



Promoting the safe application of biotechnology through Multi country Cooperation in the implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks in Asia

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID

10991

Project Type

MSP

Type of Trust Fund

GET

CBIT/NGI

CBIT **No**

NGI **No**

Project Title

Promoting the safe application of biotechnology through Multi country Cooperation in the implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks in Asia

Countries

Regional, Bangladesh, India, Mongolia, Philippines

Agency(ies)

UNEP

Other Executing Partner(s)

National Biosafety Committee, Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MONGOLIA), National Committee on Biosafety of the Philippines (NCBP), Department of Environment, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (BANGLADESH), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (INDIA), Korea Institute for Promoting Biosafety Cooperation (KIPABiC)

Executing Partner Type

Government

GEF Focal Area

Biodiversity

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Biodiversity, Mainstreaming, Supplementary Protocol to the CBD, Influencing models, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Demonstrate innovative approach, Stakeholders, Local Communities, Communications, Education, Public Campaigns, Awareness Raising, Beneficiaries, Private Sector, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Type of Engagement, Partnership, Consultation, Information Dissemination, Participation, Civil Society, Trade Unions and Workers Unions, Community Based Organization, Academia, Non-Governmental Organization, Indigenous Peoples, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Women groups, Gender results areas, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Participation and leadership, Capacity Development, Access to benefits and services, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Innovation, Knowledge Generation, Targeted Research, Learning, Theory of change, Adaptive management

Sector

Mixed & Others

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation

Climate Change Mitigation 0

Climate Change Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation 0

Duration

36 In Months

Agency Fee(\$)

103,852.00

Submission Date

4/13/2022

A. Indicative Focal/Non-Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
BD-3-8	GET	1,093,186.00	5,500,085.00
Total Project Cost (\$)		1,093,186.00	5,500,085.00

B. Indicative Project description summary

Project Objective

To strengthen institutional, human and regulatory capacities and promote cooperative measures in the implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks for the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms (LMOs) in Asia

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
1. Multi-country Collaboration and Cooperation on Biosafety Issues	Technical Assistance	1. Harmonized inter-country biosafety systems and enhanced institutional capacities resulting in adequate protection in the use of modern biotechnology in Asia	1.1. Fully functional cooperative network on biosafety and the safe use of biotechnology established; aiming to coordinate and harmonize biosafety activities, including sharing of information. 1.2. Biosafety Institutions are competent and well-equipped with the necessary administrative and technical tools 1.3 Designated Centres of Excellence are interlinked and strengthened	GET	533,365.00	2,150,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
2. Facilitating the establishment, further development and effective implementation of biosafety systems at national level.	Technical Assistance	2. National biosafety systems are updated and ready for effective implementation	<p>2.1 A baseline report on the status of implementation of the Protocol including a stocktaking and inventory of national and regional biosafety and biotechnology resources and capacity building needs in the project countries prepared;</p> <p>2.2. Established, reviewed and updated fully functional and transparent national biosafety frameworks, including National Biosafety policy, fully functional and responsive regulatory, administrative and public awareness and participation systems</p>	GET	412,821.00	1,800,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
3. Project Monitoring and Evaluation	Technical Assistance	3. Systematically monitored processes aligned with available resources and producing high quality results	3.1 A comprehensive project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework developed, implemented and including best practices and lessons learned 3.2. Mid-Term/Terminal Evaluation	GET	50,000.00	600,085.00
Sub Total (\$)					996,186.00	4,550,085.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)						
GET			97,000.00	950,000.00		
Sub Total(\$)			97,000.00	950,000.00		
Total Project Cost(\$)			1,093,186.00	5,500,085.00		

Please provide justification

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(\$)
GEF Agency	UNEP	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	250,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Philippines	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,200,085.00
Recipient Country Government	Mongolia	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Bangladesh	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	India	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	700,000.00
Civil Society Organization	Korea Institute for Promoting Biosafety Cooperation (KIPABiC)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,600,000.00
Other	Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy of South Korea	Grant	Investment mobilized	250,000.00
Total Project Cost(\$)				5,500,085.00

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

The grant was provided by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy of Korea through UNEP to be used by the Korea Institute for Promoting Biosafety Cooperation as a mobilized grant that will be used to support project development during the PPG and in execution of activities. It will also be used to provide technical support including exchange meetings, field and study tours and also to bring in additional participation to other Parties in the region who were originally part of the Asian Biosafety Family. The mobilized grant of \$250,000 has already been transferred to UNEP and is set up as a dedicated fund to support the project GEF ID: 10991. In addition, the remaining support will be through ?recurrent expenditure? to support training, exchange and expert support to Korea to support capacity building issues and the Project Management Unit as highlighted under 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(\$)
UNEP	GET	Philippines	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	434,658	41,292	475,950.00
UNEP	GET	Mongolia	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	481,023	45,697	526,720.00
UNEP	GET	Bangladesh	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	53,413	5,074	58,487.00
UNEP	GET	India	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	124,092	11,789	135,881.00
Total GEF Resources(\$)					1,093,186.00	103,852.00	1,197,038.00

E. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)
PPG Required **true**

PPG Amount (\$)
50,000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)
4,750

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programmin g of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNEP	GET	Philippine s	Biodiversit y	BD STAR Allocation	20,000	1,900	21,900.0 0
UNEP	GET	Mongolia	Biodiversit y	BD STAR Allocation	10,000	950	10,950.0 0
UNEP	GET	India	Biodiversit y	BD STAR Allocation	20,000	1,900	21,900.0 0
Total Project Costs(\$)					50,000.00	4,750.0 0	54,750.0 0

Core Indicators

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	60,000			
Male	40,000			
Total	100000	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

The multi-country project will support implementation of the Cartagena Protocol, by strengthening the institutional capacity of participating countries? relevant ministries as well as specific, biosafety related agencies to fully operationalize their national biosafety frameworks and regulations in compliance with the CPB which will contribute to the overall objective of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of its components away from the potential negative impact of modern biotechnology. Biodiversity is an "asset" that makes critical contributions to sustainable development. This thinking is reflected in the CBD's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, 2011-2020, and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets as well as the GEF-7 biodiversity focal area strategy and was reaffirmed at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the CBD (CBD/COP 13) with the adoption of the "Cancun Declaration on Mainstreaming the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity for Well-being", that recognizes that the management of this asset requires full engagement of all government ministries, and most critically, from the agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and tourism sectors. The proposed project will contribute to the set targets of the new proposed Biosafety implementation plan and capacity building action plan of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety under the Post 2020 Biodiversity Framework 2021 ? (https://bch.cbd.int/post%202020/plans_review.pdf) The Project is expected to contribute to the overall progress toward the implementation of the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework under Target 17 and also the Capacity Building Action plan for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and will contribute to the review and update of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs) to align with the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Attaining the targets required to support the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety requires the implementation of a package of actions typically including legal and policy frameworks and technical measures, socio-economic considerations (Article 26), liability and redress, monitoring and detection of LMOs,

enforcement, and public and stakeholder engagement that are coherent across government ministries and across sectors. Core Indicator 11: The number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender are estimated figures as received from the four participating countries during the national consultative processes. This will be further reviewed during the PPG phase

