



Promotion of Integrated Biodiversity Conservation and Land Degradation Neutrality in Highly Degraded Landscapes of Iraq

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID

10672

Project Type

FSP

Type of Trust Fund

GET

CBIT/NGI

CBIT No

NGI No

Project Title

Promotion of Integrated Biodiversity Conservation and Land Degradation Neutrality in Highly Degraded Landscapes of Iraq

Countries

Iraq

Agency(ies)

UNEP

Other Executing Partner(s)

The Ministry of Environment in partnership with UNEP West Asia Office

Executing Partner Type

Government

GEF Focal Area

Multi Focal Area

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach, Sustainable Pasture Management, Ecosystem Approach, Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques,

Sustainable Fire Management, Sustainable Agriculture, Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Livelihoods, Income Generating Activities, Sustainable Forest, Drought Mitigation, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands, Food Security, Land Degradation Neutrality, Land Productivity, Carbon stocks above or below ground, Land Cover and Land cover change, Biodiversity, Mainstreaming, Agriculture and agrobiodiversity, Tourism, Biomes, Lakes, Rivers, Desert, Financial and Accounting, Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting, Species, Wildlife for Sustainable Development, Threatened Species, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Productive Landscapes, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Community Based Natural Resource Mngt, Influencing models, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Demonstrate innovative approach, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Stakeholders, Type of Engagement, Consultation, Participation, Information Dissemination, Local Communities, Civil Society, Non-Governmental Organization, Community Based Organization, Beneficiaries, Communications, Awareness Raising, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Women groups, Gender results areas, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Capacity Development, Access and control over natural resources, Integrated Programs, Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration, Sustainable Food Systems, Landscape Restoration, Integrated Landscapes, Commodity Supply Chains, Smallholder Farmers, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Enabling Activities, Learning, Indicators to measure change, Knowledge Exchange, Knowledge Generation

Sector

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation

Climate Change Mitigation 0

Climate Change Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation 1

Submission Date

12/2/2021

Expected Implementation Start

3/1/2022

Expected Completion Date

2/28/2026

Duration

48In Months

Agency Fee(\$)

431,121.00

A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS

Objectives/Programs	Focal Area Outcomes	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
BD-1-1	Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes through biodiversity mainstreaming in priority sectors	GET	600,000.00	2,000,000.00
BD-2-7	Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate	GET	1,168,046.00	8,500,000.00
LD-1-1	Create enabling environments to support scaling up and mainstreaming of SLM and LDN	GET	447,160.00	1,642,857.00
LD-2-5	Maintain or improve flow of agro-ecosystem services to sustain food production and livelihoods through Sustainable Land Management (SLM)	GET	2,322,922.00	13,357,143.00
Total Project Cost(\$)			4,538,128.00	25,500,000.00

B. Project description summary

Project Objective

Strengthen governmental and non-governmental capacities to achieve biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality in Middle Euphrates landscape through integrated landscape management.

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
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Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
Component 1. Strengthened policies, frameworks, (Sustainable Land Management, Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management) - TA 100%	Technical Assistance	<p>Outcome 1.1 Adoption of new policies and plans which integrate landscape level SLM, and biodiversity conservation measures by the Ministry of Health and Environment</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <p>- Number of adopted policies and plans integrating biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management</p> <p><i>Increased capacity of the Ministry of Environment to implement Integrated Conservation Management Framework as measured by the Capacity Development Scorecard.</i></p>	<p>1.1.1 Assessment of national/subnational policies, legislation and procedures that identify integration of biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality into national policies and plans with consideration to the impact and role of women in conservation</p> <p>1.1.2 A national cross-sector and multi-level Integrated Conservation Management Framework (ICMF) developed and approved by the key Ministries (Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water Resources).</p> <p>1.1.3 Joint multi-stakeholder/multi-sectoral working groups established to form a coordination mechanism for the implementation of the ICMF</p>	GET	1,025,910.00	3,426,768.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing (\$)
Component 2 Measures avoiding degradation and biodiversity loss and land rehabilitation to improve ecosystem functions and services: the project will strive to establish and make operative 2 new protected areas according to clear criteria and belonging to the national list of Key Biodiversity Areas published in 2016 - TA 80% INV 20%	Technical Assistance	Outcome 2.1 Two new PAs established and sustainably managed: Razzaza Lake and Sawa Lake and their surrounding areas <i>Indicator:</i> <i>- Establishment of two new PAs proposed for protection of representative ecosystems covering up to 176,292 ha</i> <i>- PA Management Plan adopted for the new Pas</i> <i>- Increase in Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool scores of the new 2 PAs</i>	2.1.1 The National Protected Area Network of Iraq is expanded by 176,292 ha through the declaration and establishments of 2 new PAs that are sustainably managed 2.1.2 Management plans factoring the resilience to climate change developed and implemented for Razzaza Lake and Lake Sawa 2.1.3 Operationalization of habitat, biodiversity and land monitoring system aligned with the Integrated Conservation Management Plan in collaboration with key government stakeholders (Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water Resources and Ministry of Planning) taking into account gender disparities and empowering	GET	1,158,971.00	5,800,578.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing (\$)
Component 3 Demonstration of more sustainable flow of agro-ecosystem services through implementing nature-based solutions in Middle Euphrates Landscape - TA 40% INV 60%	Investment	Outcome 3.1 The replication/ The replication/ scaling up of SLM in more areas of similar nature in Middle Euphrates Landscape in line with Output 1.1.6 <i>Indicator:</i> <i>- Basic data on LDN and SLM are collected or updated, and analyzed with priority SLM measures to be developed and implemented in 10,000 ha of agricultural arable land promoting climate smart agricultural practices</i> <i>- Increased productivity of benefitting farmers participating in project pilots through Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and Office of Agriculture Training and Extension (OATE)</i>	3.1.1 Decision support tools for locally adaptive LDN measures provided to support decision-making through assessments (ecological and vulnerability). 3.1.2 Locally adaptive LDN measures to enhance water conservation and prevent changes in the characteristics of soil, wind erosion, salinization and loss of natural fertility of soil identified and validated by the governorates and Ministry of Environment 3.1.3 Techniques and management practices including but not limited to the revision/reform of existing policies and possibly adoption of new policies for sustainable land management developed and tested in 10,000 ha (results will be monitored through	GET	1,591,174.00	8,174,387.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
Component 4 Capacity building and knowledge management: a new information/knowledge database and an awareness strategy will also scale up the long-term impacts of the project in protecting Iraq's unique biodiversity and agro-ecosystem services on which its people depend on, by making fully accessible management plans, best practices, monitoring and data to inform decision makers and farmers - TA 100%	Technical Assistance	Outcome 4.1 Stakeholders apply their increased knowledge and take actions on land use planning, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services and LDN <i>Indicator:</i> <i>Project database is uploaded into Environment Information System in the Ministry of Environment incorporating Biodiversity and SLM data and traditional management practices</i> <i>- Number of stakeholder engagement workshops (government level, local people, women, etc.)</i> <i>- Increase stakeholder</i>	4.1.1 An information/knowledge management system developed and made accessible to stakeholders enabling learning from and upscaling of pilot activities (ensuring accessibility by men, women, and youth) 4.1.2 A communication and awareness strategy is developed to support the implementation of ICMF 4.1.3 Awareness raising and technical materials, based on best practices identified through Component 2 and 3, developed in local languages, disseminated and used for training of landowners, communities and private sector, taking into account gender balance, to promote adoption of SLM practices and biodiversity conservation	GET	460,972.00	6,303,267.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
Monitoring and Evaluation	Technical Assistance	Outcome 5.1 Integrated and effective monitoring and evaluation system in place	5.1.1 Project progress reported timely 5.1.2 Mid-Term Review conducted 5.1.3 Terminal Evaluation conducted	GET	85,000.00	520,000.00
Sub Total (\$)					4,322,027.00	24,225,000.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)						
				GET	216,101.00	1,275,000.00
				Sub Total(\$)	216,101.00	1,275,000.00
				Total Project Cost(\$)	4,538,128.00	25,500,000.00

Please provide justification

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

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	5,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Agriculture	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	5,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Water Resources	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	5,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Governorates of Middle Euphrates	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	10,000,000.00
GEF Agency	UNEP	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500,000.00
Total Co-Financing(\$)				25,500,000.00

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

N/A.

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

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNEP	GET	Iraq	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	2,770,082	263,157	3,033,239.00
UNEP	GET	Iraq	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	1,768,046	167,964	1,936,010.00
Total Grant Resources(\$)					4,538,128.00	431,121.00	4,969,249.00

E. Non Grant Instrument

NON-GRANT INSTRUMENT at CEO Endorsement

Includes Non grant instruments? **No**

Includes reflow to GEF? **No**

F. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required **true**

PPG Amount (\$)

150,000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

14,249

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programmin g of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNEP	GET	Iraq	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	91,561	8,698	100,259.00
UNEP	GET	Iraq	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	58,439	5,551	63,990.00
Total Project Costs(\$)					150,000.00	14,249.00	164,249.00

Core Indicators

Indicator 1 Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
182,081.00	176,292.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
182,081.00	176,292.00	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
Akula National Park Ibn Najm	125689	SelectNatural Monument or Feature	4,000.00			<input type="checkbox"/>
Akula National Park Lake Sawa	125689	SelectNatural Monument or Feature	20,058.00	20,058.00		<input type="checkbox"/>
Akula National Park North Ibn Najm	125689	SelectNatural Monument or Feature	1,789.00			<input type="checkbox"/>
Akula National Park Razzaza Lake	125689	SelectNatural Monument or Feature	156,234.00	156,234.00		<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial Protected Areas Under improved Management effectiveness

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

Name of the Protected Area	WD PA ID	IUCN Category	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
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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)
20000.00	10000.00	0.00	0.00

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

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

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes 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)
20,000.00	10,000.00		

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
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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	150,000	2,500		

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Male	150,000	2,500		
Total	300000	5000	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

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

describe any changes in alignment with the project design with the original pif

The main change in the passage from the PIF to the CEO Endorsement stage has been the reduction in the number of new PAs to be established within the project site (from 4 to 2) and the reduction of estimated land to be tested under SLM practices (from 20,000 ha to 10,000 ha). The first change was agreed following discussions with government counterparts and national experts and the realization that unfortunately 2 of the 4 KBAs to be turned into PAs selected during the PIF stage had meanwhile been reclaimed to agriculture (therefore biodiversity and natural ecosystems assets of these area have meanwhile vanished). The second revision originated from a more realistic estimation of the total land that could be tested under SLM practices during project life that was performed by an agriculture national expert. For the rest, the PPG development process was an elaboration, detailing and specification of the project document developed during the PIF stage.

A. Project Description.

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

The project will contribute to the general global goal of biodiversity conservation and restoration of degraded lands. It will substantially contribute to the 5 strategic goals of the Convention on Biodiversity and it will contribute to the achievement of at least 8 Aichi targets - especially target #11 (17% of terrestrial ecosystems and inland waters protection by 2020), target # 1 (by 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably), target #2 (by 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems).

The project is in line with UNEP's medium-term strategy 2018-2021 and it will support the following GEF 7 program objectives:

- ? Biodiversity objective 1 (BD-1-1): mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes through biodiversity mainstreaming in priority sectors.
- ? Biodiversity objective 2 (BD-2-7): address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate.
- ? Land degradation objective 1 (LD-1-1): the project will promote sustainable land management (SLM) practices aiming at an improved flow of agro-ecosystem services, reduction of land degradation and sustaining food production.
- ? Land degradation objective 1 (LD-2-5): maintain or improve flow of agro-ecosystem services to sustain food production and livelihoods through Sustainable Land Management (SLM).

The project will strive to substantially contribute to achieve the 5 targets for Land Degradation Neutrality set by the Iraq Government in 2017, in line with the UNCCD:

- ? Improve productivity and SOC stocks in 80,000 ha of annual crops and plantation lands by 2035 as compared to 2017.
- ? Increase the current SOC levels by 2035: for shrubs and grasslands; crop land
- ? Conversion of bare land to pasture lands in 100,000 ha by 2035 as compared to 2017.
- ? Reduce salinization rate by improving productivity and SOC stocks in cropland and
- ? Plantation lands 10,000 ha. by 2035 as compared to 2017.
- ? Conversion of sand dune land to grasslands in 150,000 ha by 2035 as compared to 2017.

The project is also in line with the following themes of UNCCD:

- ? Desertification monitoring and assessment
- ? Agroforestry and soil conservation
- ? Rangeland management and fixation of shifting sand dunes
- ? Water resources management for arid-land agriculture
- ? Strengthening capacities for drought impact mitigation and combating desertification
- ? Assistance for the implementation of integrated local area development programmes.

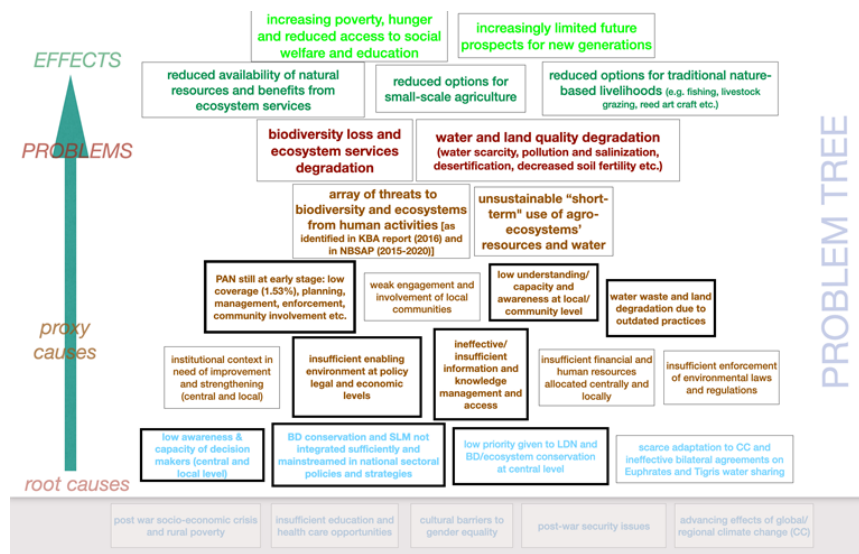
The root causes that were identified during the PPG development process are the following:

- ? Low awareness and capacity of decision makers (central and local level)
- ? Biodiversity conservation and SLM not integrated sufficiently and mainstreamed in key political and economic sectors at central level
- ? Low priority given to LDN and BD/ecosystem conservation at central level
- ? Scarce adaptation to climate change and ineffective bilateral agreements on Euphrates and Tigris water sharing.

The project will address directly the first 3 root causes listed above and indirectly also the fourth. The barriers that were identified at national level during the PPG development process are the following:

- ? Uncoordinated and contradictory institutional and regulatory framework
- ? Stagnation of establishment of new protected areas
- ? Limited knowledge products to enhance understanding of and interest in sustainable land management (SLM) practices
- ? Lack of sustainable financing mechanisms for community based SLM practices
- ? Insufficient understanding and awareness of the importance of biodiversity conservation and SLM practices and low public awareness.

