scenario, the project aims to make a business case for investing in biodiversity and by doing so it will set up an innovative mechanism for biodiversity financing, not only by re-investing monetary benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources into conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity, but also by stimulating scientific research, encouraging technology transfer along value chains using genetic resources hence contributing to wider development co-benefits. This target could be achieved by setting up an ABS business platform and investment facility to promote dialogue and partnerships with potential business users of Morocco's genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.

5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

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 (table format acceptable)

The following table brings together i) the risks to project implementation and ii) the social and environmental risks potentially posed by the project requiring management. The latter is based on the UNDP Social and Environmental Pre-Screening completed during PIF design (Annex E).

Identified risk	Proposed measures to address risk
Risks to project implementation and success	

<p>ABS-NP not ratified and national ABS Law not adopted by project start</p>	<p>High level engagement via FM6 and FM6RSA will aim to secure the ratification and adoption of the national ABS law. Meanwhile, no ABS agreements will be entertained with private entities</p>
<p>Lack of political will and lengthy process for the full national ABS framework to be adopted and operationalised</p>	<p>The project will seek to help the development of pilot value chains and establish ABS agreements on key resources by using already-existing procedures and mechanisms for accessing biological resources, in the various departments managing and monitoring the different involved ecosystems. This way, no new specific policies will be required to provide access and to establish value chains, while the political and parliamentary process takes place for the adoption of the national ABS legal framework. ABS agreements will be developed under the existing guidelines of existing laws on biodiversity (namely CITES) and will establish benefit-sharing clauses between private entities (users and providers of genetic resources) that will require minimal input from government authorities. The departments involved in the future National Competent Authority will be consulted on an individual and case-by-case basis to simulate and test their ABS processes without hindering the establishment of prospective ABS agreements between private parties, on an observational basis only. If the the ABS legal framework is adopted during the project implementation, the ABS agreements will be subject to validation by the National Competent Authority, whose sub-committee will have been involved in the development of said pilot agreements at an early stage.</p>
<p>The private sector companies pre-selected and consulted during project design eventually decline to work with the project during the PPG or implementation phases as proposed, especially given concerns about R&D confidentiality</p>	<p>The project and related key stakeholders (government, UNDP, academia, NGOs, etc.) commit to not seek or disclose any information identified as confidential by the private sector companies. Technical reporting and reporting on co-financing can remain generic enough to not undermine legitimate concerns.</p>
<p>The genetic resource value chain is insufficiently developed to bioprospecting and industry standards</p>	<p>The genetic resources chosen to build the value chains around will be carefully selected based on previous feasibility studies, regional specificities and the existence of traditional value chains with high economic potential. Only genetic resources that have been subject to high previous demand from bioprospectors, and where Morocco is a recognized high-level producers at the regional level, will be considered.</p>
<p>R&D in the bioprospecting sector for specific resources is under-developed and local and/or foreign research entities are lacking capacity to perform R&D for said resource.</p>	<p>The project will ensure that appropriate research entities are selected to participate in the ABS value chain development and with sufficient potential to perform R&D on specific genetic resources, for the establishment of high-value potential benefits in the medium and long-term for ABS agreements.</p>

Lack of capacity and political will to add value to genetic resources and to develop, negotiate and monitor benefit-sharing agreements.	Key genetic resources will be selected for the pilot ABS value chains development, that are prioritized in the local development plans for forestry and agriculture at the regional level, and where local authorities have already experience in dealing with producers and local communities on said resource. ABS and biodiversity in general will be integrated into the local and regional development strategies in order to ensure that local decision-makers are in line and supportive of the establishment of value chains and ABS agreements on the targeted resources.
Risks emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic	The main risk is that COVID will likely reduce the resources available in the Moroccan Government for environmental management. Activating the ABS framework and engaging the private sector in developing more sustainable business models and rural livelihoods therefore seems well aligned with the desired green recovery. At the same time, the risk that ABS product development could be reduced seems very marginal, given how little the cosmetic and pharma sectors have been affected by the pandemic to this date.
Social and environmental risks potentially created by the project	
<i>Please also see the SES risks in the SESP in Annex E Like the above risks to project success, these will be revised at PPG stage ? and added to the UNDP Risk Log here.</i>	