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description);

Asia encompasses many different ecoregions and biomes. It contains two of the world's major biogeographical realms; Indomalayan (covers South East Asia) and Palearctic (covers the Middle East and large parts of Asia). These terrestrial realms contain dramatically different assemblages of plants and animals and globally important numbers of endemic species. The Asia region is exceptionally rich in biodiversity. The tropical forests of South East Asia, the reefs of the 'coral triangle', the temperate forests and the large river basins found in the region are among the most unique on Earth. Additionally, the South-East Asia region, mainly comprising of islands and archipelagos, has an exceptional flora and fauna that evolved independently leading to the high levels of endemism as a result of geographical isolation. Furthermore, many Asian countries host one of the oldest agricultural communities in the world and are among the centres of origin/ diversity for important crop plants. However, biodiversity in the Asia region is in fast decline with many biodiversity hotspots at threat from habitat destruction and other anthropogenic pressures.

The rapid economic growth in the Asia region, accompanied by increased resource use by a growing urban and middle-class population has generated significant pressures on the region's biodiversity. Additionally, the production of sufficient food remains a challenge due to increased population growth, limits to agricultural lands and climate change despite the significant increases in per capita agricultural production over the last decades. Aiming to increase their agricultural production to ensure food security and promote trade in agricultural products, many Asian countries have already started, or are in the process of, developing and using biotechnologies. Many countries are acquiring crops and crops products that are developed elsewhere and may contain GMOs components. Additionally, transboundary movement and exchange of materials is a likely consequence of the region's farming systems. However, the adoption of transgenic varieties in centers of biodiversity without sufficient, transparent and scientifically sound biosafety decision-making processes, appropriate risk management practices, and related biosafety research in place in all countries of the region could be detrimental to the conservation of biodiversity in the region as a whole. Potential, negative impact on biodiversity of the accelerating, unregulated use of LMOs could have major and long-term implications for the regional and global environment, for human/animal health, and for international trade and competitiveness. Health and environmental concerns are reflected in widespread public mistrust of GMO crops. Meeting the needs of the region's population while also ensuring the protection of biodiversity is a challenge, one that will require significant effort to address.

Genetic technologies to increase productivity, provide resistance to diseases and abiotic stress to combat climate change could be the solution to many environmental issues such as increased deforestation. Large areas of forest are being converted into plantation and agricultural land due to the rapidly growing demand for food, vegetable oils and bio-fuels, among other agricultural and industrial

activities. Modern biotechnology applications offer new opportunities for food security and poverty alleviation and provide powerful tools to address key environmental issues. However, it needs to be properly developed and safely implemented, while protecting the environment and ensuring human and animal health. Biosafety provides a framework for the assessment and management of potential risks associated with the use of modern biotechnologies.

Asia is a huge and extremely diverse region politically, economically and in terms of capacity and biodiversity. Most countries in the region have biosafety laws in place but many lack capacities to conduct proper risk assessment, monitoring, detection and identification of GMOs specially those that are the result of new genetic technologies such as genome editing. There is need for building and developing capacity across the region in risk assessment, risk management, decision making, identification, detection of LMOs especially transgenic crops and monitoring their environmental effects in these main centers of biodiversity. There is also a need for strengthening cooperation, sharing information, experiences and lessons learnt, harmonization of biosafety systems and working on common approaches for risk assessment, risk management, socioeconomic considerations in decision-making and monitoring of GMOs. The current project aims to address those needs and to develop and strengthen biosafety capacity in Asia both at the national and regional level to minimize and manage any potential risks associated with the application of modern biotechnology, in conformity with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

A key project focus is to support operationalization of each country's national biosafety frameworks and to establish effective, efficient and transparent national biosafety systems that are responsive to countries international obligations as well as their needs and priorities. Component 1 of the project will focus on common visions and approaches, aims to promote greater inter-country cooperation and harmonization of biosafety systems including standards, administrative procedures, post-release activities, sharing of information, experiences and lessons learnt. The project by combining national and multi country activities will enhance sustainability, allow pooling of resources to promote cost effectiveness especially through the establishment of regional database for knowledge sharing on biosafety and the production of common science-based materials for training and communication purposes.

- 1) the baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects,

Currently, there are 50 countries in the Asia-Pacific region that have ratified the Cartagena on Biosafety and 39 countries are eligible for GEF funding for implementation of their National Biosafety Frameworks. Several countries were involved in the preparation of this project concept and have endorsed the project concept. The status of each country's national biosafety framework is available both on the Biosafety Clearing Houses and also the national Biosafety web pages.

The project will build on the experience that the participating countries have already gained, to effectively secure the involvement of national authorities, non-governmental organizations, private sector and research institutions and local communities and to implement national biosafety relevant interventions through the previous GEF projects on Development and Implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks and assistance on "Building Capacity for Effective Participation in the BCH" and other related projects such as:

- Mongolia: currently active project country in the BCH III (Phase III), after the signature of a Small-scale funding agreement with UNEP-GEF in August 2018,
- Philippines: participated in the BCH (previous Phases I and II).
- India: Capacity Building project focused on management of LMOs in Agriculture and is currently working on a project to translate and decentralize the national biosafety system from the Union to the State Levels to ensure monitoring and enforcement mandates among others which are entrusted to the State level Committees is strengthened in the management of deliberate of LMOs to the environment.

Annex D shows the ongoing capacity building initiatives relevant to the Cartagena Protocol in the project participating countries.

Acknowledging CPB compliance requirements, an initial stocktaking exercise will be carried out in participating countries in Asia, as part of the PPG, to identify: National priorities and policies on biotechnology and biosafety; Stocktaking analysis of inventories on the Regulatory, administrative, technical and institutional capacity for the safe use of modern biotechnology including existing national, bilateral or multilateral cooperative programs in capacity building relevant to biosafety at the regional and national levels, mechanisms, approaches and synergies in the region to facilitate regional cooperation and information sharing. The final project proposal will address identified biosafety technical weaknesses and capacity building needs in the target countries.