The following problem tree was prepared through consultation with key stakeholders with the aim to develop an efficient intervention strategy:



Problem tree developed during the PPG development process, boxes framed in bold are the causes or barriers that the project will try to address directly

2. The baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects;

Table below (Table 11 from prodoc) provides an outline of the baseline developments that Iraq underwent in recent times in the field of environment and sustainable agriculture with an indication of relevant gaps that the project could and should address.

Type	Gap (in baseline ?status quo? scenario)
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Policy framework

Iraq has developed a number of national policies and strategies in the field of environment, biodiversity conservation and sustainable agriculture, on top of having signed a range of international agreements. What is probably lacking is an integration between these policies and strategies so that they are not conflicting between each other, and they are rather harmonized between each other. Biodiversity conservation and natural and agricultural ecosystems sustainable use need to be mainstreamed and integrated into the other national strategic sectoral policies.

Institutional and legislative framework

Since the establishment in 2003, the Ministry of Environment (MoE) of Iraq has devoted a lot of effort in addressing environmental challenges including severe pollution, misuse of land resources and biodiversity loss and habitat degradation. Despite the huge gap due to decades of isolation of Iraq from the international and scientific community, substantial lack of environmental protection policies during 30 years of dictatorship, and institutional weakness of being a new institution with a jurisdiction conflicting with other traditional institutions, the effort of the MoE to recover the difficult environmental situation has been focused on aligning Iraq to the international standards and on institutional cooperation. In this context, the fundamental financial support of international donors and technical assistance of international organizations (UNEP, UNDP, UNESCO, FAO, IFAD, IUCN, and others) to the Government of Iraq, and to the Ministry of Environment in particular, have been a pillar of the ongoing institutional and legislative reform.

Since 2008 several international agreements have been signed and ratified by Iraq: the Ramsar Convention in 2008, the CBD and UNFCCC in 2009, the UNCCD in 2010, CITES in 2012, and CMS in 2016.

Several projects have been prepared and implemented to support the MoE in developing national policies, strategies and plans for environmental protection and sustainable development: the National Environmental Strategy and Action Plan of Iraq launched in June 2013, was developed in a joint effort of MoE with UNEP and UNDP. Two projects for the development of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) of Iraq and the National Capacity Self-Assessment were funded GEF through UNEP. Five PAs have been established so far for a total of 1.53% of the national territory preserved. Two milestone legal frameworks were developed like the Law No. 27 of 2009 on environmental protection and the protected areas Law No 2 of 2014.

However, many gaps and weaknesses are still present in the institutional and legislative framework. In developing new environmental strategies, the MoE is often overlapping the jurisdiction of other line Ministries and with regional or local government institutions.

Although, the 2014 regulation on PAs has marked a significant advancement in the institutional process of planning, establishing and managing Protected Areas, the process needs to be enforced and streamlined through proper coordination of several institutions involved, development of procedures, methodologies, and tools with adequate training and capacity building. The UNEP GEF GFL/5392 PAN project and IUCN proposed a revision of this process that is currently at the final stages of endorsement by the Government. The effective management of new PAs is another issue that should be improved: lack of sufficient funds, equipment and experienced staff are problems that do not allow a proper management of new PAs. The financial sustainability of the PA system is still to be planned and fully taken into account by the competent institutions together with the monitoring of the management effectiveness.

Specific technical issues	<p>The country has made advances in the fields of environmental management and protection and towards curbing land degradation. However, these progresses are still largely insufficient when related to the general context of the country. During the project development process gaps in capacity have been assessed in the fields of mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and SLM into national sectoral policies and strategies, in managing PAs and implementing their management plans, in monitoring effectiveness of management of PAs and in applying SLM and LDN new techniques in agriculture.</p>
Data and research	<p>The key biodiversity areas (KBA) inventory of Iraq (2016) provides a wealth of data on valuable ecosystems and biodiversity hotspots in the country. The effort carried out by MoE, and Nature Iraq helped to establish national and local capacities to undertake well organized field surveys on biodiversity and use rapid assessment techniques and methodologies. The survey work itself has helped to gain a better understanding of both Iraq's wealth of resources (natural, cultural, and human) and the threats that they face in the country (unsustainable development, pollution, habitat destruction, declines in health and loss of species).</p> <p>The baseline information provided by the KBA inventory provided an effective basis to design a national PA system and identify areas that hold substantial and significant biodiversity and natural ecosystems heritage on a national, regional, and global level.</p> <p>Building on the results of the KBA project, the MoE has prioritized areas for protection and conservation planning, expanding the first list of 10 proposed Protected Areas that were included in the POWPA Action Plan of Iraq of 2012 by adding 13 additional proposed in 2018 (6th biodiversity national report).</p> <p>However, the KBA survey work conducted so far still has many gaps: for example, many areas in the country have not been surveyed yet and the surveys have not covered all season cycles. In addition, surveys have so far been very strongly focused on birds, which are one of the best indicator <i>taxa</i> for biological diversity, however other <i>taxa</i> deserve more focus, and they will require different survey methodologies (e.g., plants, invertebrates, fish, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals).</p> <p>In general, in the target Governorates of the project site (Karbala and Muthanna), the SLM practices implemented are the saline land reclamation through construction of irrigation and drainage network, land leveling, leaching of salts and planting salt and drought resistant crops. They also tested the sand dunes movement and fixation by building artificial and biological barriers.</p>

Management practices	<p>The five PAs officially declared in Iraq so far (1.53% of the national territory) do not have management in plans or, when they do, these are not implemented effectively due to lack of funds and capacity.</p> <p>The way agriculture is managed in the country is unsustainable in the short to medium term because it is based on wasting the natural resources and on depleting them beyond their capacity of regeneration: this applies to the soil and the water. This improper and unsustainable management of the land is driving to dramatic degradation of the conditions that have allowed agriculture in Mesopotamia for millennia. The decreasing water coming from Turkey due to dam construction and to a lack of written agreements and the rampant climate change are exacerbating the situation. Historically, men have been responsible for making decisions and planning of the farming activities, women are not usually in charge of this type of management.</p>
Public Awareness	<p>Lack or insufficient knowledge on values of biodiversity and importance of ecosystems services and functions and the weak understanding of the importance of protecting biodiversity and maintaining ecosystems is among the root causes of lack of effectiveness of environmental policies in Iraq. Same applies to the awareness in regards to the need to halt land degradation and desertification processes through using nature-based and ecologically sound agriculture methods. The MoE has undertaken many initiatives for raising awareness among national institutions and supporting mainstreaming of biodiversity protection within sectoral policies and plans. Many initiatives have been developed also for increasing public awareness on biodiversity and environment. Based on the experience gained in the establishment of the existing PAN, it is evident that this issue is very critical for the success of similar conservation projects and needs to be addressed with a specific awareness and outreach strategy and with development of concrete tools and materials specifically aimed at awareness raising within different groups: the national and local institutions, the scientific community, the local communities within and in the surroundings of the new Protected Areas, and the wider public. . In some areas, men have been leaving the degraded areas and seek out jobs in the urban areas, leaving women in charge of the role and responsibilities of the farm.</p>

Iraq has so far implemented a number of projects and initiatives as an intervention based on laws and regulations related to land management, agriculture and biodiversity conservation. Some of these projects' outputs and results can serve as a beneficial platform for this GEF project. The baseline projects with whom active coordination needs to be maintained are given in the table below (Table 12 of prodoc).

Name of the project, Duration	Description of activities and envisaged outcomes
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<p>UNEP GEF GFL/5392 PAN, 2016-on going</p> <p>?Initial Steps for the Establishment of the National Protected Areas Network in Iraq?</p>	<p>This project, at its final year of implementation and with a budget of \$1.2 million, was aimed at developing an institutional environment enabling the development and implementation of the protected area network in Iraq and at same time at contributing to the extension of PAN through the establishment of 2 new PAs (Dalmaj and Teeb). The main linkage with this project will be to integrate the technical guidelines, best practices and lessons learned, as documented in its annual progress reports and Mid-term Evaluation, into the inception of this project. Recommendations from the mid-term review have already informed this project development. The UNEP GEF GFL/5392 PAN project components will address barriers and constraints to effective implementation of the national network of protected areas, focusing on (a) design, planning and establishment of the national system of Protected Areas in Iraq; (b) strengthening the institutional and legislative framework for Protected Areas, through stakeholder consultation, capacity building and provision of technical tools to enable legislation enforcement. The Project will support the target of increasing the number of protected areas by 6.5% of the total area of the country. Information on new PAs established by the proposed project will be uploaded on the web site on PAN developed by UNEP GEF GFL/5392 PAN project.</p>
<p>UNEP GEF 6 9744 EIS, 2017-on going</p> <p>?Establishing a Functional Environmental Information System for the Synergistic Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) for Iraq?</p>	<p>The objective of this project, with a budget of \$1.1 million, was to enhance the capacity of MoE for monitoring and reporting on Multilateral Environment Agreements through a well-integrated and functional environment information system. Component 4 of proposed project, focused on information/knowledge and awareness, will link to the UNEP GEF 6 9744 EIS project. It will do so by developing a coordinated environmental knowledge and information management system and by enhancing institutional coordination and technical capacities to mainstream, develop, and utilize policies for the effective implementation of MEAs and relevant SDGs. MEA monitoring and reporting activities will provide a basis on the availability of key data and the proposed Project will use this Project's findings to establish a robust baseline for the Project.</p>
<p>?Building capacity to advance the National Adaptation Plan process in Iraq?</p>	<p>The GCF funded project will advance the National Adaptation Plan in Iraq through strengthening institutional, technical and financial capacities as well as medium- to long-term adaptation will be mainstreamed into national and local planning. The total funding from GCF is US\$2,566,795 and the project is in its initial stage and will end in 3 years by 2025. This project will help to identify the climate change scenarios, and options to enhance resilience of Protected areas to climate change. The management plans of PAs will align with the national adaptation plan actions.</p>

<p>?Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting and Implementation?</p>	<p>Under the lead of the Ministry of Agriculture, in 2017 the Iraqi government joined the land degradation neutrality target setting programme (LDN TSP) to alleviate and decrease the effects of soil salinity and erosion, sand dune movement and sand and dust storms, to become land degradation neutral. Five national voluntary LDN targets were set: (1) Improve productivity and Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) stocks in 80,000 ha of annual crops and plantation lands by 2035 as compared to 2017; (2) Increase the current SOC levels by 2035 for shrublands, croplands and grasslands; (3) Conversion of bare land to pasture lands in 100,000 ha by 2035 as compared to 2017; (4) Reduce salinization rate by improving productivity and SOC stocks in crop and plantation lands in 10,000 ha by 2035 as compared to 2017; and (5) Conversion of sand dunes to grasslands in 150,000 ha by 2035 as compared to 2017. This proposed project will directly contribute to achievement of LDN and also will provide a monitoring system that is aligned with UNCCD's global land based global indicators: land cover, land productivity (net primary productivity) and carbon stocks (soil organic carbon) and other locally relevant indicators.</p>
<p>FAO GEF 9745 SLM 2020- on going ?Sustainable Land Management for Improved Livelihoods in Degraded Areas of Iraq?</p>	<p>A GEF-funded FAO project intended to improve the flow of agro-ecosystem services to sustain food production and livelihoods. The overall objective of the project is to reverse land degradation processes, conserve and sustainably manage land and water resources in degraded marshland ecosystems in Southern Iraq for greater access to services from resilient ecosystems and improved livelihoods. The project is for a total of GEF Grant amount: \$ 3 549 321 approved in 2017. During the PPG phase a comprehensive discussion was undertaken with the project proponents to ensure a strong synergy especially in relation to component n. 3 of proposed project. The Ministry of Agriculture is involved in the FAO Sustainable Land Management Project and is the member of the PSC. This project will ensure complementarity between the work that is being carried by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment.</p>
<p>IFAD IRQ/MIE/Agri/2017/1 BRAC 2020-on going ?Building Resilience of the Agriculture Sector to Climate Change in Iraq?</p>	<p>An IFAD approved project started in 2020 and should be operational until 2025. The project's total investment is US\$ 9.9 million. The project objective is to strengthen the agro-ecological and social resilience to climate change in the four target governorates. The project will take place in governorates that over-lap and compliment the proposed project activities in the Middle Euphrates Landscape. The project is organized around two components. Under the first component, the project will build capacities required to integrate climate change adaptation and risk reduction into agriculture planning and production systems. Under the project's second component, the project will assist to generate climate-resilient agriculture investments. This baseline project will provide climate smart solutions, which are also planned under component n. 3 of proposed project (LDN implementation actions). A strong link and partnership between these two projects will be pursued.</p>

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

The proposed alternative scenario - with the GEF project - will support the design and initial steps for the integration of biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality at national level, contributing to the ongoing transition process by:

- ? Support the GoI's capacity to effectively integrate biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality into sectoral policies.
- ? Establish 2 new PAs significantly contributing to the extension of the national PA network coverage and the number of species of global importance that will be under effective conservation management in the country; support in engage and involve the local stakeholders; development of management plans and prompting their implementation; support in providing trained staff and equipment to the new PA.
- ? Piloting a testing ground for SLM methodologies, tools and stakeholder involvement mechanisms, thus creating a model to improve agro-ecosystem services and demonstrate sustainable flow of agro-ecosystem services to sustain food production and livelihoods.
- ? Supporting the MoE in managing and use knowledge and in raising public and authorities' awareness on the value of biodiversity and the importance of maintaining ecosystems and their services for human well-being into national planning processes and achieving sustainable use of land and biodiversity resources in the country.

The project envisages the interplay of four components with associated outcomes. The components are the following:

- ? Component 1 represents the foundation of the proposed initiative as it lays the policy, institutional and economic ground for component 2 and 3 to be implemented smoothly and ensuring the sustainability of their results over medium and long term. The lessons learned in component 2 and 3 will feed back into national level revisions of policy and legislative frameworks.
- ? Component 2 will ensure that policies and frameworks also include avoiding degradation and biodiversity loss to enable ecosystem functions to be restored.
- ? Component 3 will demonstrate sustainable flow of agro-ecosystem services to sustain food production and livelihoods through implementing nature-based solutions to landscape restoration at the local level through:
 - a. Capacity development programme for farmers, including resource mobilization, advocacy, and communication
 - b. Training for local stakeholders e.g., farmers, PA managers, agricultural associations on best practices for agro-biodiversity, water conservation and climate smart agriculture.
- ? Component 4 will ensure the project results can be scaled up through capacity building and knowledge management.

The four outcomes are the following:

- ? Outcome 1.1 is focused on creating the conditions -institutionally, legally and on a policies and economic level- enabling biodiversity conservation and sustainable agriculture to become priority issue at the same level with other sectors that are considered crucial to the nation (socio-economy, industry, health, food production,

education etc.). This Outcome is designed to facilitate the integration and mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation and integrated landscape management into key sectoral national policies.