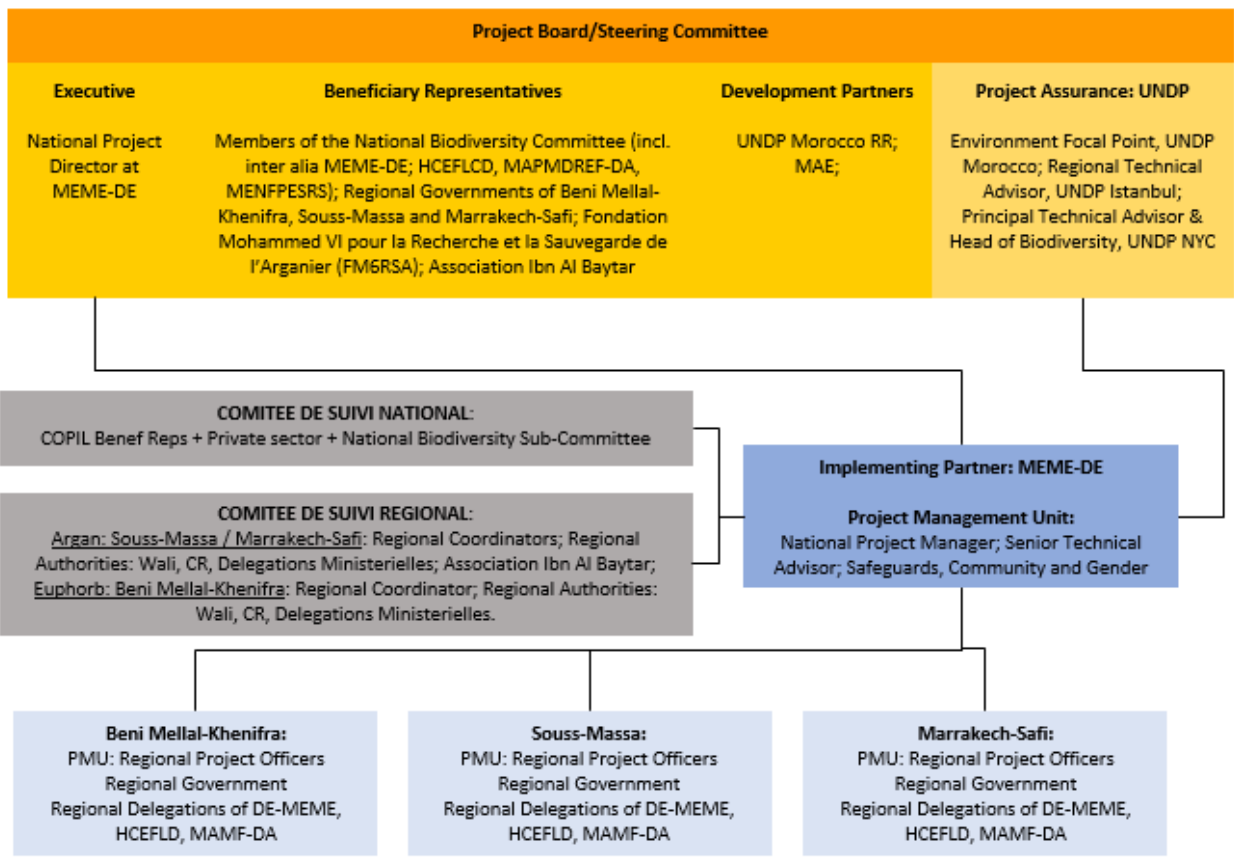
6. Coordination

Outline the institutional structure of the project including monitoring and evaluation coordination at the project level. Describe possible coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