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

The proposed project is multi-country in scope and aims to assist participating countries to meet their international obligations as Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The current project will create the necessary capacities for LMOs to be introduced into the environment, without undermining the conservation of native genetic resources, and will thus assist the project countries to conciliate their economic and scientific development, with the objectives and articles of the CPB. It has national and multi country components as follows:

? **Component 1: Multi country collaboration and cooperation on biosafety issues;**

The objective of this component is to strengthen technical capacity, establish mechanisms for multi country cooperation (in Bangladesh, India, Mongolia & Philippines) and elaborate common strategies, approaches, mechanisms and methodologies on biosafety science-based issues such as risk assessment, risk management and monitoring of GMOs. This is in line with Articles 14 (bilateral, regional and multilateral agreements and arrangements) and 22 (capacity building) of the Cartagena Protocol, specifically their emphasis on joint country interventions harnessing the potential of shared expertise and resources. In area of LMO detection, the project intervention will focus on training and capacity strengthening of designated regulatory agency officials in sampling and detection. Specific thematic guidelines on sampling and detection including protocols, will be developed, harmonized and shared

with the three countries for review and integration in the national biosafety system. There will also designated training for custom officers in data review and handling of LMOs at the port. Relevant guidance documents including manuals on sampling procedures will developed for quarantine inspectors. Designated ports will equipped and laboratory facilities upgraded to support handling of large volumes of agricultural commodities for inspection in the participating countries mainly through development of harmonized operating procedures and upgrades where applicable.

Expected outcomes include: 1. Harmonized inter-country biosafety systems and enhanced institutional capacities resulting in adequate protection in the use of modern biotechnology in Asia

? Component 2: Facilitating the establishment, further development and effective implementation of biosafety systems at national level.

The objective of this component is to further develop and operationalize participating countries national biosafety frameworks and enhance institutional capacities at the national level. This is in line with Article 2.1 of the protocol that mandates Parties to take the necessary and appropriate legal, administrative and other measures in **Bangladesh, India, Mongolia and Philippines** to implement their obligations under the Cartagena Protocol.

Expected outcomes include: By all the end of the project, all participating countries have a workable fully functional and transparent national biosafety framework consisting of: 1) A comprehensive National Biosafety policy used as the basis for the development of an adequate national regulatory regime and institutional framework; 2) A fully functional and responsive regulatory regimes in line with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and national needs and priorities; 3) A fully functional national systems for handling request, performing risk assessment, decision-making, performing administrative tasks; 4) A functional national systems for ?follow-up?, namely monitoring of environmental effects, inspections and enforcement; 5) A functional national systems for public awareness and participation including a system for handling, storing and exchanging information in line with the BCH requirements.

Interventions will be focused on strengthening the implementation of the existing biosafety systems at the national level through the following:

Capacity Building

Trainings, refresher courses and workshops are important in building and sustaining the knowledge of new and inexperienced people in the field of biosafety. Local trainings/workshops/seminars on science communication and public engagement will be conducted to keep people in the loop on what is the current situation of biosafety in the country.

Involvement in public fora and online discussions

Participation in public and online fora can develop one's cognitive and critical thinking skills. It promotes better exchange of information and sharing of views and experiences and builds awareness of the positions of other countries in specific matters related to biosafety.

Development and Distribution of Information Materials

Creation and distribution of audio-visual presentations, information materials on biotechnology and biosafety of LMOs and new and emerging technologies, with focus on the regulatory process, from contained use to commercialization. These will highlight the long process it takes to assure safety of a product. These will be provided/distributed to different regions in the country in coordination with the Local Government Units (LGUs).

National BCH Portals and Asia Biosafety Family Portal

By increasing the inter-operability potential and outreach of the national nodes of the BCH, the Central Portal and the Asia Biosafety Portal and striving to be an excellent tool for disseminating reliable scientific information necessary for ensuring the safe and sustainable use of modern biotechnology.

Leverage partnerships and networks with regional and local partners

Aside from promoting cooperation and networking among its members, mapping knowledge and identifying gaps can be established which will help determine the key success factors, what works, what doesn't work and what mistakes to avoid in the implementation of each country's NBF and the Protocol.

Utilization of multi-media

Increasing public access to biosafety information can be achieved and can be made available to various clients through multi-media and interpersonal channels

Public Outreach Activities

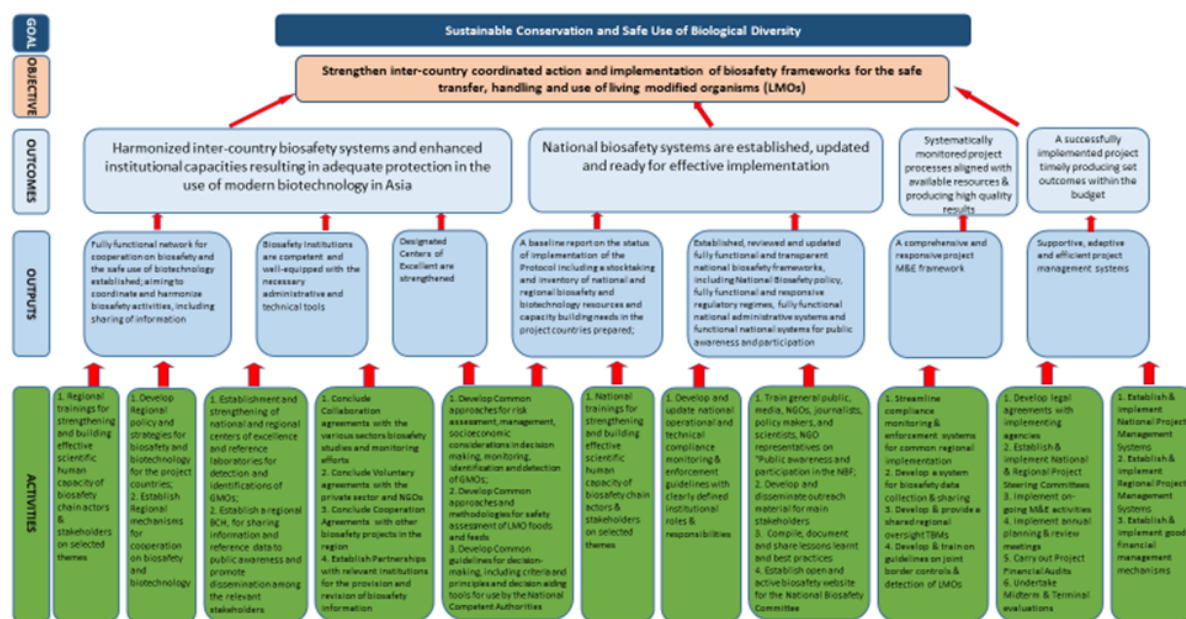
Conduct meetings with various stakeholders and through exhibitions at government events (such as the National Biotechnology Week), publications and fact sheets, these can proactively provide effective community outreach and education to targeted members of the public.