- ? Outcome 2.1 is focused on formally turning the 2 target KBAs into new PAs in the 2 different governorates (Output 2.1.1), on ensuring their respective management plans are discussed and agreed (Output 2.1.2) and on establishing a national plan aimed at monitoring key parameters of the PAN nationally (Output 2.1.3). The outcome has been designed to address lessons and recommendations from previous projects and especially from the UNEP GEF GFL/5392 PAN project, with the aim to enhance, improve and extend the PAN nationally, which in turn will have positive impacts on biodiversity, ecosystems and on the livelihoods of local communities and vulnerable groups in the project areas. This outcome was especially designed to effectively address the rampant problems -an array of drivers well described and defined in the KBA publication (2016) -determining biodiversity loss and natural ecosystem services degradation.
- ? Outcome 3.1 is focused on promoting the use of modern and SLM nature-based measures in the project area. The outcome will target the agricultural areas around the newly established PAs (desirably), or otherwise in other suitable areas of the governorate (?SLM areas?) and will be based on a substantial involvement of local farmers (with a focus on youth and gender equality). It is expected that the outcome will substantially contribute to the meeting by GoI of the LDN targets. The outcome will include discussion and development of specific locally based tools for decision makers. The main medium-term prospect of this outcome is to create the conditions enabling the replication and scaling up of SLM tests? results to more areas of similar nature within the Middle Euphrates Landscape. The outcome was designed in order to address the national major concern of land degradation in agricultural arable irrigated areas of the country (salinization, water waste, soil nutrients degradation etc.): and it is expected to provide the higher impact -of all the outcomes of this project- in terms of improved livelihoods as it will assist the farmers to increase the crop production in a sustainable way. The outcome will utilize tools developed by the UNCCD to support local community participation in the verification of LDN indicators/metrics. The LADA local tool provides a methodological approach for the assessment of the land degradation processes, their causes and impacts at local level in collaboration with local stakeholders and communities. The outcome will also address another critical aspect in this field: the lack of credit opportunities for sustainable finance at local level.
- ? Outcome 4.1 is aimed at sharing the knowledge gathered locally through the project activities (mainly from component 2 and 3) and increase the awareness on both biodiversity conservation and sustainable agriculture. The achievement of this outcome will target the local communities, especially farmers and livestock breeders. Through this outcome best practices and results of the capacity building programme elements and outputs can be scaled up and replicated in other, ecologically equivalent, areas of the country.

The four components and outcomes of the project are described and outlined in detail under section 3.3 of the project document.

4. Alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies;

Overall, the project is expected to enhance policy, legal and institutional frameworks in support of SLM and biodiversity considerations, develop sub-national strategies for the sustainable

management of ecosystems to supply important ecosystem services and develop LDN targets for the pilot provinces. Specifically, the project will support the following program objectives:

Biodiversity: In line with GEF 7 biodiversity objective 2 (BD-2-7), the project will promote Improving Financial Sustainability, Effective Management, and Ecosystem Coverage of the Global Protected Area Estate by supporting:

- ? Establishment of 4 new protected areas.
- ? Development and implementation of management plans for the new 2 PAs
- ? Development of community-based adaptation strategies for community participation in PA management.

Land degradation: In supporting the GEF 7 objective 1 (LD-1-1), the project will promote sustainable land management (SLM) practices aiming at an improved flow of agro-ecosystem services, reduction of land degradation and sustaining food production, by supporting:

- ? Degraded agricultural land, grasslands and drylands restored and under integrated management with rehabilitated or restored ecosystem services.
- ? On-the-ground implementation of sustainable land management, soil erosion control measures, diversification of crop and livestock systems across farm holdings.
- ? An enabling environment for better land use management and practices

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

Scenario without the GEF investment: The baseline for the project rationale is mainly founded on efforts and actions implemented by the line ministries in cooperation with international funds and agencies. Without the GEF investment: national and local policies and strategies regarding biodiversity conservation, protected area management, land degradation and management will not be harmonized and strengthened in the medium term. In addition, over the short/medium term, national plans such as National Environmental Strategy and Action Plan, Iraq's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), Iraq's national Land Degradation Neutrality Targets, agriculture management plans, and watershed and irrigation system management plans will not have led to establishment of new Protected Areas and support SLM practices. The staff of Ministry of Health and Environment and the staff in Governorates will not have sufficient capacity to expand Protected area network and implement SLM practices that support LDN targets. The Ministry will not be able to collect scientific information needed to establish the new PA and expand PA network. The community will have limited awareness on the benefits of well managed network of PA. As a result of these shortfalls, biodiversity will be lost, key ecosystems that sustain biodiversity and livelihoods will deteriorate, and soil quality will continue to degrade due to uncontrolled and inadequate land use, and the social and economic consequences of land degradation will continue to adversely impact the livelihood of people in Iraq.

Scenario with the GEF investment: This project will help Iraq meet multiple environmental targets set in the National Development Plan. GEF funds will serve as catalyst to develop a coherent and coordinated approach to reduce pressures on biodiversity and land, through development and

implementation of cross sectoral and multi-level 'Integrated Conservation Management Framework' in Iraq. More specifically, the GEF investment will facilitate strengthened policy, legal and regulatory frameworks, assessment of socio-economic impacts of establishing new integrated conservation management on local population. The Project will expand the network of PAs, establish four new protected areas and develop and implement the management plans of these new four areas. The Project will support Iraq's national Land Degradation Neutrality Targets by assessing and surveying of key land degradation drivers, developing decision support tools for locally adaptive LDN measures. In addition, the project will develop and demonstrate local measures enhancing water conservation and preventing loss of soil and its fertility. The project also will result in improved institutional and technical capacities at the ministerial and governorate level, and increased awareness among stakeholders at all institutional levels and the wider public on the importance of establishment and management of protected areas, sustainable land use and soil conservation measures. By the end of the project, project stakeholders will have increased access to environmental information and will be participating more widely in decision-making in Iraq.

In summary the incremental cost analysis can be synthesized as shown in table below (Table 13 of prodoc).

Baseline Scenario B (Business as Usual)	Alternative Scenario A (with project interventions)	Local/National and Global Environmental Benefits (A - B)
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Component 1: Strengthened policies, frameworks, (Sustainable Land Management, Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management).

Baseline:

Policies and frameworks at national level are not conducive for mainstreaming SLM, biodiversity conservation and PA management into sectoral policies and strategies.

Development policies and strategies in different strategic sectors (energy, industry, infrastructure, socio-economy and poverty reduction, agriculture, environment, education etc.) are not coordinated and linked together; and they are often conflicting.

Decision makers and Ministries staff lack the capacity and understanding to take into account and to integrate the instances for the conservation of biodiversity, for the sustainability of agriculture and for achieving land degradation neutrality targets.

The revision and streamlining of the process to establish PAs, proposed by UNEP GEF GFL/5392 PAN and IUCN is not endorsed by Government yet.

Lack of economic incentives to promote environmental protection and sustainability.

Probable results:

Biodiversity national heritage will continue to be lost, natural ecological services will continue to be degraded until they will not be able to serve to the well being and health of local communities. Land degradation and water decrease will continue and will produce an advanced decrease in

An inter-ministerial cross-sector working group is established with the aim to coordinate and guide a new Integrated Conservation Management Framework (ICMF).

ICMF will aim to mainstream SLM, biodiversity conservation and PA management into sectoral policies and strategies nationally, for the first time in the country.

The knowledge and awareness of ministerial staff and decision makers on the importance of these themes is increased and this will substantially contribute to the inclusion on the political agenda of SLM and biodiversity conservation as top priorities.

Local/national benefits:

Farmers and livestock breeders around Razzaza and Sawa lakes will test and experience new techniques of production that are sustainable on the medium term, and this will increase their trust in a viable future. The improvement of the environmental and ecological conditions will have beneficial effects on their livelihoods and sense of well being and health.

Women will benefit from increased empowerment, encouraged representation, and participation in the community and the scaling up of the best conservation method in the regions of the project.

Global benefits:

Iraq will begin to implement its NBSAP (2015-2020 and its extensions) on the ground at an enhanced pace and with more effectiveness resulting in tangible effects to the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems of global importance. Iraq will provide concrete contributions to meet obligations with CBD, UNDCCC and desertification conventions and to achieve the 5 LDN targets agreed in 2017.

<p>Component 2: Measures avoiding degradation and biodiversity loss and land rehabilitation to improve ecosystem functions and services.</p> <p>Baseline:</p> <p>The PAN of Iraq covers only 1.53% of the national territory currently, despite the commitments under CBD and PoPAW to reach 17% of terrestrial ecosystems and inland waters. Two new PAS (Dalmaj and Teeb) have been proposed recently through the UNEP GEF GFL/5392 PAN, but they have not been officially established yet.</p> <p>Management plans of the only 5 PAs of Iraq are not implemented due to lack of capacity and funds.</p> <p>Probable results:</p> <p>Biodiversity national heritage will continue to be lost, natural ecological services will continue to be degraded until they will not be able to serve to the well-being and health of local communities.</p>	<p>Two new PAs proposals will be formulated with the contribution of the local communities and stakeholders for a total of 176,292 ha. Key baseline data will be collected enabling an efficient monitoring of management through the years and the direct engagement of local communities. These PA proposals will be submitted to NCPA and MoE for approval and hopefully the process for their approval will be smoother and faster than for previous PAs thanks to the revision and streamlining of the process proposed by UNEP GEF GFL/5392 PAN and IUCN.</p> <p>The new PAs will have management plans agreed with the local communities and ready to be implemented with funds from the MoE (co-finance commitment).</p> <p>A pool of Government staff will be trained as PAs staff increasing the national and local overall capacity of PA management.</p>	<p>Local/national benefits:</p> <p>Farmers and livestock breeders around Razzaza and Sawa lakes will experience an improvement of the environmental and ecological conditions and will receive beneficial effects on their livelihoods and sense of well-being and health. In the medium term some sort of eco-tourism (national and international) may bring additional benefits to the local communities.</p> <p>Increased number of women hired in the new proposed Pas as well as the training workshops that women will benefit from on measures to avoid biodiversity loss and utilization of the ecosystem services</p> <p>Global benefits:</p> <p>Iraq will begin to implement its NBSAP (2015-2020 and its extensions) on the ground at an enhanced pace and with more effectiveness resulting in tangible concrete effects to the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems of global importance. Iraq will provide concrete contributions to meet obligations with CBD, UNDCCC and desertification conventions and to achieve the 5 LDN targets agreed in 2017.</p>
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<p>Component 3: Demonstration of more sustainable flow of agro-ecosystem services through implementing nature-based solutions in Middle Euphrates Landscape.</p> <p>Baseline:</p> <p>The degradation of land and the scarcity of water are advancing at alarming rates fueled by unsustainable agricultural practices and by climate change. Agricultural production is decreasing, and poverty is advancing instead of being reduced, all over the country.</p> <p>Application of SLM, nature-based and climate resilient techniques to agriculture are at their infancy in Iraq, including at the 2 project selected SLM areas. Land degradation neutrality 5 targets agreed in 2017 are far from been achieved yet.</p> <p>The capacity and know-how to use these techniques are lacking in the project areas.</p> <p>No financial environment exists at local level facilitating and enabling local farmers to undertake new more sustainable agricultural techniques and approaches.</p> <p>Probable results:</p> <p>The current trend will continue with a severe impact especially at local level, with poverty and hunger on the increase. Also the national economy will be affected by this trend.</p>	<p>Based on the proposed intervention capacity and awareness will be spread at local level, both within the farmers community and the local administrators: people will regain trust on the future thanks to a transition towards a sustainable agriculture and a curb on land degradation and water waste. The Agriculture Training and Extension will be the mean through which capacity and awareness will be spread. Local banks, based on their increased capacity, will also catalyze the process by economically promoting this virtuous socio-economic process.</p>	<p>Local/national benefits:</p> <p>Improvement of crop production in the trial fields at the project area; prospects for an improvement of livelihoods for a number of local farmers. Prospects to replicate and scale up this successful model to other areas of the country, ecologically comparable.</p> <p>Women will benefit from the participation in developing the LDN measures and the increased involvement in the decision making as well as the training sessions that will target women on sustainable flow of ecosystem and nature-based solutions.</p> <p>Global benefits:</p> <p>Prospects to decrease and alleviate poverty rates and spread across MENA region. Developing case studies and good practices that can be applied in other areas of the world.</p>
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<p>Component 4: Capacity building and knowledge management.</p> <p>Baseline:</p> <p>There is no sharing of information nor knowledge on biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services and sustainable agriculture. The awareness on these themes is also very scarce. No communication strategies and efforts are in place to fill these gaps.</p> <p>Probable results:</p> <p>The dangerous business-as-usual context will survive without any prospect of being overcome with heavy negative effects on the socio-economy and quality of life of thousands of people,</p>	<p>Thanks to the proposed project the awareness on these vital themes will be increased and spread, together with the capacity and the know-how. People will be empowered and will gain trust that they can revert an ecologically deadly cycle.</p> <p>An effective communication strategy and an information and knowledge management system will assist to catalyze this crucial process of change.</p>	<p>Local/national benefits:</p> <p>Farmers and livestock breeders around Razzaza and Sawa lakes will test and experience new techniques of production that are sustainable on the medium term, and this will increase their trust in a viable future. The improvement of the environmental and ecological conditions will have beneficial effects on their livelihoods and sense of well-being and health.</p> <p>Increased participation of women in capacity building programs and the raised awareness regarding women-targeted farmers field schools</p> <p>Global benefits:</p> <p>Iraq will begin to implement its NBSAP (2015-2020 and its extensions) on the ground at an enhanced pace and with more effectiveness resulting in tangible effects to the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems of global importance. Iraq will provide concrete contributions to meet obligations with CBD, UNDCCC and desertification conventions and to achieve the 5 LDN targets agreed in 2017.</p>
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6. Global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF); and 7) innovativeness, sustainability, and potential for scaling up. ?

The project will indirectly benefit the whole population of Iraq and it will play an important role in enhancing food production and livelihood improvement for about 5,000 people in the selected areas in the Middle Euphrates region. They will directly benefit from the project interventions and move to more sustainable agricultural production with the support of this project. The project will contribute to food security & sustainable livelihoods, creating new jobs in rural areas.

Component 1 will see the update of policies, frameworks, and capacities relative to Sustainable Land Management, Invasive Alien Species Management, Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management. These outcomes will help meet the challenge identified by the Government of Iraq of the lack of clear environmental legislations.

The proposed project will meet biodiversity targets by contributing towards the protection and safeguard of globally threatened and significant species and ecosystems that occur only in the country (complete list is presented under Biodiversity in section 2.1 of prodoc). Indeed, the protection of the habitats and species will also contribute in the conservation status of those species listed under the CITES convention. Furthermore, Component 2 will support the Government of Iraq on the establishment of new Protected Areas covering up to 176,292 ha. The targeted new PAs (Razzaza and Sawa lakes) are KBAs. By factoring the new PAs resilience to climate change in PA management plans, the Project will contribute to country's Adaptation's initiatives.