Institutional structure

1. The **Implementing Partner** for this project will be the **Department of Environment of the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment (DE-MEME)**. The Implementing Partner will be entrusted the implementation of the project, and it will host the Project Management Unit.
2. **UNDP** will be accountable to the GEF for the implementation of this project (oversight of project execution, GEF project cycle management services). UNDP will also be responsible for the Project Assurance role in the Project Board/Steering Committee.
3. The **Project Board/Project Steering Committee** is responsible for taking corrective action as needed to ensure the project achieves the desired results. The composition of the Project Board must include the following roles:
 - Project Executive (National Project Director): will be the Director of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Section in the Department of Environment of the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment (MEME-DE).

- Beneficiary Representative(s): Individuals or groups representing the interests of those who will ultimately benefit from the project. Their primary function within the board is to ensure the realization of project results from the perspective of project beneficiaries. Often civil society representative(s) can fulfil this role. The Beneficiary representatives are: Members of the National Biodiversity Committee (incl. *inter alia* MEME-DE; HCEFLCD, MAPMDREF-DA, MENFPESRS); Regional Governments of Beni Mellal-Khenifra, Souss-Massa and Marrakech-Safi; Fondation Mohammed VI pour la Recherche et la Sauvegarde de l'Arganier (FM6RSA); Association Ibn Al Baytar.
- Development Partner(s): Individuals or groups representing the interests of the parties concerned that provide funding and/or technical expertise to the project. The Development Partners are: UNDP Morocco (Resident Representative); Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccans Abroad (MAE).
- Project Assurance: UNDP performs the quality assurance and supports the Project Board and Project Management Unit by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. This role ensures appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed. The Project Board cannot delegate any of its quality assurance responsibilities to the Project Manager. UNDP provides a three-tier oversight services involving the UNDP Country Office and UNDP at regional and headquarters levels. Project assurance is totally independent of project execution.



4. MEME-DE as Implementing Partner is able to hire project staff to be delegated to other government agencies.

5. The Implementing Partner has requested that UNDP provides Direct Payments on its behalf, as there are legal reasons that prevent the IP from receiving GEF resources directly from UNDP or other donor agencies. Under the Direct Payment cash transfer modality, the government assumes responsibility for the contracting process, performs recruitment or procurement, and signs the contract according to its own rules and regulations, and retains full accountability over the execution of the project. UNDP will ensure a full separation/firewall between oversight and such minimal implementation support functions by assigning these to distinct personnel in the UNDP Country Office in Morocco.

Monitoring and evaluation

6. Project M&E will be led by the M&E Officer with additional input provided by the Project Manager and Senior Technical Advisor. The project comprises a dedicated component and budget on M&E.

Coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives

Project or Initiative	Type of coordination/engagement
UNDP/GEF/MEME project <i>Developing a National Framework on Access to and Benefit-Sharing of Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge as a Strategy to Contribute to the Conservation and Sustainable Use of biodiversity in Morocco</i> (GEF # 5605, 2014-2019)	This is the immediate predecessor project on which the here-proposed project will build ? regarding the adoption of the legal and institutional framework (ABS NP ratification, ABS law, ABS NCA designation, etc.), capacity development and communications, and outreach to academia and procate sector. The government staff in MEME-DE remains the same and they and the former Project Manager provided significant input to the here-proposed project and will continue to be involved during project implementation.
UNDP/GEF/MAMA project A <i>Circular Economy Approach to Agro-Biodiversity Conservation in the Souss Massa Draa Region of Morocco</i> (GEF # 3989, 2014-2020)	While the project will have ended by the time the here-proposed project starts, there will be connections and learning. Both projects deal with the endemic Argan ecosystem in the Souss Massa region and work with rural communities. There is good learning in the complications the GEF-4 project faced in establishing a good understanding of a complex concept like PES amongst government and community stakeholders in the region, and the challenges in linking the rural development interventions to sustainable ecosystem management and biodiversity conservation. The ABS project is prone to face similar challenges.