Digitization of Information

Digitized Information are more portable. These are much more easy to transfer from a storage device to another and can be easily uploaded in the Portal or can be transferred through emails. This make dissemination of information efficient and more effective.

In summary, the current project's proposed structure seeks to collate the major tasks that are pending for the full implementation of the Cartagena Protocol in the target countries.

The focus of the proposed project is per the theory of change as shown below:



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

The project belongs to the Biodiversity Focal Area and fits within the GEF 7 Biodiversity strategy program under objective 3: 'Further biodiversity policy and institutional frameworks?' under item H- Implement the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

At the national level, the project would assist in building national capacity to implement the CPB by increasing the institutional effectiveness through: 1) establishing clearly-defined institutional mechanisms for administering biosafety including defined responsibilities on biosafety within each national institution/agency and designated technical specialists and personnel and 2) capacity building for personnel to be able to perform the assigned tasks.

At the multi country level, the project would enhance cooperation and collaboration aiming for a more effective and efficient use of human, technical, institutional, capacity building and financial resources through: 1) establishing mechanisms to promote inter-institutional and inter-country collaboration on biosafety and sharing of human and technical resources (Article 22 of the CPB), 2) Strengthening of designated centres of excellence, including reference laboratories, 3) development of common approaches to risk assessment, risk management and communication, contingency planning and emergency responses, monitoring and enforcement to be used by project targeted institutions/ agencies and collaboratively between participating countries and 4) Promoting sharing of information all aimed at facilitating national biosafety decision making.

Furthermore, due to the cross-cutting nature of the biosafety issue, the project is relevant to 'Food, Land Use, and Restoration Impact Program' as it may improve countries institutional capacity to manage biodiversity in production landscapes and harness biodiversity for sustainable agriculture by

allowing the safe and sustainable use of transgenic crops and derivatives of agricultural importance. The interventions under this component will generate results which can be repurposed to support risk profiling and management, testing, emergency responses and enforcement measures in relation to the current COVID-19 and future pandemics as a biosecurity response.

5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing;

The absence of GEF contribution will prolong and postpone the full effective implementation of the national biosafety frameworks in the participating countries.. This will endanger the control of LMOs and create an urgent situation in a region which is among the richest and unique biodiversity areas of the world as a result of rapidly expanding adoption of transgenic crops without systematic risk and impact assessment, safety management and tracking/monitoring systems. This will also lead to persistence of many of the already existing problems which include interalia 1) gaps in biosafety frameworks and related legislation, 2) insufficient capacity for administrative procedures, 3) inadequate laboratory tools/methodologies and guidelines for GMOs risk assessment, risk management, detection, identification and enforcement 4) insufficient training of personnel and lack of corresponding experts, 5) missing harmonization between frameworks and legislations in the region to manage new biotechnology applications including genome editing and new plant breeding techniques 6) Lack access to updated and latest information.

The other scenario of having separate projects in participating countries is also deemed not suitable as it would require major, long-term investment to reach international standards and multidisciplinary technical capacity. This is unacceptable given the urgency of biosafety as a result of the rapidly evolving nature of biotechnology techniques and applications. Additionally, this would result in 1) scale, cost and time inefficiencies, 2) lost opportunities for collaboration, cooperation and exploitation of comparative advantage and complementary skills, 3) Lack of harmonization between biosafety systems in the region and lack of common approaches on risk assessment, monitoring and enforcement 4) Potential lack of sustainability.

Proposed GEF involvement in the context of this proposed project would contribute towards the successful implementation of participating countries national biosafety frameworks to fulfil their obligations as Parties to the Cartagena Protocol, and to meet their national needs and priorities for sustainable development. The project will enhance inter-country cooperation and promote sharing information, experiences and lessons learnt, The involvement of GEF would also help to act as a catalyst to enlist financial and political support from the Governments, thus promoting sustainability of the outcomes of the project. It would also provide hands on experience and lessons in translating biosafety systems from contained and field trials to handling deliberate release and commercialization to which India, Philippines and Bangladesh have started making strides and will assist Mongolia with capabilities in the handling of deliberate releases and commercialization of LMOs when the need arises.

The project paradigm is thus built on maximizing economies of scale by exploiting the comparative advantages of participating countries and entities as either Net Donors/Providers (NP) or Net Recipients (NR) of capacity, within the project's multi-country structure.

6) global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF);

Global environmental benefits and adaptation benefits would include inter alia:

- ? Contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of the rich and unique genetic resources in Asia through pursuing a synergistic approach to implementing the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological diversity as well as the Supplementary Protocol on Liability and redress;
- ? Minimizing the potential risk of LMOs to wild relatives and cultivated varieties of the Asia region and ensure identity preservation;
- ? Implementing biosafety actions on a greater scale to avoid further biodiversity loss and to contribute to the overall global agricultural development;
- ? Building biosafety capacity of small nations in Asia and ensuring effective implementation of biosafety laws and regulations across the region;
- ? Mainstreaming biosafety across sectors and ensure policy coherence among the participating countries;
- ? Promote a coordinated and strategic regional approach to risk assessment, risk management and monitoring the long-term environmental impact of transgenic varieties in agriculture thus addressing the information deficit;
- ? Enhance the capabilities of the target countries to comply with their international biosafety obligations and commitments, thereby improving each country's contribution to global conservation efforts.
- ? Using genetic techniques to harness genetic diversity in the region and to deal with climate change and desertification as well as other abiotic and biotic stresses (e.g. drought resistant, salt tolerant varieties or, alternative crops, and improved agricultural practices)

and 7) innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up.

The proposed multi-country project has a significant innovative aspect, as it is the first GEF project in Asia to combine, integrate and harmonize both national and multi-country biosafety efforts. At the national level, the thrust will be to operationalize effective and efficient biosafety systems that are responsive to demonstrated country needs and priorities to allow safe biotechnology advancements. At the multi-country level, activities will focus on establishing common biosafety/biotechnology visions, strategic priorities, approaches and cooperation mechanisms for participating countries, and pooling of resources to promote cost effectiveness and economies of scale, foster greater cooperation and enhance sustainability. The project strategy of developing and strengthening the capacity of Centers of Excellence in the partner countries is expected to strengthen biosafety knowledge based on their agro-ecological and social needs of the participating countries. The project design will enable its inspired measures to be implemented in practice after the project ending.