Furthermore, Component 3 focuses on more sustainable flow of agro-ecosystem services through implementing nature-based solutions to landscape restoration at the local level on 10,000 ha of agricultural arable land in order to strengthen implementation of LDN and enhance food security. Indeed, LDN target was established in the country in 2017 with the aim to minimize the effects of land degradation, combat desertification and conserve land resource productivity to meet food demands. Therefore, it is apparent that these targets have a direct correlation with the project's specifications and outcomes. The implementation of project programs & activities, urging the use of the methodology of proper land & water resources management in a manner that leads to the sustainability of the project, reducing the use of chemical fertilizers & pesticides that lead to pollution of soil & water, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through increasing vegetation cover, as well as optimal use of agricultural products by the consumer & avoid excessive use. The project will introduce different restoration strategies to restore degraded ecosystems & reverse negative impacts on biodiversity & ecosystem services, including the provision of freshwater, food, & water quality, & climate regulation, while supporting the production aspects of the landscape (Component This component will also strive to promote climate smart agriculture reducing the vulnerability of farmers to climate extremes.

This project will provide further evidence & important transformation in a post-conflict country case by enhancing lands' productivity & farmers' capacity. The Project will also support restoration of ecosystems, which will help restore ecosystems & improve pastoralism & address poverty & prevent further displacement which occurred due to ecosystem deterioration.

Innovativeness, sustainability, and potential for scaling up.

Innovativeness. The project has been tailored to combat Iraq's biodiversity threats in an innovative way. First, the project will develop an Integrated Conservation Management Framework which has yet to be established in Iraq. Biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality are necessary for the ecosystem, human and animal health, prosperity, and livelihoods. This will be achieved after the identification of legal, policy, and institutional gaps. Furthermore, capacity building is an indispensable

effort, engaging experts and local communities in biodiversity conservation, smart agriculture, land management and nature-based solutions.

Although some efforts have been made by the MoE towards biodiversity conservation, with the establishment of protected areas, these lack management and a long-term monitoring programme. Therefore, the programme will innovatively improve management capacity for effectiveness of protected areas and biodiversity conservation and highlight gender roles in conservation and management.

Finally, the post-war situation and international sanctions, as well as the growing land degradation challenges have resulted in an underdeveloped institutional capacity and governance structure in the environment sector. To this end, advances in SLM, and ecosystem conservation have not been the main priorities of the government. Therefore, this unique situation of Iraq, present innovative opportunities to combat the many threat the biodiversity is facing.

Iraq is in urgent need for environmentally sustainable food systems and political will is strong for a successful and transformational change for a sustainable food and land management. On the other hand, armed conflict converted more than one third of agricultural lands into non-productive lands. These areas have started to be restored gradually. This project will provide further evidence and important transformation in a post-conflict country case by enhancing lands productivity and farmers capacity, through partnerships and active engagement on the ground.

The project promotes the following innovative approaches to tackle the issue of land degradation neutrality:

- ? Scaling down the national LDN strategy to the local level;
- ? Trial and test new SLM techniques (biological treatments and crop rotations, sand dunes fixations (mechanical, chemical, and biological), addition of organic fertilizers, use of non-conventional water and sewage water for irrigation and crop production, application of modern methods most appropriate for the conditions in the region with respect to water harvesting and, use of crop varieties resistant to salinity;
- ? Involve the local communities of the project sites in the field trials.

Sustainability. The current COVID-19 pandemic poses a significant 'global risk' on sustainability of all projects, and this Project is not shielded from this risk. Furthermore, Iraq's capacity to sustain project outcomes at the moment is limited due to the prevailing security situations, limited number of skilled manpower and new and complex institutions. However, our current experience in the Protected Area Network project demonstrates that there is strong interest and willingness to develop the capacity as well as ameliorate its environmental institutions. Furthermore, the country's young population has a critical role towards sustainable development and shaping the future, being active architects of development. In order to sustain Project outcomes, key design considerations have been considered for better durability. These issues will be revisited at the PPG phase for achieving enduring outcomes. The project emphasizes multi-stakeholder processes, supporting the involvement and motivation of stakeholders. As summarized in the stakeholders' section, the Ministry of Environment and UNEP organized an intensive discussion with various stakeholders to identify the local needs. The local needs will be supported with strategic capacity assessments and capacity building activities tailored to local culture and targeted to develop champions and build trust and ownership. Capacity building and training activities targeting farmers will be conducted in collaboration with the Office of Agricultural Extension Services and Training. Gender empowerment is at the forefront of the project, with the

establishment of a capacity and knowledge building programme targeting women. The project outcomes and outputs will be sustained, and the impacts on the lives of the local communities will be maintained through demonstration of SLM and biodiversity conservation practices with locally adapted measures supporting distributional outcomes, which will be possible for the target community to sustain. The Project is targeting to remove major barriers causing biodiversity loss and degradation of land. Creation and managing knowledge are key to achieve sustained impact of the project. By building on the currently ongoing projects, the Project is benefiting from the created new knowledge. With a dedicated component on knowledge management, the Project embeds knowledge creation into the project cycle. The capacity and knowledge development programme seek to strengthen local know-how, which equips the communities with the right skills to pave their own paths in a sustainable manner.

Overall, the strategy and mechanisms selected by the project, in order to ensure that the activities of the project are sustained, involve engaging the key stakeholders especially at local level in the implementation of the key activities and ensure that these latter produce direct and tangible benefits for them in terms of livelihoods and quality of life. For instance, an increased capacity and the successful testing of SLM techniques will likely result in increased agricultural yields and higher quality products, as well as in a reduction of the cost of land management and water use efficiency; while an efficient management of the new PAs will produce benefits to the local community at large such as improved ecosystem services and resilience to climate change, new income options and improved recreational, spiritual and aesthetic opportunities etc. Moreover, through component 4 fully dedicated to the knowledge sharing and management, the project will strive to communicate the results and key know-how of the project within the whole project site and also into the surrounding ecologically equivalent areas of the Middle Euphrates landscape. It is foreseen that the good practices and initiatives that resulted in tangible benefits to the local communities will likely be replicated and scaled up by other communities of the Middle Euphrates landscape, with young hopefully leading the process, especially if local authorities and NGOs are keen to facilitate and support the process of change.

The procurement of basic key equipment for each new PA (e.g., 3 PCs, 5 binoculars, etc. for each PA) and a robust capacity building program on effective PA management are among the activities planned under Output 2.2. We estimated that these activities should already ensure a fairly good degree of sustainability for the implementation of the PA management plans developed under the same output, especially taking into account that there will be an emphasis in engaging the local community since early stages in the development of these plans with a clear focus on determining tangible benefits to them. The project therefore will strive for the full engagement of the local community and an enhanced capacity of the staff from MoE that will manage the new PAs but, on the other hand, it will count on the commitment of the Govt. and MoE in increasing the national system of PAs to plan an annual budget for the implementation of the management plan of the new 2 PAs.

To the same purpose will contribute also the planning of the continuity of monitoring and evaluation, beyond the project end, in a cooperative fashion between the concerned state ministries and the local population and the civil society organizations concerned with the preservation of biological diversity and the reclamation of lands affected by the effects of climate change.

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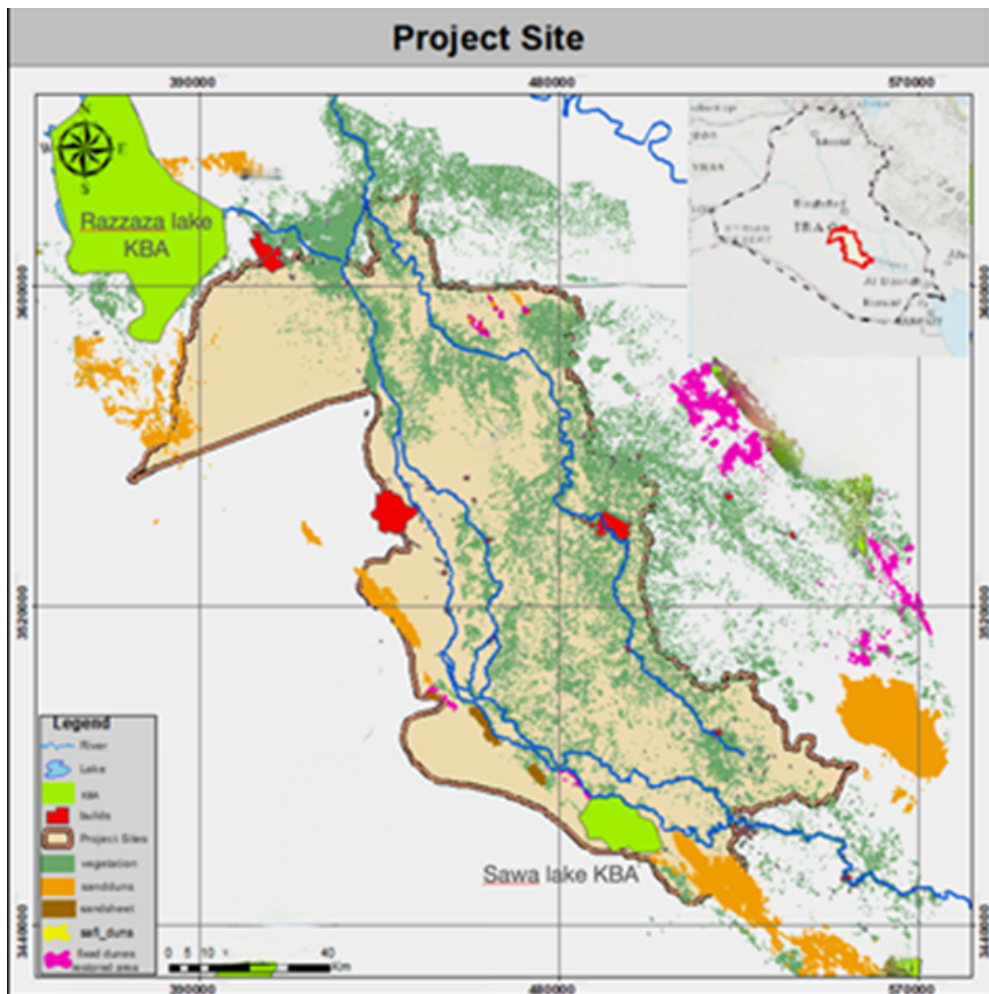
Scaling Up. The project has significant prospect to be sustained and scaled-up. First, it will revise the enabling environment with respect to policies, regulations as well as capacity and knowledge building, which will ultimately improve the management of biodiversity conservation in the country. In addition, the project will focus on declaring additional protected areas, which will expand the protected area network in Iraq. Indeed, this emphasizes the potential of amplifying the project in the future at a higher

scale. It can be stated that with the enabling environment and practical experience, the government of Iraq will have the necessary skills to replicate this approach to all PAs in the national system.

Features of this project do not solely cover the Middle Euphrates Landscape needs, but elsewhere in the country and in the region. Therefore, with the support from the GEF, these successful outcomes can be replicated. Finally, the project will focus on ecosystem vulnerability assessments and surveys of key land degradation leading to locally adaptive LDN measures, allowing for the establishment of a strong baseline to protect the rich biodiversity of Iraq. The integrated landscape approach to SLM and BD conservation across degraded landscapes developed in this project can serve as a good practice model for other projects seeking to balance biodiversity conservation and long-term productivity.

1b. Project Map and Coordinates

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



1c. Child Project?

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

N/A

2. Stakeholders

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

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Yes

Private Sector Entities Yes

If none of the above, please explain why:

Please provide the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent assessment.

Stakeholder and level	Relevance and Expected Role in Project
<i>National level</i>	
Ministry of Environment	The MoE being the lead and coordinating ministry in our project is expected to play a major role in coordination, follow up, decision taken, provision of data, and liaising with all GoIs institutions on central and governorate level
Ministry of Agriculture	The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) is considered the main technical and field arm of the line ministries. It has the actual data in the field of socio-economic, agriculture practices, land degradation types and measures, live stocks, crop varieties etc. It also has the staff to implement certain activities and practices on the ground and develop pilot fields and modalities in successful stories to show resident of the particular site and farmers how to benefit from the expertise and training provided by the project. Among the ministry field offices is the Office of Agriculture Training and Extension which will play a major role in the capacity building, knowledge transfer and extension in the local sites. Needless to mention that among the MoE coordinating committee is members from the office of combating desertification and forestry which is one of the MoA field offices and main partner in implementing this project.

Ministry of Water Resources	The Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR) has an important role as partner in this project. It is responsible for the water provision and distribution all over the country, including the project site. Its provision could be through surface water as well as through groundwater which is very likely be the case in some parts of our project. It is also the responsible ministry for monitoring water quantity and quality data throughout the year. Its field office called "the national center for water resources" is responsible for monitoring the quality and quantity in Iraq. It is also responsible for soil survey and analysis, and other climatic data and forecasts. In addition to that, the (MoWR) is responsible for restoring and reclaiming land through its state commission for land reclamation which is a distinguished commission in its capability.
Universities	The universities, both in Baghdad and in the governorates where the sites are located can play an important role in supporting the project with results of their research work which is mostly adopted to the local environment and applicable to these sites. It can also provide the project with updated expertise and knowledge in solving issues and contribute to the capacity building and training program. Universities will play a key role in the knowledge dissemination and engagement of youth.
National Associations	The Iraqi farmers' association existing within the project area can mobilize and encourage farmers in the site to benefit from the project in the best possible way. It has the capacity to engage with both the project personnel as well as with farmers in solving any problems that might arise in the field. Similarly, the Association of Agriculture Engineers also can play a similar role with the staff of the ministries and the local community. It can also support the training program and capacity building as well as provision of knowledge
National NGOs	There are several registered local and international NGOs in the agriculture center. These NGOs are very capable, and they gained experience working with international agencies. They can also engage in implementing important issues in the project.
Ministry of Planning	The Ministry of Planning (MoP) is the umbrella for all the projects and assistance provided to Iraq. It has the role of being involved in all projects in different fields. Until recently, the name of the ministry was: Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation" which means all projects have to go through the MoP. However, in order to streamline the flow of assistance, the ministry gives certain flexibility to other sectoral ministries.
<i>Local-level</i>	
Governate of Karbala for Razzaza Lake	Stakeholder and Member of PSC. This would include reviewing the PA plans and providing feedback and reviews of ongoing baseline and socio-economic studies

Governate of Muthanna (Sawa Lake)	Stakeholder and Member of PSC. This would include reviewing the PA plans and providing feedback and reviews of ongoing baseline and socio-economic studies
<i>Multilateral and bilateral donors and regional/international organizations</i>	
FAO	FAO being the specialized agency in agriculture can also support the project by several ways. It is involved in a similar project in the adjacent locations in southern Iraq. The lessons learned from FAO will help UNEP in improving the project implementation.
The Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD)	ACSAD was established in 1968 and is a specialized organization affiliated to the League of Arab States (LAS) aimed at unifying efforts to develop scientific agricultural research in the arid and semi-arid areas and exchanging information and expertise to advance scientific advancements and transferring, developing and localizing modern agricultural techniques in order to increase agricultural production in these areas. Their experience in the region is an advantage and they have previously worked in the State of Iraq. They have a strong technical team and would be able to carry out the baselines studies and carry out additional capacity-building exercises to support the outputs.
IFAD	Similar to FAO, IFAD in also supports the agriculture and water sectors in Iraq and it is implementing a similar project in collaboration with the ministry of agriculture.
IUCN	IUCN is an international non-governmental organization concerned with the conservation of nature. It has extensive experience in Iraq, but also particularly as an implementing partner with UNEP ROWA on the GEF-funded PAN project. They are the key partner developing the PA network in Iraq under this project and have supported the development of the technical guidelines and revision of the legislation that supports further PA on being established in the country. They have wide-ranging experience in developing PA management plans, capacity building on the field, as well as supporting in carrying out necessary ecological surveys.