GCF/ADA/ANDZOA/DRA Souss Massa project *Development of Argan orchards in degraded environment (DARED)* (GCF FP 022, 2017-2022)

There are important connections with this projects because both deal with the endemic Argan ecosystem in the Souss Massa region and work with rural communities. However, the approach is different. While the GCF project directly commits GCF resources to reforestation under the project and aims to introduce a plantation-based recovery and expansion of the Argan resource with a focus on severely degraded lowlands with limited biodiversity co-benefits, the here-proposed project aims to provide incentives to communities and additional sustainable resources to achieve a better conservation and sustainable use of the natural Argan forest ecosystem and its biodiversity. In addition, the GCF project focuses on the southern parts of the Argan range near Tiznit, while the here-proposed project will be active further north where there are no plans for Arganiculture plantations.

7. Consistency with National Priorities

Is the Project consistent with the National Strategies and plans or reports and assesments under relevant conventions?

Yes

If yes, which ones and how: NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc

1. The project is fully aligned with Morocco's **National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan / NBSAP 2016-2020**, most notably:

- Under Axis A *Strengthen the conservation of species, ecosystems and the services they provide*, with the following national operational objectives:

o *A4. Strengthen or establish appropriate programmes for the in situ and ex situ conservation of the cultivated plant genetic diversity, domestic and wild animal breeds, microorganisms, as well as for the conservation of forestry species and other species of spontaneous flora of socio-economic value.*

o *A5. Take stock of national marine genetic resources and establish a programme for their conservation, including conservation and management plans for red coral.*

- Under Axis C *Contributing to the improvement of the living conditions of local populations through the effective implementation of the NBSAP*, with the following national operational objectives:

o *C1. Strengthen mechanisms for integrating the economic, social and cultural values of national biodiversity and ecosystem services into sectoral decision-making and planning processes.*

o *C3. Establish the national legislative and institutional framework for the operationalisation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization, in order to generate potential additional resources for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the fight against poverty.*

- Under Axis D *Strengthening national biodiversity governance*, with the following national operational objectives:

o *D1. Strengthen the national framework for the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) through the strengthening of national, regional and local coordination structures, promoting convergence and participation.*

o *D2. Updating national biodiversity legislation through the updating and modernization of legislation, as well as the development of implementing legislation.*

o *D4. Develop the plan for mobilizing the financial resources needed to implement the strategy and activities contained in the new National Biodiversity Action Plan, through partnerships at national and international levels.*

o *D5. Develop and enrich the National Biodiversity Clearing House Mechanism (CHM).*

- Under Axis E *Improving, enhancing and sharing knowledge about national biodiversity*, with the following national operational objectives:

o *E1. Improving the valuation of the economic, social and cultural values of national biodiversity and ecosystem services.*

o *E4. Develop and implement collaborative and relevant research programmes based on national priorities and scientific and technical information needs on biological diversity, and publish reports on national biodiversity trends.*

2. **CBD National Report and Nagoya Protocol National Report:** in its last report, Morocco highlights the synergies between the implementation of the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol and its 2018 National Sustainable Development Strategy. The NSDD identified seven major issues, the first of which is that of the consolidation of the governance of sustainable development and has broken down into four strategic areas, including the strengthening of the legal framework and control mechanisms. As such, the NSDD calls for the development of new laws that contribute to sustainable development, which includes the legal and institutional framework for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.

3. In addition, the new **Constitution of Morocco**, promulgated on July 29, 2011, sets the framework for decentralization and advanced regionalization, aimed at achieving integrated and sustainable development at the economic, social, cultural and environmental levels. The Constitution officially proclaims that the State will strive towards the achievement of sustainable human development, with the objective of consolidating social justice, the preservation of national natural resources and the rights of future generations.