The project approach to sustainability consists of the further described key components:

? Political and financial terms:

Integration of biosafety issues into policies and strategic documents ensures that biosafety will continue to be taken into account in decision making as a part of environmental protection and scientific and technical development even after the project ends. Agreed policies could guarantee sustainability of biosafety financing on the regular manner from States' budget. The project would assist politicians to better understand the issues of biosafety and ease for sectorial ministries to plan their budgets and activities for future. This approach would lead to a better cooperation between relevant governmental institutions in-country and among the participating countries so that they do not work in isolation that could lead to overlapping and big gaps in the implementation of CPB. Additionally, the multi-country component is expected to create medium-term economies of scale in implementing the CPB. Involvement of international agencies in the project is a potential opportunity for garnering their longer-term financial support. The multi-country approach also improves the fund-raising prospects of a group of countries versus a single country and reduces intraregional competition and duplication of effort. Furthermore, the project provides a base from where Asia regional biosafety capacity can be strengthened. Conducting active fund raising capacity in the partner countries, as well as effective partnerships with other stakeholders and donors, are expected to boost financial sustainability.

? Institutional, legal and operational terms:

At the national level, establishing legal frameworks with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for biosafety guarantees institutional sustainability. Institutional arrangements once established would be sustained well beyond the life of the project. Organizing capacity-building workshops and courses for officers and experts, with the aim to improve competence, share information and experience and follow recent scientific development contribute to operational sustainability. Furthermore, In order to guarantee sustainability, more than one person will be trained per institution, and written guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) will be developed to enable new personnel get acquainted on biosafety issues. A multi-country strategy and structure, exploiting the technical experience and complementary expertise of each country and its Centers of Excellence, are expected to bolster institutional sustainability.

Replicability and scaling up: The project will establish an online knowledge-sharing mechanism for replication of cooperative and national experiences. Methodologies and tools developed by the project will be designed for easy transfer and trained technical personnel will be available within the region through a roster of experts. The multi country approach also provides a better foundation for replicating similar biosafety operations in other countries of the region. The lessons learnt under this project during project preparation and implementation could be used in other proposed regional and national projects for biosafety. The project will facilitate direct replication by applying the following approaches: 1) demonstrate new ideas and practices in each of all project components, 2) identify and disseminate lessons learned and best practices to project partner institutions and authorities, 3) enable stakeholders to access information regarding biosafety issue and connected procedures, and in certain cases even additional funds from national or regional sources, and 4) train experts and other individuals to expand the project main approaches to other sphere of activities (at national level) or countries.

Scaling up occurs when lessons and experience are integrated into major programme or policy priorities and funding criteria. Scaling-up activities will represent: Lessons learned and experience gained under the project will be shared and demonstrated in a way that strengthens organizational and stakeholders capacities and contributes to the development of supportive policy, strategies, programmes and fiscal incentives. It is expected that the use of common approaches by participating countries in addition to promoting regional cooperation on biosafety and biotechnology issues, will eventually lead to harmonization of policies, regulations and procedures for safe application and use of biotechnology as well as the biosafety regulatory frameworks.

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:

N/A

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

Stakeholder involvement has always been a core element of the debate on biosafety. The PIF was developed through a consultative process led by the Asian BCH family^[1] which is an offshoot of the support provided by the Korean Biosafety Clearing House to the UNEP-GEF BCH Projects (Phases I & II). The outcome of the consultation led to a request for UNEP and Korean BCH to lead a consultative process to develop a Regional PIF and meetings were held in Korea, India and Lao PDR. Initially, 23 countries committed to the project but only 4 were able to secure funding from their GEF 7 STAR resources.

During the project preparation, special attention will be given to key elements for successful stakeholder engagement which tend to fall by the wayside in the rush to participate in the discourse. It is envisaged that the different stakeholders will be engaged and involved throughout the preparation and execution stages of the project through direct consultation and participation in the project activities. Possible stakeholders, depending on in-country dynamics may include the following:

[1] <https://asiabchfamily.org/?menu=72#>

Stakeholders	Role / intervention
? Parliamentarians, policies decision-makers	? Participating in drafting policy papers, review and approval of regulatory instruments ensuring state financing for biosafety activities

? Governmental ministries/departments and regulatory Agencies [eg. environment, agriculture, science and technology, health, Finance, Trade]	? Advise on the design and participate in activities relevant to the development and implementation of policy and regulatory frameworks/ functions including Standard Operational Procedures, Risk Assessment and Risk Management, monitoring, compliance and enforcement.
? Standards Institutions	Advise on the design and participate in activities relevant to development of standards and Standard Operational Procedures to facilitate work of regulatory institutions
? Academia [e.g. universities and research institutions]	Advise on the design and participate in activities relevant to science based issues such as biosafety research including biological monitoring tool, training and including the preparation of training and outreach materials and laboratory analytical functions to support regulatory agencies
Civil Society groups and non-governmental organisations	? Advise on the design and participate in activities relevant to consumer related issues, public engagement and socio economic considerations.
Private Sector	Product related issues
Customs and border control officials	Port and border monitoring and contribution to decision making
Indigenous and Local Communities	Sharing knowledge and assist in monitoring and management of biological resources

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).

In the consultative process leading to finalization of the project design and during the project execution, efforts will be put in place to ensure representation of women and men. Additionally, gender specific data will be collected and disaggregated to guide national design and implementation of gender specific tasks to support implementation of the Protocol. This includes establishing national systems and cooperative networks on public awareness, education and participation in line with Article 23 of the Protocol. It is envisaged that project will work on common approaches on socio-economic considerations arising from the impact of Living Modified Organisms based on article 26.1 of the CPB are taken onboard in decision making. Those will include gender sensitive dimension and will guide ex-ante and post-ante socio-economic studies on use of LMOs. Gender issues will also be incorporated in developing governance mechanisms

at two levels a. at the project level and b. in the design, review and update of regulatory instruments. Capacity building interventions, knowledge management and information sharing will also focus on capturing gender disaggregated data as this is key to monitoring project results and delivery. A gender analysis and a gender action plan will be developed during the PPG phase and dedicate gender expertise will be assigned to assist in the implementation of the project at both the national and joint activities to support the two key components of the project..

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;

improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or Yes

generating socio-economic benefits or services for women. No

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.

Biosafety is a cross-cutting issue and undoubtedly there is no other area of technology where stakeholder involvement is more deeply embedded in regulations and legislation. Given the ramifications of compliance with the Cartagena Protocol, biosafety capacity-building per se, and the public controversy surrounding GMOs, the development and implementation of effective and workable biosafety system would require collaboration and involvement of all relevant stakeholders. The project will support the concept of public-private partnership and cooperation both at the national and regional level especially in science based thematic issues including strengthened testing capacity, development of biology materials and access to product development databases . The representatives of private companies and industry associations (e.g. oil refineries, feed and seed importers, feed processors, farmer unions, companies dealing with GMOs) will benefit from information exchange and from operating biosafety framework.

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 summarizes the information about possible risks have been identified for the project.