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

During the PPG Phase, the mapping and analysis of the stakeholders were conducted. More details on the mapping exercise can be found on the Project Document's Section 2.5 and Section 4 Institutional Frameworks and Implementations Arrangements. The project development phase was led by a working group made up by two representatives from UNEP ROWA, one in-country UNEP representative and 3 consultants (2 national and 1 international). The working group discussed and exchanged ideas frequently with representatives of the MoE (especially the GEF Focal Point and technical deputy minister of MoE, the manager of Environment Directorate and the PA responsible/expert), especially via the in-country UNEP representative and the 2 national consultants. More details on the consultation meetings and all stakeholders consulted during the PPG phase can be found in the project document's

Table 14. An inception workshop was held on 29 April 2021, with participation of the Deputy Minister of MoE and other high-level representatives of line ministries. During this workshop the workplan and schedule of the project development were discussed and agreed, together with several other issues related to the KBAs selection of the project. A clear request was made by the Government to review the priority areas; particularly that Ibn Najm and North Ibn Najm were not priority areas any more. A stakeholder validation workshop was organized on 2 November 2021. During the meeting the final version of the project document was discussed with the stakeholders and their feedback was received, addressed, and integrated in the final document.

During the project execution phase, stakeholder engagement is a key pillar of the project, particularly during project implementation and beyond. Despite COVID restrictions that might be faced, depending on the state of the pandemic, the Iraqi government and the MoE are committed to promoting a participatory approach for environmental protection and the future economic development of Iraq. The project's intervention strategy is based on a fully participatory community-based philosophy aimed at furthering mutual confidence and collaboration between government authorities and local communities on environmental planning and decision-making issues.

During the initial stage of project implementation, a thorough detailed stakeholder analysis will be used to develop a stakeholder engagement plan that would be the basis of engagement from the start of the project until its completion. This stakeholder engagement plan will ensure to include women and youth and related non-governmental organizations, etc.

The stakeholder analysis and assessment will be performed taking into full consideration the recent experience of UNEP GEF GFL/5392 PAN project and FAO GEF 9745 SLM project and their lessons learned.

The project will strive since its early implementation stages to engage effectively the key stakeholders, especially local communities, with a focus on youth and women, with the aim to value as much as possible their traditional ecological and agriculture knowledge and to assign clear roles as to avoid these kinds of risks.

Social sustainability and stakeholder engagement will be addressed through the design and execution of a comprehensive stakeholder involvement plan, identifying stakeholder interests and possible conflicts and responsive mitigation measures. Local communities will be able to participate in the project through the Intervention Area Coordinating Teams that will be established locally within the project site (ideally one for each KBA).

The civil society-based NGOs, in particular, will be prompted to play a major role in supporting the establishment and management of the new 2 PAs, and providing direct and indirect support to the park's services. Based on a thorough initial stakeholder analysis and an effective engagement strategy the project will strive to involve and engage key stakeholders in project activities since its earliest stages. The new partnerships and collaborative management arrangements being fostered by the project will improve the stake of communities and the private sector in PA management, building a sense of ownership that will reinforce the commitment of involved stakeholders to carry out initiatives for biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management beyond the duration of the project lifetime.

Social sustainability of project outcomes will be also facilitated by taking into full consideration gender equality issues and environmental and social safeguards. The sharing of knowledge and information will take place through the implementation of Component n. 4.

Select what role civil society will play in the project:

Consulted only;

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor;

Co-financier;

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

Executor or co-executor;

Other (Please explain) Yes

local community and civil society should be involved in the decision-making of the new PAs through their representatives (using the co-management approach) while they will have a more leading role in the testing of new SLM approaches in agriculture, thanks to capacity building and direct involvement in field activities. ?

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Provide the gender analysis or equivalent socio-economic assesment.

The project aims to produce positive environmental and social impacts under all its four components. The overall project goal is to ensure biodiversity protection and conservation of ecosystems and the sustainable use of agro-ecosystems. The project environmental and social safeguards are informed by GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming. The main objective of the safeguards is to prevent and mitigate any unintended negative impacts to people and the environment that might arise through the implementation of project activities. The GEF safeguards will be complemented by the UNEP Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) that has been updated as part of ensuring fiduciary standards during the selection of the specific target interventions. A thorough gender analysis and assessment was performed during the PPG project development (September 2021).

Because gender inequalities are evidently correlated to socio-economic conditions, inequalities seem to be more evident in the governorate of Muthanna than in Karbala. The project will devote a special attention to vulnerable groups such as women and girls, young and unemployed people from local communities. Targeted activities on promoting gender equality and addressing poverty will be carried out in implementing component 2, 3 and 4 at the 2 pilot KBAs and SLM areas. Gender-related data available at governorate level will be carefully reviewed at the inception of the project. Activities will include, but not be limited, to ensure women representation in consultations and workshops (at least 30% of the total of participants), their participation in capacity building programs and field activities and targeted communication/awareness activities. Gender issues that have a bearing on the project will be assessed, as well as opportunities to empower women through gender responsive adaptation, mitigation and risk reduction measures. Data collected throughout the duration of the project will be disaggregated by age and gender, The Office of Agriculture Training and Extension (MoA) with branches in each Governorates, has a department focused on the ?development of rural women and girls? whom cooperation and assistance will be duly requested.

Women farming associations and NGOs (a list is provided in Appendix 16 of prodoc) will be consulted and invited to participate in project activities according to their interest and competence. Opportunities for identifying specific co-benefits such as job opportunities or micro financing for start up businesses in agriculture or conservation is created for youth and women. This will be carried out through the identification of incentives and disincentives enabling an integration of environmental and land degradation concerns into national, regional and governates sectoral policies.

The project will also ensure gender equity in the planning and implementation of project activities. The project will adopt UNEP's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment and take into account the differences, needs, roles and priorities of men and women. The project will also acknowledge that women are often the most vulnerable to natural habitats and ecosystems and land degradation such as that resulting from poor management of natural and agro-ecosystem and will be proactive in seeking women's input to local innovations for sustainability. Deliberate effort will be made to encourage the participation of women and youth in the implementation of interventions including capacity building activities.

In particular, the project will adhere to the Gender Action Plan that was developed during the PPG development process proposing and providing specific gender-related actions and indicators in relation to each output of the project (Appendix 17). Once the project is approved and the project team is in place, project will also develop gender guidelines that will apply to the on-the-ground interventions and the project as a whole. They will aim at ensuring gender considerations are always taken into account in the project activities. Further gender sensitivity in the on-the-ground interventions will be a requirement, with particular attention to needs of different groups - e.g., parallel consultation processes at local level to enable women to be heard; to ensure project interventions benefit all groups (in terms of aims and participation).

Gender Action Plan

Gender Action Plan

Outcome	Outputs	Gender Action	Indicator
Project Component 1. Strengthened policies, frameworks, (Sustainable Land Management, Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management			

Outcome	Outputs	Gender Action	Indicator
<p>Project Outcome 1.1: Adoption of new policies and plans which integrate landscape level SLM, and biodiversity conservation measures by the Ministry of Environment</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Number of adopted policies and plans integrating biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management</i> - <i>Increased capacity of the Ministry of Health and Environment to implement Integrated Conservation Management Framework as measured by the</i> 	<p>Output 1.1.1</p> <p>Assessment of national/subnational policies, legislation and procedures that identify integration of biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality into national policies and plans with consideration to the impact and role of women in conservation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empowering local communities and women by Organizing stakeholder consultations with community groups to explain the importance of the project for the community, as well as the main project activities and timeline. - Encourage women representation in stakeholders? consultation meetings and validation workshop to discuss draft of Executive Regulation for landscape level SLM, and biodiversity conservation measures. - Gender Consultant to be hired through the project implementation. - Review gender-related data available at governorate level. - ensure that gender issues were included in the adopted new policies and plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of Consultations conducted in each Hotspot. - <i>Number of adopted policies and plans.</i> - Percent women participation at the consultation meetings and/or validation workshops. - Proportion of team member assessing legislation who are women - gender issues were included in the adopted new policies and plans.

Outcome	Outputs	Gender Action	Indicator
<p><i>Capacity Development Scorecard.</i></p> <p><i>(baseline targets will be developed during PPG)</i></p>	<p>Output 1.1.2.</p> <p>A national cross-sector and multi-level Integrated Conservation Management Framework (ICMF) developed, and approved by the key Ministries (Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, and Ministry of Water Resources)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage women representation in stakeholders' consultation meeting and periodic meetings to discuss the (ICMF). - Strengthen women's participation by organizing women led discussions with the community women groups and the active well-known NGOs to discuss and scale-up the best examined ways for conservation in the regions of the project. - Gender and social inclusion concerns identified during the consultations and subsequent field visits and addressed in project activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of Consultations conducted in each Hotspot - Percent of women participation at the consultation meetings and/or validation workshops. - Proportion of team member for field visits who are women
	<p>Output 1.1.3.</p> <p>Economic incentives and disincentives designed to promote the implementation of ICMF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include and encourage women's participation in selection and analysis of internationally recognized Economic incentives and disincentives to promote the implementation of ICMF. - Encourage women participation in stakeholder workshop to present and discuss selected incentives and disincentives to promote the implementation of ICMF. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of workshops and meetings. - Percent of women participation at the consultation meetings and/or workshops.

Outcome	Outputs	Gender Action	Indicator
	<p>Output 1.1.4.</p> <p>Joint multi-stakeholder/multi-sectoral working groups established to form a coordination mechanism for the implementation of the ICMF (considering involvement of private sector, gender balance and trainings and workshops targeted for women and girls)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include and encourage women's participation in selection and analysis of internationally recognized nature-based solutions. - Encourage women participation in stakeholder workshops and trainings to present and discuss their needs and requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of the participated women in all activities.
	<p>Output 1.1.5.</p> <p>Increased capacity on Integrated Conservation Management and Compliance designed and implemented across relevant ministerial sectors (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, trade, and environment) targeting national and sub-national professionals, administrators, NGOs, private sector and community leaders and other stakeholders considering gender appropriate responses particularly women on the field.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducting trainings for women in cooperation with active NGOs in the region of the project to encourage them to be the economic motivators by increasing their knowledge in investing in the natural resources in a sustainable and environmental friendly craft businesses or by breeding animals like sheep to produce wool in eco-friendly and sustainable ways to produce carpets, hand-made products and clothing . This will encourage the tourism and enable women economically to reduce poverty especially among families headed by women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of trainings and workshops. - The number and the incomes of the benefited women from the capacity building programmes.

Outcome	Outputs	Gender Action	Indicator
	<p>Output 1.1.6.</p> <p>The Integrated Conservation Management plan for the Middle Euphrates Landscape developed to identify and reduce the pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in Middle Euphrates landscape and disseminated to all relevant stakeholders (Implementation of the Plan formulated under Components 2, 3 and 4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop management plans by selecting the appropriate management tools to suit the circumstances of the selected sites. - Encourage women involvement and participation in the training and capacity building activities for the community groups in the regions of the project to be aware about the suitable, sound and environmental friendly technologies for planting, watering and land management taking into account the traditional available technologies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - number of the developed plans. - Number and percent of the trained women the regions of the project.
<p>Project Component 2: Measures avoiding degradation and biodiversity loss and land rehabilitation to improve ecosystem functions and services</p>			
<p>Project Outcome 2.1:</p> <p>Four new PAs established and sustainably managed in Razzaza Lake, and Lake Sawa.</p> <p><i>Indicator:</i></p>	<p>Output 2.1.1</p> <p>The National Protected Area Network of Iraq is expanded by 182,081 ha through the declaration and establishments of new 2 Pas that are sustainably managed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage qualified women especially from universities and community groups in the regions of the project to be part of the management departments to enable them from sharing their ideas and plans for sustainable management of the four proposed new PAs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proportion of hired staff for The National Protected Area Network who are women. - Gender Unit established, staffed and has clear mandate

Outcome	Outputs	Gender Action	Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of four new PA proposed for protection of representative ecosystems covering up to 182,081 ha - Increase in Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool scores of the new 2 PAs - PA Management Plan adopted for the new PAs 	<p>Output 2.1.2</p> <p>PA Management plans factoring the resilience to climate change developed and implemented for Razzaza Lake, Sawa Lake and the surrounding areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involve the local population and encourage female participation in the employed staff for the new PA management. - ensure the gender equality participation in training opportunities for the employed staff for proposed new PAs management. - Satisfaction survey to be designed to give anonymity and ensure complaints regarding the developed management plans and gender involvement. - Ensure survey design and implementation is gender-sensitive and is disseminated in a manner that reaches both men and women to identify the real and current status of biodiversity in the selected sites in order to help find the necessary solutions to conserve biodiversity in those sites. - Enhance the gender equality in the communication and awareness between government institutions and the private sector and developing a closely related approach between them in order to find solutions to stop biodiversity loss and land degradation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percent women participation in training workshops - Gender sensitization training held - Satisfaction survey allows for anonymity and reflects the opinion of men and women. - Number of complaints related to harassment and discrimination and proportion of complaints resolved. - Number of men and women participating in the awareness activities.