4. The **National Charter for the Environment and Sustainable Development** adopted by the Kingdom of Morocco also proclaims that research and development must be supported to stimulate innovation and encourage technologies and processes that are appropriate for the protection of the environment, sustainable development and job creation as part of a new economy and green growth. The Charter advanced the adoption of the following laws and strategies: (a) The Framework Law on the Environment, which has become the new key global legislative reference on the environment; and (b) the national strategy for sustainable development. Taken together, these laws govern the use of

biological and genetic resources, and provide the foundation for the development of a coherent framework for ABS.

8. Knowledge Management

Outline the knowledge management approach for the Project, including, if any, plans for the Project to learn from other relevant Projects and initiatives, to assess and document in a user-friendly form, and share these experiences and expertise with relevant stakeholders.

1. The project includes a dedicated workstream on Knowledge Management under Component 4. KM will be a key element during implementation to ensure that all the lessons learned from the implementation of relevant previous and parallel projects are captured, analyzed and shared with key stakeholders to promote learning within and across government departments, research institutions, bioprospecting companies and local communities targeted, in order to help replicate and scale up its impact, as well as to inform policy.

2. Knowledge management will be supported by the development of training materials and case studies. This material will be freely available and widely distributed. It will provide comprehensive guidance to stakeholders and will be used in future projects, as well as in other countries in the region and beyond.

3. At the national level, the project will be providing guidance, producing knowledge products, using innovative knowledge exchange tools, and sharing valuable information and lessons learned adapted to different audiences and in different languages, namely the following :

- Guide on how to register intellectual property rights linked to genetic resources (existing);
- Guide on how to collect and protect traditional knowledge linked to genetic resources (existing);
- Communication and marketing strategy to promote the establishment of ABS agreements (existing);
- Case studies on the economic potential of ABS agreements on genetic resources (existing);
- Training guide for trainers on ABS (under development);
- Guide on ABS agreements negotiations for specific contract clauses (to be developed);
- Guide on business models of industries (pharmaceutical, cosmetics, agriculture, etc) and their implications for the negotiations of benefit-sharing agreements.
- Guide on gender-based sensible ABS approaches in local communities (to be developed).
- Guide on how to use the One-Stop-Shop for ABS transactions (to be developed).

4. At the local level the project will work directly with the communities and stakeholders in capturing their lessons and feedback, conducting knowledge exchanges, organizing training workshops and establishing networks of NGOs to promote the development of ABS value chains and the

establishment of ABS agreements, as well as push through the finalization of the ratification process and adoption of the draft ABS law in Morocco.

5. This management approach will help to scale up and replicate best practices and lessons learned from the previous project, as well as south-south and triangular cooperation previously involving Morocco, specific to ABS.

9. 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
Low			

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

Provide preliminary information on the types and levels of risk classifications/ratings of any identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and describe measures to address these risks during the project design.

Part B. Identifying and Managing Social and Environmental Risks

QUESTION 2: What are the Potential Social and Environmental Risks? <i>Note: Complete SESP Attachment 1 before responding to Question 2.</i>		QUESTION 3: What is the level of significance of the potential social and environmental risks? <i>Note: Respond to Questions 4 and 5 below before proceeding to Question 5</i>		QUESTION 6: Describe the assessment and management measures for each risk rated Moderate, Substantial or High
<i>Risk Description (broken down by event, cause, impact)</i>	<i>Impact and Likelihood (1-5)</i>	<i>Significance (Low, Moderate Substantial, High)</i>	<i>Comments (optional)</i>	<i>Description of assessment and management measures for risks rated as Moderate, Substantial or High</i>
<p>Risk 1. There is a risk that rights-holders do not have the capacity to claim relevant rights, especially amongst less educated rural populations, some of which are indigenous people; there is equally a risk that duty-bearers (government and private sector partners) do not have the capacity to meet their obligations in respecting and protecting the human rights of affected populations.</p> <p>Human Rights: P2, P3. Accountability: P14</p>	<p>I = 2 L = 3</p>	<p>LOW</p>		<p>While this risk is assessed as Low, this will be reassessed during the PPG and incorporated into the ESMF, and into site-specific (value-chain specific) ESMPs if required.</p>