Potential risks	Level of risk	Proposed mitigation measures
Participation of multiple entities within each country with differing interests to implement Cartagena Protocol, could create conflicts.	Medium (M)	Initial selection of entities will be based on expertise, complementarities and work record as entry points for each country to guarantee project commitment and execution. Using integrative approach to biotechnology and biosafety within the project will serve to tackle different interests.
Participation of multiple countries with different capacity level could create problem during the project implementation.	Low (L)	Governance arrangements include a Project Management Committee with representatives of partner countries to avoid predominance of some countries and ensure that participating entities focus on project objectives and outputs. Additionally, the project, by promoting cooperation and sharing of resources, will provide an incentive for non-Parties to ratify the CPB. Resources will also be provided within the project to allow the countries that have not as yet started work on their NBF, to develop their NBF.
Possible lack of harmony at national and regional level for safe use, handling and transboundary movement of LMOs.	Medium (M)	Regional collaboration and harmonisation of methods of assessment and testing through existing national and regional Protocols

Changed political will and commitment to project objectives, in a partner country, may be as a result of governmental change that shift support away from the project.	Low (L)	PMU would develop a strategy consistent with project objectives and activities, to educate new administration in project goals and methodologies. It will also put in place a system for periodic reviews and soft skills training activities to engage high level decision makers
Possible fluctuations in the personnel during the project implementation entailing changes in the coordinator and other important support staff. (low level)	Low (L)	the project will link several people on key tasks. Moreover, minutes and reports of all the activities implemented will be made to maintain the historical memory of the project and ensure that new members can have a solid foundation in order to continue the implementation.
Certain delay in acquiring necessary outputs for project activities that depend on Government decision or decision makers. (low level)	Low (L)	Choosing right political candidate or Champion who will further work in cooperation for approval National Biosafety Program is very important for the Project implementation.
Delays in internalizing and start of the project	Low (L)	Share all approved and UNEP legal instruments ahead, discuss and address questions informally prior to signing off

<p>Due to climate change impacts, public perception towards LMOs change, especially if LMOs perform better under climate change conditions</p>	<p>Low (L)</p>	<p>Potential use and import of LMOs may increase under increased temperature and other climate change related results due to tolerance to abiotic stresses.</p> <p>The main projections under climate change suggest that seasons of heat, drought and rainfall will become more intense. These changes are likely to result in an increased frequency of extreme events, primarily floods (resulting in erosion, landslides, and crop failure) but in some cases also droughts. Food security will be affected by land and infrastructure degradation due to erosion/landslides, an increase in livestock and crop diseases due to temperature increase, direct crop failure due to floods and heavy rains. Water availability will be affected by possible periods of drought. Climate projections (for year 2100) include projected increase in temperature of 2.5°C - 3°C, increased unpredictability of seasonal rains, and increased incidence or intensity of extreme weather events including droughts, cyclones and floods. Key climate impacts are crop loss/failure, loss of pasture lands and water resources for livestock, loss of marine habitat, increased ranges of vector-borne diseases and increased risk from waterborne diseases and degradation of water quality and reduced access to water supplies[1]. Climate change projections for the period 2045 ? 2065 suggest: (i) minimum expected temperature increase of 1-2 °C and a maximum of 2-3.5°C in the summer, and 2.5 - 4°C in winter; and (ii) rainfall projections are uncertain with differences among regions. Implications are: (i) projected temperature rises could result in evaporation and evapotranspiration increases from 5-15%; (ii) hotter days, in tandem with shorter growing seasons, would make it harder even for resilient crops; (iii) Productivity among crops could drop by 20 ? 50%; (iv) increased difficulty in the provision of sufficient grazing for livestock; (v) heat stress on livestock which can affect feeding and reproduction[2]². Due to the effects on food security and food production in the countries, potential use and import of LMOs that are better adapted (or perceived to be) or tolerant may increase. During PPG, the potential of climate change scenarios on the countries' response will be integrated into capacity building interventions and into the design of the ten-year strategic plans and policies to ensure that such changes to public attitude to LMOs are anticipated and proactively managed. Furthermore, the project purpose is to strengthen [participating cpountries capacity to effectively manage safe handling and use of LMOs in such cases.</p>
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An outbreak of diseases (Covid-19)	Low/Medium	<p>In the Philippines, the government has declared Metro Manila and the National Capital Region under General Community Quarantine (GCQ) and the rest of the country either under Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine (MECQ) or Modified General Community Quarantine (MGCQ) as the number of COVID-19 cases began to spiral. The Luzon island group is home to about 62 million people or 57% of the national population. The Community Quarantine has entailed a suspension of economic activity, except for essential sectors; a skeletal work force and social distancing restriction in the permitted sectors; a prohibition on public transportation; and a stay-home order on all quarantined persons unless they are accessing basic necessities and health services, also subject to movement restrictions and social distancing</p> <p>As of August 22, 2021 the Philippines has 1,839,635 total cases of which 125,900 are active cases, 1,681,925 have recovered and 31,810 have died.</p> <p>On June 21, 2021, the Department of Health (DOH), the University of the Philippines - Philippine Genome Center (UP-PGC), and the University of the Philippines - National Institutes of Health (UP-NIH) report the detection of four additional Delta (B.1.617.2) variant cases, 14 Alpha (B.1.1.7) variant cases, 21 Beta (B.1.351) variant cases, and one Theta (P.3) variant case based on the latest whole-genome sequencing report. The DOH, UP-PGC, and UP-NIH assure the public that biosurveillance activities for the detection of COVID-19 variants shall continue amidst the increase in cases in Visayas and Mindanao. The procurement of reagents for whole genome sequencing for the rest of the year was initiated by a grant of Php 180 million by the DOH to the UP-PGC last May 2021. These reagents will allow the DOH, UP-PGC, and UP-NIH to sequence samples of COVID-19 cases regularly until the end of the year, ensuring that the government will have essential information in mitigating the spread of COVID-19.</p> <p>Bangladesh has had 866877 total cases of COVID-19 since the start of the epidemic. 13787 COVID-19 related deaths occurred and recovery cases is 791553. Bangladesh is still suffering from New Delta variant of Covid-19. The Hospitality and Tourism Sector (HTS) is one of the 15 major sectors that are used to estimate the GDP of the country. Consequent upon the 'new normal' lifestyle accompanied by severe disruption of economic activities wreaked havoc on the economy of Bangladesh. However, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was uneven both across geography and type of economic activity. Consequently, the sector was one of worst hit sectors affected by COVID-19 pandemic. The country-wide lockdown imposed by the government led to closure of hotels, motels, restaurants, and transport sector activities as well as cancellation of all domestic and international flights to and from Bangladesh resulting in huge losses in this sector. Even though the lockdown has been gradually withdrawn since June, 2020; this sector is still susceptible to the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in long-run considering the incessant spread out of this deadly virus.[3]³ there is currently 1,794 active cases.</p> <p>Mongolia</p>
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[1] Climate Risk Profile: Bangladesh | Global Climate Change (climatelinks.org); India Climate Change Country Profile | Global Climate Change (climatelinks.org); Climate Risk Profile: Mongolia | Global Climate Change (climatelinks.org); Climate Risk Profile: Philippines | Global Climate Change (climatelinks.org)

[3] <https://www.bids.org.bd/page/researches/?rid=214>

[4] <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

[5] <https://wtcc.org/Research/Economic-Impact/moduleId/704/itemId/184/controller/DownloadRequest/action/QuickDownload>

[6] <https://knoema.com/atlas/Philippines/topics/Tourism/Travel-and-Tourism-Total-Contribution-to-Employment/Contribution-of-travel-and-tourism-to-employment-percent-of-GDP#:~:text=In%202019%2C%20contribution%20of%20travel,%20for%20Philippines%20was%2026.3%20%25> .