Outcome	Outputs	Gender Action	Indicator
	<p>Output 2.1.3</p> <p>Operationalization of habitat, biodiversity and land monitoring system aligned with the Integrated Conservation Management Plan in collaboration with key government stakeholders (Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water Resources and Ministry of Planning) taking into account gender disparities and empowering women in decision making processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure gender equality in consultation meeting activities to enable achieving the integration among local communities, decision makers and the private sector on the one hand to face challenges in the environmental, economic, social and cultural components associated with sustainable development on the other hand. - Ensure gender mainstreaming in the Land monitoring system and data analysis. - Ensure women including in the training workshops on land monitoring system and emphasizing the local population on how to maintain the sustainability of nature reserves, adherence to traditional knowledge inspired by natural resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of the training workshops. - Number of men and women participating in each training workshop. - Number of men and women in each consultation meeting participating from the governmental representatives, community groups, NGOs and private sectors.
<p>Project Component 3: Demonstration of more sustainable flow of agro-ecosystem services through implementing nature based solutions in Middle Euphrates Landscape</p>			
<p>Project Outcome 3.1:</p> <p>The replication/ scaling up of SLM in more sites of similar nature in Middle Euphrates Landscape in line with Output 1.1.6</p> <p><i>Indicator:</i></p> <p>-20,000 ha of agricultural arable</p>	<p>Output 3.1.1</p> <p>Decision support tools for locally adaptive LDN measures provided to support decision-making through assessments (ecological and vulnerability)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage women participation in the process of developing locally adaptive LDN measures provided to support decision-making through assessments (ecological and vulnerability) - Ensure meaningful consultation with female stakeholders in decision-making process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proportion of team developing the locally adaptive LDN measures provided to support decision-making through assessments (ecological and vulnerability) who are women. - Percent of consulted stakeholders who are women

Outcome	Outputs	Gender Action	Indicator
<p>land under sustainable land management and climate smart agricultural practices strengthening the implementation of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)</p> <p>- Increased productivity of farmers participating in Project pilots</p> <p>- Number of benefiting farmers</p> <p>(baseline targets will be developed during PPG)</p>	<p>Output 3.1.2</p> <p>Locally adaptive LDN measures to enhance water conservation and prevent changes in the characteristics of soil, wind erosion, salinization and loss of natural fertility of soil identified and validated by the governorates and Ministry of Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage women to participate in training workshops for targeted institutions and farmers of the region to share information and ideas to improve the planning and governance on the LDN measures through better water management, adoption of drought tolerant crops and enhance using sound available and affordable technologies that could be used to achieve sustainability of the natural resources and prevent changes in the characteristics of soil, wind erosion, salinization and loss of natural fertility of soil. - ensure gender equality in the Conducted trainings and consultation meetings on assessing the legal, policy and institutional gaps for adaptive and sustainable land management, biodiversity conservation and support resilience to climate change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of the training and consultative meetings. - Percent women participation in each training and consultative meeting. - Number of benefiting women farmers. - productivity of women farmers participating in Project pilots

Outcome	Outputs	Gender Action	Indicator
	<p>Output 3.1.3</p> <p>Techniques and management practices including but not limited to the revision/reform of existing policies and possibly adoption of new policies for sustainable land management developed and tested in 20,000 ha (results will be monitored through the monitoring system developed under Output 2.1.3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure the gender mainstreaming in the adopted new policies for sustainable land management developed and tested in 20,000 ha (results will be monitored through the monitoring system developed under Output 2.1.3) - Gender equality in the trainings on data analysis for the developed monitoring system and smart agriculture practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of the revised existing policies for sustainable land management. - Number of the adopted policies for sustainable land management. - Percent women participation in each training and consultative meeting.
	<p>Output 3.1.4</p> <p>In collaboration with the Office of Agricultural Extension Services and Training, capacity development program established and local stakeholders (e.g. farmers, farmer cooperative systems, agricultural associations, PA managers, women) trained on best practices for SLM, biodiversity conservation, water conservation, climate smart agriculture and agro-biodiversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure the gender equality participating in the established Training, capacity development program and local stakeholders (e.g. farmers, farmer cooperative systems, agricultural associations, PA managers, women) to be trained on best practices for SLM, biodiversity conservation, water conservation, climate smart agriculture and agro-biodiversity.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percent women participation in the trainings and the program.
	<p>Output 3.1.5</p> <p>Training sessions on</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure equal women participation in the training sessions on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of trainings. - Percent of women

Outcome	Outputs	Gender Action	Indicator
	sustainable finance for the local banks in the Middle Euphrates landscape organized	sustainable financing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage women participation in ToT - Ensure that gender aspects are included in the assessment of the previous financing mechanism and if adequate measures had been in place to ensure women participation. - Ensure method of disseminating brochures is designed to reach women owned businesses - encourage banks and national available funds for enable women economically by offering soft loans for them to encourage them participating in the labor markets especially in land sustainable management, combating climate change, and biodiversity conservation. 	participating in the trainings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender aspects included in assessment - Proportion of women-owned businesses receiving brochure on financial schemes and incentive mechanism - Number of women receiving the TOT certification. - Number of participating banks. - Amount of offered soft loan per woman. - The extent of total budget available to be offered by the banks.
Project Component 4: Capacity building and knowledge management			
Project Outcome 4.1: Stakeholders apply their increased knowledge and take actions on land use planning, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services and LDN.	Output 4.1.1 An information/knowledge management (KM) system developed and made accessible to stakeholders enabling learning from and upscaling of pilot activities (ensuring accessibility by men, women, and youth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure KM system is gender-sensitive and includes approaches that reaches men, women and youth. - Encourage women to share projects and success stories to be featured in the KM portal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender sensitive KM system in place. - Proportion of featured projects and stories by women

Outcome	Outputs	Gender Action	Indicator
<p><i>Indicator:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of Stakeholder engagement workshops (government level, local people, women, etc.) - Number of case studies developed (at least one case study on the impact of the project on women) - Availability of materials published and disseminated (# of fact sheets/infographics, # of awareness raising events) 	<p>Output 4.1.2</p> <p>A communication and awareness strategy is developed to support implementation of ICMF.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage women to participate in workshop or consultative meeting to exchange information, experiences and best practices. - Encourage women participation in the developed awareness strategy. - Document experience of women who participate in the awareness strategy. - Ensure women participation in the developed case studies on the impact of the project on women . - Ensure women participation from the community, women farmers, universities, NGOs, private sector in a survey well prepared to know the effects and benefits of the project activities to support gender equality.. - achieve a study on women role in agriculture sector in Iraq and how to support them to be part of solution against land degradation, and food insecurity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percent women participation in awareness raising activities and events. - Percent women participation in survey. - Percent women participation in exchange missions. - Percent women sharing experiences. - A study on women roles in agriculture sector was achieved.

Outcome	Outputs	Gender Action	Indicator
	<p>Output 4.1.3</p> <p>Awareness raising and technical materials, based on best-practices identified through Component 2 and 3, developed in local languages, disseminated and used for training of landowners, communities and private sector, taking into account gender balance, to promote adoption of SLM practices and biodiversity conservation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure awareness raising plan and campaigns and events are gender-sensitive and adopt different approaches to reach both men and women through engaging with women NGOs such as those in Table 1 - Initiate at least four farmer field schools (two in each project's areas) with the importance of allocating one school in each area for women to ensure that women farmers are able to attend, taking into account the specificity of the region and the prevailing social beliefs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percent women participation in awareness raising activities and events. - Build up a farmer field school for women in each area of the project.
	<p>Output 4.1.4</p> <p>Project monitoring and evaluation system operating providing systematic information on progress in meeting project outcome and output targets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that the monitoring and evaluation system is sensitive to the gender requirements and needs. - Incorporate gender aspects in lessons learned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - monitoring and evaluation system includes collection of gender-disaggregated information. - Gender aspects incorporated in lessons learned.

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

Yes

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

Improving women's participation and decision making Yes

Generating socio-economic benefits or services or women Yes

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

Yes

4. Private sector engagement

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

Private sector will be engaged by the project through the following outputs:

- ? the functioning and activity of the ICMF working group which will include private stakeholders (output 1.1.3);
- ? the benefitting from the capacity building program under output 1.1.4;
- ? the benefitting from the economic incentives designed to promote implementation of ICMF (output 1.1.5);
- ? the emergence of alternative income options associated with the development of the 2 new PAs (component 2) like for instance ecotourism services and other income generating activities linked to the functioning PAs;
- ? the effective training of local banks in sustainable financing (output 3.1.5) will benefit also private banks but perhaps more importantly it will produce substantial incentives and provide new conditions favorable for private investments in the short and medium term.

Overall, the private sector stakeholders will be involved in all the consultations and trainings that will be carried out across the 4 components of the project and they will likely find themselves in the conditions to benefit from the new socio-economic development scenario created by the project.

Identification of private sector stakeholders will be carried out in the inception phase of the project to ensure their engagement and endorsement of ecotourism plans in the KBAs. Also, local banks will be identified and a needs assessment to evaluate the capacity building needs, opportunities and gaps of the local financial sector. Training materials will be developed to be adjusted for the local financial sector.

Private sector will be engaged mainly in the development of alternative income options associated with the 2 new PAs (e.g. ecotourism) and through the participation of local banks in the training for sustainable financing. Identification of private sector stakeholders will be carried out in the inception phase of the project to ensure their engagement and endorsement of ecotourism plans in the KBAs.

Also, local banks will be identified and a needs assessment to evaluate the capacity building needs, opportunities and gaps of the local financial sector. Training materials will be developed to be adjusted for the local financial sector.

The lack of development of private sector in Iraq makes it challenging for the project to directly involve it. Therefore, the project will approach unions, chambers of commerce, and other entities. Also, as part of the sustainability strategy, the project will strive to complement the '1 Trillion Dinars Initiative' launched by the GOI through the Central Bank of Iraq that is dedicated to support all small to medium enterprises as a part of a wider governmental strategy to boost economic growth, create new job opportunities, and the production of local goods.

5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

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

The project is supported by the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water Resources, and all other partners and collaborators (local and international). The project will seek full cooperation with other regional and international partners working in similar areas such as FAO, ACSAD, IFAD, ICARDA, UNCCD, IUCN.

Table below (Table 12 of prodoc) is listing the risks that were identified during the PIF and PPG processes, via consultation with key stakeholders and national experts, together with an estimate of the level of impact and the mitigation measures that will be put in place. Covid pandemic is regarded as the higher risk for the project in the short term but a strong vaccination plan that should be soon financed by the World Bank, should help to mitigate this risk. The Covid pandemic has also led decision makers and public opinion world-wide to reflect on the importance of the link between ecological services and biodiversity conservation and human health. The pandemic has brought on a mainstream level the issue of the strict link still existing between human health and the planet ecological health. This new awareness should increase the support to the proposed project both at the central and at the local level.

Risk	Level of Impact	Mitigation Measures
<p>1. Disruption of or impediments for project activities due to the ongoing COVID 19-pandemic; reallocation of committed co-financing from the Government to COVID related initiatives.</p>	<p><i>medium/ high</i></p>	<p>The COVID pandemic poses a risk to the implementation of the project, particularly if new variants arise. Similarly, to other countries around the world, shutdowns took place in the country, and lockdown measures were implemented in the heat of the pandemic, however as of the end of 2021, lockdown measures have eased and physical meetings have been taking place. As of 29 September 2021 12%, of Iraq population has received 2 vaccination doses while 6.3% has received only one. In order to boost the vaccinated proportion in the population the Iraqi Government has received a 100 million USD from the World Bank (*). This massive vaccination program, that is planned to start in October 2021, should curb and limit intensity of future Covid infection outbreaks. By the time this project will start being implemented the majority of adult people of Iraq will have been vaccinated.</p> <p>All Covid-related safety measures will be adopted (e.g. mask wearing, social distancing etc.)</p> <p>The project can arrange part of the activities to be run online (e.g. meetings and consultations, trainings)</p>

<p>2. There is limited professional capacity in Iraq to support the implementation of technical project activities.</p>	<p><i>medium/ high</i></p>	<p>The Project Management capacity of the Iraqi MoE has improved through the years in terms of technical capacities by developing and implementing several GEF funded projects carried out with other UN agencies including UNEP.</p> <p>UNEP will support MOE and will be responsible for project cycle management services. Working closely with the MoE and other implementing partners. UNEP ROWA will perform support activities such as (project oversight, liaising with GEF, revising and approving budgets, ensure timely disbursement, follow up on progress and certify project completion) as stated under the implementation arrangement.</p>
<p>3. Relevant stakeholders for the project development processes have very limited understanding and awareness of the environmental and BD conservation issues and of land degradation neutrality issues. This is (and will continue to) limit severely the efforts of MoE to uphold BD conservation issues in the Government's agenda. The MoE is also constrained in terms of its ability to foster mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation issues and environmental concerns into other sectors and Ministries.</p>	<p><i>medium/ high</i></p>	<p>This is a constraint and risk that will be addressed through a significant budget allocation for stakeholder consultation, awareness raising, consensus building and communication-related activities. These tasks are outlined as Component 1 and 4 of the project and will be designed to provide cross-cutting support to Components 2 and 3.</p>

<p>4. Climate-change related weather extremes may negatively affect project activities for ecosystem restoration and effective SLM practices.</p>	<p><i>medium/ high</i></p>	<p>Appreciable worsening of climatic changes are unlikely to occur over the course of project implementation, but the on-going climatic trends could certainly affect the outcomes of the project over the long term. Specific recommendations from the GEF's STAP were taken into account (**). A thorough assessment of risks over the medium and long term, based on local ecological and agricultural conditions and associated CC vulnerability and exposure at the two KBAs and at the two governorates, will be performed under Component 2/Output 2.1.1. Based on this data and based on different CC risk scenarios an international CC adaptation expert will discuss with local stakeholders and develop specific risk mitigation plans and resilience plans for the two components focusing on field work (component 2 and 3). Steps will be taken to build resilience measures into project design to minimize the risk and/or adapt to new conditions when possible. The project's approach will enable stakeholders to better understand vulnerabilities and strategically adapt to the associated risks. Building the capacity for this resilience will be key to the project's long-term success. SLM and CA practices will be selected based on their potential contribution to more resilient production of agro-ecosystems.</p>
<p>5. Political instability and frequent changes in government might negatively affect the level of political commitment towards biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management.</p>	<p><i>medium</i></p>	<p>The design of the project will take this risk into account by: (a) focusing on the development of broad-based technical, professional, and institutional capacity within the MoE. This may partly compensate for the possible temporary lack of high-level political support, and technical staff can sustain the process of project development. In addition (b) Through an active consultation, awareness, and outreach program (all 4 components), the project will develop a broader base of understanding, consensus and support within other ministries and stakeholders (with a special focus on decision makers), thus increasing the level of political support for the BD conservation agenda and land degradation neutrality in the country.</p>

<p>6. The concept of Protected Areas ?Mahmiat? is often initially met with resistance and prejudice by stakeholders and local communities. This is expected to constrain the initial efforts of the MoE towards discussing and establishing a PAN</p>	<p><i>medium</i></p>	<p>Same as above: the combination of increased national capacity and broad consultative and awareness efforts is expected to mitigate this anticipated problem by removing critical barriers and building consensus and understanding of BD conservation issues among all key stakeholders involved in the project development process. The project will also take stock of the participatory and community based ?Hema? approach to PA management as approved at the IUCN congress in Jeju (2012), ref.: http://www.spnl.org/jeju-declaration-adopted-to-promote-green-growth/</p>
<p>7. Insufficient engagement efforts and unclear roles of stakeholders in the execution of the project may result in lack of commitment from local communities and therefore may result in failure of demonstration projects.</p>		<p>A stakeholder analysis and assessment will be performed at the early project stages, taking into full consideration the recent experience of UNEP GEF GFL/5392 PAN project and FAO GEF 9745 SLM project and their lessons learned.</p> <p>The project will strive since its early implementation stages to engage effectively the key stakeholders, especially local communities, with a focus on youth and women, with the aim to value as much as possible their traditional ecological and agriculture knowledge and to assign clear roles as to avoid these kind of risks.</p>
<p>8. Lengthy processes of approval and activation of legislation, especially PA proposal approval</p>	<p><i>medium</i></p>	<p>The project will have limited influence over this higher-level institutional and governance issue. supporting the preparation and discussion of legal and institutional set-up with a targeted consultation and awareness outreach campaigns focusing on decision-makers and other government departments represented in the Cabinet and members of parliament. The project will benefit from the newly developed process of approval of PAs promoted by UNEP GEF GFL/5392 PAN project and IUCN</p>