<p>Risk 2. There is a risk that project support directly or indirectly linked to rural livelihoods may lead to child labour (boys and girls) and to unduly modified work or enhanced workloads for women, especially in the collection of primary materials for ABS value chains, but also in livestock herding and farming/ gardening as well as firewood, feedstock and water collecting.</p> <p>Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: P10. Standards 7.1, 7.3, 7.5</p>	<p>I = 2 L = 3</p>	<p>LOW</p>		<p>While this risk is assessed as Low, this will be reassessed during the PPG and incorporated into the ESMF, and into site-specific (value-chain specific) ESMPs if required. These will also consider potential labour related risks. If Moderate or higher risks are identified the requirements of UNDP's SES Standard 4 will apply.</p>
<p>Risk 3. Given the prevailing cultural context, there is a risk that groups marginalised for socio-economic, tribal (especially indigenous people) or gender (especially women) reasons are not duly consulted and involved in the project, do not benefit equally, and that the project and its stakeholders reproduce established discriminations, potentially leading to inadvertent harm.</p> <p>Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: P10. Accountability: P13, P14</p>	<p>I = 4 L = 2</p>	<p>MOD</p>	<p style="color: red;"> </p>	<p>At PPG stage, an ESMF and a Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be developed for the entire project to ensure meaningful stakeholder consultation and engagement across all elements of the project. This will incorporate an ESIA and an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework. A Gender Action Plan will also be developed and implemented for the project. Stakeholders will also have access to a project Grievance Redress Mechanism, to be in place. Project-affected people will be informed about the existence of these processes and mechanisms.</p> <p>In addition, site-specific (value-chain specific) ESMPs may be developed that include site-specific Stakeholder Engagement Plans and Indigenous Peoples Plan (including FPIC processes), where relevant.</p>