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.

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be set up, involving representatives from UNEP (who will act as chair), KIPABic, the National Coordinators (NC) from four participating countries and other relevant institutions involved in the project's implementation. The PSC will guide the overall implementation of the project and ensure that project goals and appropriate GEF and UNEP procedures for reporting are met.

A Project Management Unit will be established, which will oversee the technical execution of the selected thematic areas and, will have an approval role in operational planning, administration, budget, annual plans, and for monitoring project progress. A project manager will be hired to head the PMU and will be in charge of day-to-day coordination of the project. The project manager will be supported by an administrative officer, a financial officer and gender expert and they will be responsible for project coordination, monitoring project progress, preparation of planning materials, administrative support, budget preparation, auditing of project financial accounts/statements at the project level and for ensuring that project activities are sustainable and execution of the project activities on the joint country level. National activities will be spearheaded by the national biosafety task forces in the

respective countries. Multi-country related or joint activities as highlighted in component one will be led by KIPABiC which will have a PMU role at the regional level and assist in co-execution with the participating four countries. The institutional arrangements will be further reviewed during the Project Preparation Phase.

The monitoring of the progress of project activities will be undertaken in accordance with UNEP's internal guidelines for project monitoring and evaluation (M&E). In this respect, self-evaluation will be ongoing throughout the project and GEF/UNEP's requirements of quarterly and half-yearly reports on substantive and financial matters will be provided. This process will include a mid-term evaluation/review and end-of-project evaluation undertaken by external review teams arranged by UNEP. Deliverables will be identified on a timetable agreed between UNEP and each participating country, and country-specific final reports will be prepared at the end of the activities planned under this project. Project execution performance, delivered outputs and project impact will be measured according to the indicators developed in the project log frame, and using the specific Monitoring and Evaluation Plan that will be developed at the inception of the project. The general and specific objectives of the project, and the list of its planned outcomes, will provide the basis for this monitoring and evaluation plan.

The project component 1 on multi-country cooperation and collaboration would be only partially funded by the countries? GEF allocation with additional funding/execution support by the Korea Institute for Promoting Asia Biosafety Cooperation (KIPABiC). Furthermore, countries not eligible for GEF funding will also be able to purchase these services and products and participate in the activities using their own funds if the need arises. At this stage, Korea Institute for Promoting Asia Biosafety Cooperation is an NGO which came out of the interventions and support to through the Korean BCH to the Asia Biosafety Family in support of the BCH II project and the current BCH III project. It provides a convening platform and the neutrality of not being a GEF recipient in coordinating, leveraging expertise and bring the different stakeholders to the same table in Biosafety Capacity building.

Coordination with ongoing and pipeline GEF-UNEP projects in participating countries will be emphasized, with a focus on the following projects:

- Regional projects:

1) *Support to the Preparation of the Fourth Biosafety Reports to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety ? Asia Pacific Region* (39 countries including Philippines, Mongolia and India),

2) *Support to Eligible Parties to Produce the Sixth National Report (6NR)to the CBD (Asia)* (17 countries including Philippines and India),

3) *Support to the Preparation of the Interim National Report on the Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol* (65 countries including Philippines, Bangladesh. Mongolia and India),

4) *Building Capacity for Regionally Harmonized National Processes for Implementing CBD Provisions on Access to Genetic Resources and Sharing of Benefits,*

- In the Philippines: *Implementing the National Framework on Access and Benefit Sharing of Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge in the Philippines, BCH I and II Sustainable Capacity Building for Effective Participation in the BCH (projects completed)*
- In Mongolia: *Support to Mongolia for the Revision of the NBSAPs and Development of Fifth National Report to the CBD ,*
- India - GEF ID 10773 - Mainstreaming of Biosafety and Institutional Capacity Building to strengthen effective implementation of Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CEO PIF Approved)

The Korea Biosafety Clearing House (KBCH) has a long history of endeavoring to bring in a cooperative atmosphere among countries in the Asia region surrounding LMOs, in particular parties' obligation to comply with the Protocol by initiating meetings on biosafety from early in 2007 -when countries were about to start establishing national frameworks to comply with the Protocol. Participants representing countries attended the meetings to share experiences and lessons they got in the course of their jobs or alternatives to shortcomings in countries, and left a strong impression on each other the way that this kind of regional gathering was very meaningful, and agreed that sort of the meetings needed to happen continually. Such KBCH efforts then evolved from its initial humble beginning into officially recognized events being united with UNEP's regional support program on biosafety. Especially in 2015, KBCH, UNEP and its advisory committee member countries developed a road map for countries to follow in a bid to raise the regional level of compliance with the Protocol, they made a decision to create an information platform through which interests and concerns in/over LMOs or demands from countries could be communicated to be conducive to making things better in countries. All these main activities by KBCH were supported by the Korea Biosafety Capacity Building Initiative that was launched at the COP-MOP8 in Pyeongchang Korea in 2014 and sustained by 2020. After the period, the KBCH with support from the government of Korea, lead the process in collaboration with UNEP and members of the Asian Biosafety Family to collaborate and brainstorm on developing interventions to support the effective implementation of the Cartagena Protocol and the region's overall improvement on biosafety. This process led to the development of the multi country PIF supported by the participating countries who were able to dedicate part of their GEF 7 resources. Though other members of the Asian Biosafety family had expressed interest they could not assess GEF allocation from their STAR resources. The follow up interventions from the KBCH has now been transferred to KIPABiC.

KIPABiC will be gearing up for cooperative activities among participating countries that will be required for the successful implementation of the Project. The experiences and lessons gained through KBCH and UNEP over the many years of cooperative activities in the region and the national representative role for biosafety it has played in the country and out are enabling it to be well prepared for required activities.

In that vein, KBCH recently helped set up the Korea Institute for Promoting Asia Biosafety Cooperation(KIPABiC) to the support for the Project.