<p>9. Rehabilitation of disused and abandoned land surfaces may encounter resistance from landowners (public and private) and political figures</p>	<p><i>medium</i></p>	<p>As with other constituent-based risks, the first line of mitigation is inclusion. Identified private-sector stakeholders will be included when possible and appropriate (at different levels) to lessen such risks and identify opportunities for growth. Value chains have been identified as one of the main crosscutting issues of this project, such that proactive efforts are being made to identify opportunities to build and strengthen the full length of affected value chains (and even creating additional value chains). Local institutions will provide a basis for private-sector stakeholders to interact and negotiate directly with communities (which comprise the program's primary constituency).</p> <p>Another mitigation measure can be through capacity building and awareness targeted at project beneficiaries. This will involve tools, such as economic models and plans, economic analysis that clearly show that there is an economic and social benefit to the adoption of the SLM measures (win-win).</p>
<p>10. Difficulties in implementing project recommendations and enforcing legislative provisions</p>	<p><i>medium</i></p>	<p>This is a longer-term risk that may affect the long-term impact and sustainability of project activities. This issue is bound to remain largely outside of the project's influence due to the limited budget and timeframe of the project. However, GEF support will focus on removing main initial barriers to lay-out solid foundations for integration of biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management, by: (a) building essential national capacity; (b) raising the level of understanding and buy-in with other government sectors and society at large; and (c) putting in place the necessary technical, legal and institutional instruments to support PA management. These initial building blocks can be subsequently developed and expanded upon through Government efforts and other Donor-assisted projects.</p>

11. Security situation	<i>low</i>	The security situation in Baghdad, the capital, and the provinces south of Baghdad is good and stable, as assessed by the Al-Nahrain Center for Strategic Studies in 2017 (***)). In particular Muthanna governorate has been among the most stable southern governorate in terms of security since 2003 until today (source: United Nations office for the coordination of Humanitarian affairs (OCHA, 2009). The security situation at Lake Razzaza KBA is regarded as fairly good currently, it is possible to move and search to collect information (source: Mukhtar Khamis Haba, pers. comm.).
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6. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination

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

1. The Ministry of Environment of Iraq is the governmental institution to provide political and institutional supervision and act as the National Executing Entity/Responsible Partner. The overall responsibility for the project execution and implementation by the Ministry of Environment implies the timely and verifiable attainment of project objectives and outcomes. The Ministry of Environment officially requested UNEP's support functions with regard to project execution with a OFP Letter of Support. This letter has been uploaded to the portal under the title "Appendix 19 - Letter of Support Request for Execution of the Project.pdf".

2. The Project will be implemented over a period of four years (48 months) beginning in 2022. The Ministry of Environment of Iraq is a governmental institution that will provide the political and institutional supervision and act the National Executing Entity/Responsible Partner. The overall responsibility for the project execution and implementation by the MoE implies the timely and verifiable attainment of project objectives and outcomes. The MoE will provide support to, and inputs for, the implementation of all project activities. Execution generally includes the management and administration of project activities, in addition to managing the delivery of project outputs. This is in accordance with specific project requirements outlines in the approved Project Document and the agreement with UNEP.

3. UNEP Ecosystems Division represented the Implementing Entity/Partner (IE) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), with the following roles:
 - ? Providing consistent and regular Project oversight to ensure that GEF policies and criteria are adhered to and that the project meets its objectives and achieves expected outcomes,
 - ? Performing the liaison function between the project and the GEF Secretariat,
 - ? Application of UN Environment policy and criteria to strengthen execution arrangements,

- ? Ensuring that both GEF and UN Environment guidelines and standards are applied and met (technical, fiduciary, M&E),
 - ? Ensuring timely disbursement/sub-allotment to executing agencies, based on agreed legal documents,
 - ? Approve budget revision, certify fund availability, and transfer funds,
 - ? Providing technical support and assessment of the execution of the Project,
 - ? Providing guidance if requested to main TORs/MOUs and subcontracts issued by the project,
 - ? Follow-up with EA for progress, equipment, financial and other reports,
 - ? Certify project operational completion
3. Full support in regard to the execution is placed in the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia as the Supporting Entity/Partner of the project. UNEP is responsible for project cycle management services. Working closely with the MoE and other implementing partners. UNEP ROWA will be responsible for:
- ? Appraise the project and finalize project implementation arrangements, including mission travel,
 - ? Recruitment of project staff and contracting of consultants and service providers,
 - ? Assist project management to draft TORs and advise on the selection of experts for implementation,
 - ? Advise on and participate in project start-up workshop,
 - ? Provide technical guidance, as necessary, for project execution,
 - ? Ensure technical quality of products, outputs, and deliverables,
 - ? Participate in the Steering Committee meetings,
 - ? Assisting the National Executing Entity that the project is executed according to the agreed work plan, budget and reporting tasks,
 - ? Provide procurement and financial management services to ensure implementation is in line with UN Environment's policies and timeline,
 - ? Make direct payment on behalf of the Executing Agency in accordance with the project budget,
 - ? Support compilation and submission of progress, financial and other reporting requirements.
4. The day today management of the project will be carried out by a Project Management Unit (PMU). The PMU will be established in Iraq and will consist of a Project Manager/Coordinator, Administrative Assistant, and locally recruited staff in the country. The PMU will use premises in the country as provided by the MoE. The PMU roles will be to implement project outputs, monitoring and reporting, liaison with project partners, ensure project execution and all technical aspects of project

implementation. Throughout the project, PMU will closely collaborate with MoE and the UNEP ROWA office. PMU will ensure collaboration with all country stakeholders, ministries and different municipalities and local communities, which is imperative for the successful implementation of the project.

5. Involvement of regional partners and collaborators such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in the project (Component 2) will ensure that the first and second components are developed according to the international guidelines and best practices. Specifically, IUCN and RCSN (Components 1 and 3) will be invited to provide technical support the National Project Team lead by the MoE throughout the project execution, especially for the establishment of the new 2 PAs, the preparation of management plans, involvement and engagement of the local community, capacity building and awareness raising, and on the job training for PA staff.
6. *Project Steering Committee.* The Project will be guided by a Project Steering Committee (PSC) composed of the National Committee for Protected Areas, Ministry of Environment (the chair), Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific researches, Science and Technology, Ministry of Construction, Housing, Municipalities and Public Works, , Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Ministry of Education, Local Governments and NGOs, Representatives from local universities and the National Project Coordinator and the National Project Manager and UNEP.
7. The PSC will be established at the inception of the project to monitor project progress, to guide the project implementation and to support the project in achieving its listed outputs and outcomes. meet regularly twice a year and whenever necessary.
8. However, the PSC will remain sufficiently lean to facilitate its effective operation. Other participants can be invited into the PSC meetings, at the decision of the PSC. The PSC will meet regularly (at least twice a year) or according to project needs, to review project progress, discuss and agree on project work plans, provide direction and guidance, and assist in project implementation, as well as provide synergies with other complementing initiatives and ongoing projects. One of the key tasks of the PSC will be to ensure coordination and synchronization of central and local-level activities supported by the project. Participation in PSC meetings will be possible also via video link or Skype and decisions and consultations might also take place in email exchange form.
9. Project Collaborators will be involved in the project to provide expertise in agriculture, land use planning knowledge and information management, regular updates on environmental management in the country, staff time, and experience in guiding and advancing the activities implementation, supporting the project with robust field data on environmental issues at stake, linking with stakeholders, including at local level for project implementation and for receiving stakeholder's input and feedback. Organizations, NGOs and research institutions working in the area of SLM, and LD will be involved in the project through providing the outputs related to data management and networking. Exact partner organizations will be identified for each project component at the initial stages of the project implementation. National and international consultancy services will be called in as required for specific tasks, such as needs assessments, development of indicator framework, capacity building and training for key stakeholders, design of delivery models and financing mechanisms. All recruitment for consulting services will be procured in accordance with applicable UNEP / GEF rules and regulations.

10. Together with IUCN that will be the main executing partner, RSCN may also join the project as executing partner with the aim to provide technical expertise for the establishment of the new 2 PAs, the preparation of management plans, involvement and engagement of the local community, capacity building and awareness raising, and on the job training for PA staff.

Other project key executing partners will be:

ACSAD will lead the implementation of the first 3 outputs of the third component of the project. Under the supervision and management of the Project Steering Committee (PSC), ACSAD will utilize its expertise to lead the implementation of output 3.1.1 ? Support Tools for Decision Makers, output 3.1.2? field survey and analysis, and output 3.1.3 ? SLM trails in the field involving farmers.

Office of Agricultural Extension Services and Training (AEST) of MoA will lead the implementation of output 3.1.4 of the project under the supervision and management of the PSC. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) will be signed between the project and AEST identifying the TORs listing all the activities needed with related indicators and benchmarks as per appendices 4 and 5 of the prodoc. AEST is expected to lead the implementation of the training programme that will be used as a model for Farm Field Schools.

IUCN ? West Asia will provide the technical support in the establishment of the Protected Areas (PAs). IUCN will lead the implementation of the outputs (2.1.1, 2.1.2, and 2.1.3) within (component 2) of the project.

UNEP Climate Finance Unit (UNEP-CFU) will lead the implementation of output 3.1.5 of the project. This implementation will be arraigned through a signed agreement, all the TORs listing the activities, indicators and benchmarks as per appendices 4 and 5 of the prodoc.

UNDP Iraq will provide the technical and logistic support to establish and build the site management offices of the PAs under (component 2) of the project. The design, specifications and requirement of the building will be completed through close consultation with the PSC and other stakeholders during the implementation phase. Assigned agreement between the project and UNDP Iraq will specify the TORs of these offices.

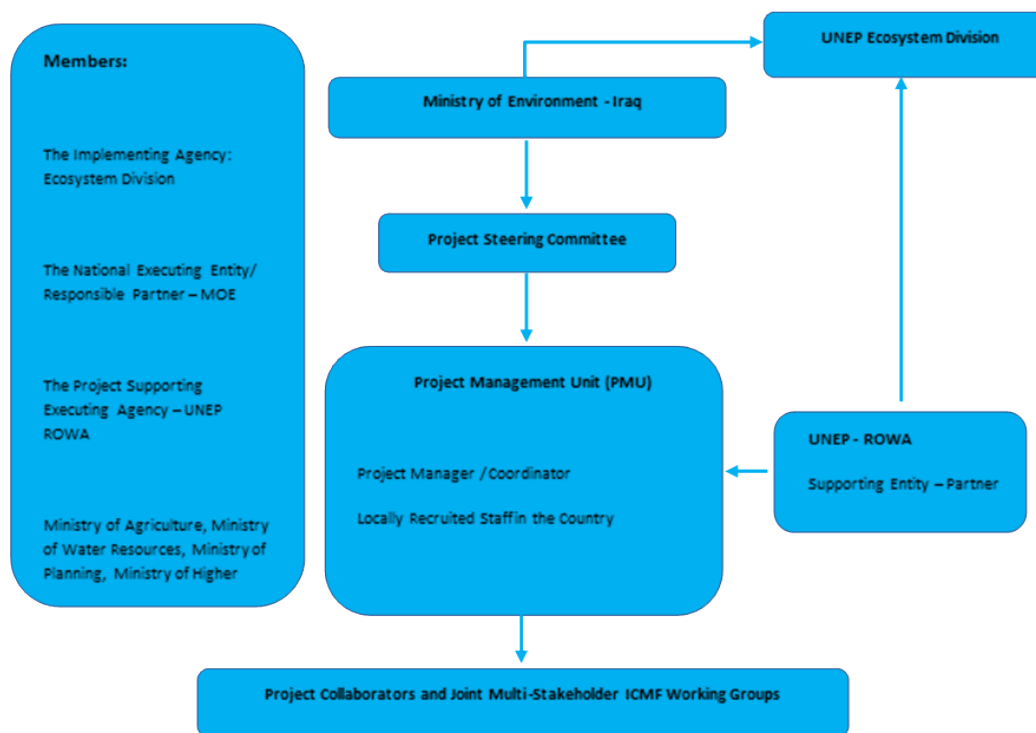
Ministry of Environment (MoE) will provide the legal and technical support in leading the implementation of (component 1) of the project outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3. this will lead to attaining the strengthened policies and framework for the management of SLM, Biodiversity and PAs.

11. *Joint Multi-Stakeholder ICMF Working Group*: The Joint Multi-Stakeholder Working Group that will be established in Outcome 1 will be established during the inception phase of the project and will be formed of:

- ? The project management team
- ? Representatives from the different departments of the MoE, MoWR, MoA, academia and any other related stakeholder representation including women associations and organizations
- ? Technical consultants/collaborators (including but not limited to IUCN, FAO, UNDP, UNCCD, ACSAD, etc.) as identified as key for the success of the project

This team will work as the technical expert working group of the project, it will meet quarterly and will

provide technical and financial guidance to the PMU.



11. At the outset of project operations, a project inception report will be prepared in co-operation with the key stakeholders, local and international expert(s) engaged in leading or supporting the implementation of the project. The inception report will include detailed work plans for each subcomponent (output) of the project at the specific activity level and elaboration of the required resources and stakeholders to be involved for reaching the stated targets. These output specific work plans will provide the main basis for day-to-day management, implementation, and monitoring of the progress of the project, complemented by the annual monitoring to be done at the Outcome level by the PIRs.

12. To successfully reach the objective and outcomes of the project, it is essential that the progress of each project component will be closely monitored both by the key local stakeholders and authorities as well as by project's international experts, starting with the finalization of the detailed, component-specific work plans and implementation arrangements and continuing through the project's implementation phase. The purpose of this is to facilitate early identification of possible risks to successful completion of the project together with adaptive management and early corrective action, when needed.

To accord proper acknowledgement to the GEF for providing funding, a GEF logo should appear on all relevant GEF project publications, including any hardware purchased with GEF funds. Any citation on publications regarding projects funded by GEF should also accord proper acknowledgement to GEF in accordance with the respective GEF guidelines.

7. Consistency with National Priorities

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

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

The project will substantially contribute to at least 9 goals of the POWPA (2012-2020), especially n. 1.1 (To establish and strengthen national and regional systems of protected areas integrated into a global network as a contribution to globally agreed goals), 1.2 (To integrate protected areas into broader land- and seascapes and sectors so as to maintain ecological structure and function) and 1.4 (To substantially improve site-based protected area planning and management). The project will promote and advocate for a significant extension of the national network of protected areas (ca. 176k ha) assisting the country to achieve the NBSAP (2015-2020) target #15 (10 new PAs by 2020).

Also, the project is aligned with Iraq's UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (signed in September 2021). The Cooperation framework aims to maximize synergies, and map complementarities across UN planning frameworks and addressing cross cutting issues such as human rights, gender equality and disabilities within its five Strategic Priorities: social cohesion, the economy, governance, the environment, and sustainable solutions for internally displaced populations (IDPs). Iraq's Vision for Sustainable Development 2030 is based on the following foundations that also echo the Strategic Objectives of the NDP 2018-2022 (related to the project):

- ? Growth through combining the sustainable development dimensions, including social integration, economic development, environmental sustainability, and good governance on the national and local levels.
- ? A diversified economy that enhances assets and is capable of generating decent and protected job opportunities
- ? Environmental sustainability that enhances a green economy.