<p>Risk 4. There is a risk that either the project or the wider ABS framework leads to the commercial exploitation of traditional knowledge without due consultations and recognition, without a fully functional ABS law and framework in place, and/or without due benefit sharing with TK holders, potentially leading to inadvertent harm to indigenous people (Amazigh) and their heritage and traditions.</p> <p>Accountability: P13, P14. Standards 4.3, 4.5, 6.4, 6.5, 6.7, 6.9</p>	<p>I = 4 L = 3</p>	<p>SUBST</p>	<p>At PPG stage, an ESMF and a Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be developed for the entire project to ensure meaningful stakeholder consultation and engagement across all elements of the project. This will incorporate an ESIA and an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework. Stakeholders will also have access to a project Grievance Redress Mechanism, to be in place. Project-affected people will be informed about the existence of these processes and mechanisms.</p> <p>In addition, site-specific (value-chain specific) ESMPs may be developed that include site-specific Stakeholder Engagement Plans and Indigenous Peoples Plan (including FPIC processes), where relevant.</p> <p>Moreover, the project will ensure that ABS-related TK is safely collected and deposited, and that no genetic resource agreements are struck with commercial entities before the ABS law and framework are fully adopted and operational.</p>
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<p>Risk 5. The project is expected to catalyse more sustainable land use, natural resource exploitation and ecosystem management, which could curtail access to traditional natural resources and harm local livelihoods, leading to economic displacement in some parts of the population including women and indigenous peoples; this might also be done without due consultation (FPIC); in this sense, the project could affect the development priorities and cultural heritage (transhumance, value systems, wealth management) of some indigenous people.</p> <p>Human Rights: P6. Gender Equality and Women?s Empowerment: P11. Accountability: P14. Standards 1.3, 5.2, 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7.</p>	<p>I = 4 L = 4</p>	<p>SUBST</p>	<p>At PPG stage, an ESMF and a Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be developed for the entire project to ensure meaningful stakeholder consultation and engagement across all elements of the project. This will incorporate an ESIA and an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework. Stakeholders will also have access to a project Grievance Redress Mechanism, to be in place. Project-affected people will be informed about the existence of these processes and mechanisms.</p> <p>In addition, site-specific (value-chain specific) ESMPs may be developed that include site-specific Stakeholder Engagement Plans, Economic Displacement Risk Assessments and Indigenous Peoples Plan (including FPIC processes), where relevant.</p>
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<p>Risk 6. The successful establishment of new value chains (ABS, or inadvertently Biotrade) could DIRECTLY lead to increased exploitation of natural resources and ecosystems/biodiversity ? both regarding the 2 taxa targeted under the project (Argan, Euphorb), but also more widely through the implementation of the ABS framework, if collection is not embedded in a sustainable management approach; especially given that rural populations and administration by default expect value chains that generate local returns based on continuing collection of primary matter; in addition, upscaling of the ABS framework, could replicate the same direct impacts in other resources/areas in Morocco.</p> <p>Standard 1: 1.1-1.4, 1.8, 1.13</p>	<p>I = 4 L = 3</p>	<p>SUBST</p>	<p>At PPG stage, an ESMF will be developed for the entire project, which is required to incorporate an ESIA and comprehensive assessments of value chains targeted by the project that define primary matter sourcing needs, carrying capacity and sustainable exploitation levels, risks to valuable biodiversity and ecosystems.</p> <p>Related impacts from upstream national-level work (ABS framework) will be assessed by a Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) under the ESMF at PPG stage.</p> <p>The project will ensure that the safeguards requirements are reflected in the emerging ABS framework over the course of the project. In replication efforts, which is linked to knowledge management under the project, care will be given to highlight the lessons learnt on risks.</p>
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<p>Risk 7. The successful establishment of new value chains (ABS, or inadvertently Biotrade) could INDIRECTLY lead to increased pressures on natural resources and ecosystems/biodiversity: firstly, successful investment by government and donors in the target area might attract additional populations, and secondly successful livelihood interventions could offer beneficiaries the resources needed to acquire new technologies/ equipment/ pesticides and greater livestock numbers with consequential environmental impacts; in addition, upscaling of the ABS framework, if not embedded in a sustainable ecosystem management approach, could replicate the same indirect impacts in other resources/areas in Morocco.</p> <p>Standard 1: 1.1-1.4, 1.8, 1.13</p>	<p>I = 4 L = 2</p>	<p>MOD</p>	<p>For the upstream national-level work (ABS framework), conduct a Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) and ensure that these requirements and others emerging are reflected in the emerging ABS framework over the course of the project.</p> <p>Government and project team will monitor for such trends and intervene especially where significant immigration and behavioural or wealth changes could undermine project success.</p> <p>In replication efforts, which is linked to knowledge management under the project, care will be given to highlight the lessons learnt on risks.</p>
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<p>Risk 8. Impacts from climate change could undermine project outcomes aimed at sustainable ecosystem management, biodiversity conservation and livelihoods, and also threaten the existence of selected taxa holding genetic resources valuable under ABS.</p> <p>Standard 2, Q 2.2</p>	<p>I = 3 L = 4</p>	<p>MOD</p>	<p>Climate change only poses a marginal risks to success of the project regarding the operationalisation of the ABS framework (especially Component 1) and the development of ABS products and value chains in general (Components 1 and 2). More specifically regarding the ABS products to be piloted by the project, based on genetic resources from the Argan Tree and Resin Spurge (Component 2): on the former, given that it appears to be on the edge of its ecological adaptability already in its natural environment, severe climate change could cause a decline in survival, regeneration and productivity that could undermine the supply of primary materials in the long-term ? however Argan plantations with irrigation are already in existence which could minimise this risk; the Resin Spurge should still be able to adapt by shifting its range into higher altitudes given that it occurs especially in the Atlas foothills</p>	<p>The risk was not considered large enough to question the project's stipulated objectives and outcomes ? much rather, the interventions to improve ecosystem health are expected to increase ecosystem resilience. The project must promote climate-smart rural development livelihoods, agriculture and ecosystem management, and avoid maladaptative investments and interventions.</p>
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QUESTION 4: What is the overall project risk categorization?			
<i>Low Risk</i>			
<i>Moderate Risk</i>			
<i>Substantial Risk</i>	X		
<i>High Risk</i>			
QUESTION 5: Based on the identified risks and risk categorization, what requirements of the SES are triggered? (check all that apply)			
Question only required for Moderate, Substantial and High Risk projects			
	X	<i>Is assessment required? (check if ?yes?)</i> <i>If yes, indicate overall type and status</i>	<i>Status? (completed, planned)</i>
The SESP requests the following sequencing of SES work during the PPG:		X	Targeted assessments
- Preparation of a single overarching Stakeholder Engagement Plan meeting the requirements of the ESMF and annexed to the PRODOC		X	ESIA (Environmental and Social Impact Assessment) ? for downstream components of the project
- Preparation of an overarching ESMF, to explicitly include also: . a sufficiently detailed assessment of the cumulative project-wide risks under the upstream planning, policy and strategic components (SESA) and the		X	SESA (Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment) ? for upstream planning, policy and strategic components of the project