7. Consistency with National Priorities

Is the Project consistent with the National Strategies and plans or reports and assessments 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

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty governing the movements of Living Modified Organisms (LMOs) resulting from modern biotechnology from one country to another. It was adopted on 29 January 2000 as a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity and entered into force on 11 September 2003. The protocol seeks the safe transfer, handling and use of LMOs, also commonly known as Genetically modified Organisms (GMOs) or transgenic organisms to prevent adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, also taking into account the risks to human health, and focusing on the trans-boundary movement of these GMOs.

The project will support the participating countries to meet the commitment shown by their ratification of the CPB. Quality implementation of the Protocol has a direct impact on the agricultural innovation and technology transfer policies of developing/evolving agricultural economies such as the partner countries in this proposal, and for the global economy and environment.

More specifically, the project is consistent with the participating countries' national priorities and plans:

- Mongolia: The National Green Development Policy (2014-2030), that aims at 'Sustain(ing) ecosystems capacity' (goal No.2) by 'Set(ting) the limitation on the import and trade of genetically modified organisms by assessing the risks associated with genetically modified organisms on human health and the environment, and by building capacities in preventing the negative impacts.' It also coherent with The Mongolia National Biodiversity Strategies and National Action Plans (NBSAPs, 2015-2025), in particular with Strategy 2 'Develop and implement science based policy on conservation and sustainable use of biological resources' and corresponding goal 'Create a legal environment for the protection, sustainable use, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from widely used and economically significant genetic resources, and to implement sustainable use, and protection from genetic erosion and depletion.' National biosafety priorities are also included in the following regulations: Law on Living Modified Organisms (2007), Mongolian National Security Concept (2010), Law on Food Safety (2012).
- India: The conservation and use of biological resources are directly mentioned in the Constitution of India (Article 48A and Article 51(g)) and is based on local knowledge systems and practices. Relevant regulatory framework include the National Environment Policy (2006) and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020). India has been proactive and intends to be a leader in regional biosafety.
- Philippines: Biosafety regulations have been in place since 1991, the NBSAPs adopted in 1997 and currently under revision, Biosafety Development Plan (2017-2022) and its strategy 'to expand the development of sustainable resources including fish, marine and genetic resources.'

- Bangladesh: Bangladesh has a clearly defined Biosafety framework supported by the Biosafety Rules of 2012 and related technical guidelines on Biosafety. Bangladesh is currently doing commercial or deliberate releases of bt Brinjal. The institutional framework for handling Biotechnology applications is in place. There are several LMO products in the laboratory and field at various stages of development including salt tolerance rice among others. See <https://bangladeshbiosafety.org/bangladesh-documents/biosafety-regulatory-documents/>

The proposed project concords with national mandates for biodiversity conservation, sustainable development, safe use of LMO, creating conditions that are conducive to using native genetic resources appropriately, generating environmental information, modernizing customs, and strengthening of environmental control and inspections. The project supports the sector development strategies and agendas of the participating countries

(Annex 1) which show marked similarity across development pillars and sector goals, and both direct and indirect consonance with the proposed project. In addition, the project will support national and sub-regional plans for agricultural development, sustainable food production and biodiversity conservation. All these countries have indicated their desire to implement their NBFs and their support for the multi-country project through their letters of endorsement. Partner countries also agreed that a multi-country approach is likely to be more cost effective, achieve more rapid impact, and be more sustainable than alternative methods, since it would both utilize and enhance existing country capacity.

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.

The proposed project use the following guiding principles of Knowledge Management Approach:

- 1) Partnership: A cooperation network for sharing information, experiences and lessons learnt on biosafety implementation at the national and regional level will be established. The network will implement its programme through an array of partnerships and coalitions. Knowledge management will be based on individuals and organisations' expertise, through decentralized model. An online exchange and library platform will be launched, availing useful tools - such as technical guidelines, specific biology documents of importance in the region. outreach and training materials - to a broader audience. Additionally, regional level meetings will serve as an opportunity for this project and others in the region to: share lessons learned, train on soft skills for negotiation and cooperation, good practices and technical expertise;
- 2) Synergy: explore and leverage synergies within partner countries to ensure maximum value creation with minimum resources and economies of scale
- 3) Quality: since capacity building is central to the project activities, creating and delivering that knowledge amounts largely to a quality management approach.

The project aims to generate and communicate knowledge on biosafety. This goal focuses on developing capacity to share knowledge. It seeks to promote a dynamic communication culture between involved countries and institutions by creating: 1) the enabling environment (policies, legal

frameworks); 2) the institutional arrangements; and 3) the management instruments for sharing data/information, assessing, planning, negotiating, cooperating, regulating, and financing. The knowledge management approach includes the following steps: 1) planning (identifying knowledge needs and intended audiences), 2) implementation (Knowledge deliverables), 3) dissemination and use (Communications strategy and channels) and evaluation (quantitative indicators and qualitative assessments)

The roles and relationship of the main actors involved in the project 'Knowledge Chain' can be summarized as follows: 1) the regional project partnerships to better identify project needs, 2) the Project Management Committee: Where knowledge needs and capacity building and development needs are identified, and 3) the project core unit made consisting of the project manager and the finance and administrative officers whose role liaise between the various entities involved in knowledge production and dissemination as well as monitoring use.

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.

The following measures shall be used to address risks during the project design, these measures shall be further reviewed during project implementation

1. The project is rated as a low-risk project. However, as guided, vulnerable and marginalized groups will be involved in meaningful discussions during the project preparation phase. Consultative processes will be set up guided by the grievance review mechanisms in the participating countries to ensure

management of potential adverse impacts through the risk assessment and risk management measures in the biosafety Decision making process. In addition, the guiding principles in Section 3 of the Safeguards and Risk Identification form will consider the precautionary approach to LMO introduction in the environment.

Good practice approach as guided shall be utilised through safeguard management approach in the project activities, budget, risks management, stakeholder engagement or/and monitoring segments of the project document to avoid or minimize the identified potential risks without preparing a separate safeguard management plan.

3. The safeguards Advisor will be consulted for guidance and reviews during the PPG phase

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title	Submitted
SRIF Multi Country_Asia-Biosafety PIF_am	
SRIF Multi Country_Asia-Biosafety PIF	

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
Atty. Analiza Rebuelta - Teh	Undersecretary/GEF Operational Focal Point	Department of Environment & Natural Resources, Philippines	12/14/2021
Mr. Neelesh Kumar Sah	Joint Secretary/GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India	12/28/2021
Mr. Md. Mostafa Kamal	Secretary/GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bangladesh	4/5/2022
Mr. Altangerel Enkhbat	Director General/GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Mongolia	4/13/2022

ANNEX A: Project Map and Geographic Coordinates

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