<p>downstream components (ESIA), to meet the Substantial risk rating of the SESP</p> <p>. Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework to spell out the requirements during inception and implementation (e.g. IP Plan, FPIC) regarding both upstream and downstream risks</p> <p>. definition of any value-chain and/or site-specific</p>	X	<i>Are management plans required? (check if ?yes). If yes, indicate overall type and status</i>		<i>Status? (completed, planned)</i>
		X	Targeted management plans	Planned
		X	ESMF (Environmental and Social Management Framework)	Planned

	<p>assessments and management plans to be prepared during the inception and early implementation phases, and outlining the procedures for these</p> <p>- Open disclosure and dissemination of the ESMF</p> <p><u>The SESP requests the following sequencing of SES work at inception prior to implementation of any project activities:</u></p> <p>- Full design, operationalization and dissemination of project Grievance Redress Mechanism</p> <p>- Capacity building and training on ESMF implementation.</p> <p><u>The SESP recommends the following tentative sequencing of SES work prior to implementation of relevant Component 2 and 3 activities (noting this is subject to changes depending on the conclusions of the ESMF at PPG stage):</u></p> <p>- Preparation of relevant ESMP(s), as identified in ESMF, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . site-specific Stakeholder Engagement Plans . site-specific ESIA's, if still required, with Economic Displacement Risk Assessments and Livelihoods Action Plans, value chain-specific assessments and management plans 	<p>X</p> <p>ESMP (Environmental and Social Management Plan)</p>	<p>Planned</p>
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<i>Based on identified risks, which Principles/Project-level Standards triggered?</i>		Comments (not required)
<i>Overarching Principle: Leave No One Behind</i>		
<i>Human Rights</i>	X	
<i>Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment</i>	X	
<i>Accountability</i>	X	
<i>1. Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management</i>	X	
<i>2. Climate Change and Disaster Risks</i>	X	
<i>3. Community Health, Safety and Security</i>		
<i>4. Cultural Heritage</i>	X	
<i>5. Displacement and Resettlement</i>	X	
<i>6. Indigenous Peoples</i>	X	
<i>7. Labour and Working Conditions</i>		
<i>8. Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency</i>		

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title

Submitted

6372 MOROCCO_ABS Phase 2_SESP ANNEX

Part III: Approval/Endorsement By GEF Operational Focal Point(S) And GEF Agency(ies)

A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S): (Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter with this template).

Name	Position	Ministry	Date
Mr Rachid Firadi	Director for Partnerships, Communication and Cooperation, GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment ? Department of Environment	4/19/2021

ANNEX A: Project Map and Geographic Coordinates

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project intervention takes place

Annex A: Program/project map and geographic coordinates