The Ministry of Planning has developed a National Development Plan (2018-2022) which includes the general framework for the development plan of Iraq. One of the main areas of focus of the NDP is Environmental Sustainability, with the objective of protecting, restoring, and sustaining the use of terrestrial ecosystems, which is in line with this project. The outcomes under the objective include 1)

reducing land degradation and combating desertification, 2) preserving the biodiversity, and 3) evolution of the use of alternative materials in agriculture and the trend towards clean agriculture. The project falls in line with these targets with the development of an Integrated Biodiversity Conservation Management Framework, the establishment of a new PA, as well as the implementation of climate-smart conservation practices and reduced impact severity of erosion, salinization, and fertility of soils in affected ecosystems.

The proposed project is directly in line with the objectives of the Iraqi National Environmental Strategy (2013-2017). The Strategy has identified a number of priority objectives regarding environmental protection, which include controlling land degradation, combating desertification and preserving biodiversity. This project is consistent with some of the main purposes under the objective: 1) inclusive planning of soil resources, 2) minimized expansion of sand dunes, 3) addressed desertification, and 4) reviewed and updated agricultural and environmental laws.

The project supports the Strategic Priority 2 related to Growing the Economy for All through supporting a diversified social market economy that generates decent job opportunities and provides an economic welfare level with a joint management of the public and private sectors to enhance the Iraqi economy capacities particularly in the agriculture sector.

It also supports Strategic Priority 4: Promoting Natural Resource and Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Resilience through (outcome 4.1) Strengthened and resource policies and frameworks are implemented for using and managing nature resources (including transboundary issues), developing renewable resources, and increasing resilience to climate change, environmental stress and natural hazards, and man-made and natural disasters. As well as (outcome 4.2) increase engagement of the people of Iraq, sub-national institutions, civil society, and private sector to ensure more responsible, inclusive, accountable and transparent management of natural resources and the environment.???

The project, especially its component n. 3, is in line with the following national strategies:

- ? Strategy for Water & Land Resources in Iraq, 2014.
- ? Iraq's vision for the sustainable development 2030
- ? National program for combating desertification in Iraq
- ? National program for combating sand and dust storms in Iraq (2015-2020).

The project will substantially contribute to the 5 strategic goals of the Convention on Biodiversity: and in particular to the 2020 Aichi target #11 (17% of terrestrial ecosystems and inland waters protection by 2020). The project will also contribute directly to Aichi target # 1 (by 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably), target #2 (by 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems), target #5 (by 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced), target # 7 (by 2020 areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity), target #12 (by 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained), target # 14 (by 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable) target #15 (by 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification) and target #19 (by 2020, knowledge, the science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved, widely shared and transferred, and applied).

The project will also strive to substantially contribute to achieve the 5 targets for Land Degradation Neutrality set by the Iraq Government in 2017, in line with the UNCCD:

- ? Improve productivity and SOC stocks in 80,000 ha of annual crops and plantation lands by 2035 as compared to 2017.
- ? Increase the current SOC levels by 2035: for shrubs and grasslands; crop land
- ? Conversion of bare land to pasture lands in 100,000 ha by 2035 as compared to 2017.
- ? Reduce salinization rate by improving productivity and SOC stocks in cropland and
- ? plantation lands 10,000 ha. by 2035 as compared to 2017.
- ? Conversion of sand dune land to grasslands in 150,000 ha by 2035 as compared to 2017.

8. Knowledge Management

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

One of the four components of this project (component n. 4) includes an output fully dedicated to knowledge management that is Output 4.1.1: an information/knowledge management system developed and made accessible to stakeholders enabling learning from and upscaling of pilot activities (ensuring accessibility by men, women, and youth).

An efficient knowledge sharing, especially in terms of good practices and trials promoted by the project, is expected to produce a multiplying effect eventually translating into replication and scaling up of successful activities to other areas of the Middle Euphrates landscape and beyond.

This output will create a public resource with the aim to make knowledge and information available to all those that most needed it. Especially in terms of sustainable and ecologically friendly agriculture, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services. This should be built up in line with the results and lessons learned by the UNEP GEF 69744 EIS project and data will duly feed into that project database. All baseline data regarding the 2 PAs will be integrated into the PA website that was developed during the UNEP GEF 5392 PAN project.

The critical part of this output will be to identify and agree on the most effective system that may not be only a web site, as the speed of internet connection may not be fast sufficiently in rural areas and smart phones with big screens may not be so common. Based on discussions with the local stakeholders and communities, the project is going to deploy suitable mechanisms to share and spread the knowledge, suitable from a cultural and social and linguistic point of view. A radio program or brochures or bi-monthly public hearings may be more suitable and accessible to local farmers. For this reason, discussions with local beneficiaries and stakeholders and national experts will serve the need to find a practical and effective solution in terms of broad accessibility to the system. It is important that the system will be accessible by everyone, including youth and women and that is culturally sensitive.

Youth make up 60% of Iraq's population who rely heavily on social media for information and knowledge. With this, social media platforms will be utilized in sharing of information. Academic professors from Universities will also support in mainstreaming learning from this project to undergraduate degrees to continue building human capital in areas related to land degradation and biodiversity loss further encourage positive behavioral change and identification of opportunities (jobs or start-up businesses).

Knowledge management would also be strengthened through the development of best practice reports, assessments, etc that can also be incorporated into other global knowledge hubs such as the UNCCD Knowledge Hub and other global platforms related to Protected Areas and Conservation.

Component 4 implementation is scheduled to start from the second year of the project duration with a total allocated budget of 460,872 USD. The overall expected outcome for this component is on one hand to share as much as possible knowledge and information produced by the project with the aim to provide chances for replication and scaling up; and on the other hand to raise and spread awareness on biodiversity conservation and SLM good practices. Below listed are among the key deliverables originating from the implementation of this component:

- ? Consultation report/s detailing the agreed system to be designed and developed targeting the project beneficiaries at local and central lev
- ? Information/knowledge system operative and fully accessible to target beneficiaries
- ? Media material of presentation
- ? Means of instruction provision (user guides, videos etc
 - ? Data and any useful information from the project uploaded in the Environment Information System
 - ? Key information on Razzaza and Sawa new PAs uploaded on the PAN Website
 - ? Workshop report
 - ? Communication and awareness strategy endorsed by local and central stakeholders
 - ? Consultation report
- ? Sound design of awareness and technical materials
 - ? Factsheets and infographics for each project site; good practice handbook
 - ? Report on awareness raising event (inclusive of women, youth, farmers, etc)
 - ? Four case studies produced (2 for each site).

The project is committed to fully benefit from the lessons learned and the good knowledge and practical experience developed by the closely related projects mentioned in Table 12 of project document (e.g., UNEP GEF GFL/5392 PAN, UNEP GEF 6 9744 EIS, FAO GEF 9745 SLM, IFAD IRQ/MIE/Agri/2017/1 BRAC etc.). The project was specifically designed as to build up and continue the good efforts and outcomes produced by the mentioned ground-breaking initiatives (some of which are still on-going). One major project still on going and focusing on environmental knowledge management in Iraq (UNEP GEF 6 9744 EIS) is managed by UNEP. All useful information stored in this already existing system will be made available to the proposed project (and all the useful information produced by the proposed project will be duly integrated in this national information resource). IFAD and FAO are already included in the list of stakeholders (reference made to Section n. 2) and all efforts will be made to access to all the key information produced by these projects, by organizing regular coordination meetings, joint training initiatives and the establishment of an inter-project knowledge and information team. The issue of the knowledge sharing will be included in any agreement that the proposed project will sign with the mentioned organizations (for instance memorandum of understanding, execution agreements etc.). Moreover, during the implementation of the project a special care will be allocated in monitoring the progress in regard to knowledge management and sharing in general and specifically in regard to Component 4 of the project making good use of indicators and benchmarks clearly specified in the logframe (Appendix 4; see list of key deliverables above).

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Describe the budgeted M and E plan

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

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

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

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

The direct costs of reviews and evaluations will be charged against the project evaluation budget as shown in Annex 7 of prodoc.

Type of M&E activity	Responsible Parties	Budget from GEF	Co-finance	Time Frame
Inception Meeting	Project Manager, Project Team, Steering Committee, UNEP		25,000	Within 2 months of project start-up
Inception Report	Project Manager		25,000	1 month after project inception meeting

Measurement of project indicators (outcome, progress and performance indicators, GEF tracking tools) at national and global level	Project Manager & Project Team; Consultants		100,000	Outcome indicators: start, mid and end of project Progress/perform. Indicators: annually (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)
Semi-annual Progress/ Operational Reports to UNEP	Project Manager		50,000	Within 1 month of the end of reporting period i.e. on or before 31 January and 31 July (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)
Project Steering Committee	? Project Manager (secretariat) ? A representative of UNEP Implementing Agency ? A senior representative of <Enter The Lead Executing Agency Name Here> ? <Insert The Other Members Of The SC Here>			At least once a year, and via electronic media per request and need
Reports of PSC meetings	Project Manager		50,000	Within 1 month after PSC meeting
Project Implementation Review (PIR)	Project Manager; UNEP		50,000	Annually, part of reporting routine (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)
Mid Term Review/ Evaluation	? Project Manager ? PMU ? External consultant(s) ? UNEP	35,000	50,000	At mid-point of project implementation (*Note: If a Mid-Term review is not required for this MSP, these resources will be applied to the Terminal Evaluation)
Terminal Evaluation	UNEP EO	50,000	40,000	Within 6 months of end of project implementation

Audit				Annually
Project Final Report	Project Manager		50,000	Within 2 months of the project completion date (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)
Co-financing report	Project Manager and Finance Manager		50,000	Within 1 month of the PIR reporting period, i.e. on or before 31 July (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)
Publication of Lessons Learnt and other project documents	Project Manager; Consultants for lessons learnt evaluation		30,000	Annually, also part of Semi-annual reports & Project Final Report
Total M&E Plan Budget		85,000	520,000	

10. Benefits

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

The global environmental benefits that this project will bring should result at the local level, in the medium term, in enhanced ecosystem services and improvement of availability of natural resources in the areas within and surrounding the 2 new established PAs and also in the areas surrounding the pilot SLM areas. Local communities will enjoy in these areas a healthier environment and improved conditions for livelihoods based on natural resources. Moreover, local communities, thanks to the project, will be less vulnerable and more adapted to climate extremes. Farmers in particular (an estimated 5000 of them) will enjoy an increase in quality, productivity and sustainability of crops production. The success of these case studies, as also of those from the sister projects (FAO and IFAD), will prompt a spread, through scaling up and replication, in ecologically similar areas of the country; and therefore, during the medium to long term hopefully there will be positive outcomes also at regional and national level.

The proposed alternative scenario - with the GEF project - will support the design and initial steps for the integration of biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality at national level, contributing to the ongoing transition process by:

- ? Support the GoI's capacity to effectively integrate biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality into sectoral policies

- ? Establish 2 new PAs significantly contributing to the extension of the national PA network coverage and the number of species of global importance that will be under effective conservation management in the country; support in engage and involve the local stakeholders; development of management plans and prompting their implementation; support in providing trained staff and equipment to the new PA
- ? Piloting a testing ground for SLM methodologies, tools, and stakeholder involvement mechanisms, thus creating a model to improve agro-ecosystem services and demonstrate sustainable flow of agro-ecosystem services to sustain food production and livelihoods.
- ? Supporting the MoE in managing and use knowledge and in raising public and authorities? awareness on the value of biodiversity and the importance of maintaining ecosystems and their services for human well-being into national planning processes and achieving sustainable use of land and biodiversity resources in the country.

11. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

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

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification *

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approva I	MTR	TE
Medium/Moderate	Medium/Moderate		

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

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

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title	Module	Submitted
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Title	Module	Submitted
Appendix 9 SRIF Iraq mfa_PRC_am	CEO Endorsement ESS	
SRIF Iraq mfa12102020	Project PIF ESS	

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

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p>Project Objective: Strengthen governmental and non-governmental capacities to achieve biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality in Middle Euphrates landscape through integrated landscape management</p>				
<p>Outcome 1: Adoption of new policies and plans which integrate biodiversity conservation and landscape level SLM measures by the Ministry of Environment</p>				

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p><i>Number of adopted policies and plans integrating biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management</i></p>	<p>0</p>	<p><i>Midterm</i></p> <p>One assessment of available policies and plans (national, regional, governorates) that identify integration of biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality and gap assessment</p> <p>One ICMF joint multi-stakeholder technical working group established; 3 meetings of the group to support the development of ICMF</p> <p>One draft ICMF and Plan</p> <p>At least 3 policies and plans (national, regional, new PA management plan) revised in the direction to integrate biodiversity and SLM</p> <p>Baseline and identification and design of economic incentives and disincentives to promote the implementation of ICMF with the Agricultural Cooperative Bank and/or other local banks and investors</p> <p>Relevant sectors practice integrated co-management; first attempts to integrate biodiversity conservation and SLM into sectoral policies and strategies</p> <p><i>Project End</i></p> <p>Integrated Conservation Management Framework approved and endorsed by Government</p> <p>At least 6 policies and plans (national, regional,</p>	<p>Number of adopted policies and plans integrating biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management</p> <p>Baseline study on economic incentives and disincentives</p> <p>Approved ICMF</p> <p>Minutes of meetings</p> <p>Legal and policy documents (e.g. management plans)</p>	<p>Integrated biodiversity conservation and land management are high in the list of priorities for the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture</p> <p>Availability of financial support that can be provided through local banks for SLM measures to be implemented</p> <p>Engagement of marginalized and vulnerable groups in technical working group meetings</p>

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p><i>Increased capacity of the Ministry of Environment to implement Integrated Conservation Management Framework as measured by the Capacity Development Scorecard.</i></p>	<p>Lack of adequate capacities in environmental management (biodiversity conservation and SLM) and cooperation among relevant Ministries (TBD accordingly to new government structure and strategy), NGOs and communities</p> <p>Baseline of the capacity development scorecard: 15</p>	<p><i>Midterm</i></p> <p>Capacity and training needs assessment is completed</p> <p>Capacity development score: 25-30</p> <p><i>Project End</i></p> <p>One 4-year capacity building program completed</p> <p>Capacity development score: 35</p>	<p>Training Needs Assessment report</p> <p>Minutes of meetings and workshop/training reports</p> <p>Capacity development Plan</p> <p>Training manuals</p>	<p>Issues of overlapping mandates and competing responsibilities</p>
<p><u>Outputs</u></p> <p>1.1.1 Assessment of national/subnational policies, legislation and procedures that identify integration of biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality into national policies and plans with consideration to the impact and role of women in conservation</p> <p>1.1.2 A national cross-sector and multi-level Integrated Conservation Management Framework (ICMF) developed, and approved by the key Ministries (Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water Resources)</p> <p>1.1.3 Economic incentives and disincentives designed to promote the implementation of ICMF</p> <p>1.1.4 Joint multi-stakeholder/multi-sectoral working groups established to form a coordination mechanism for the implementation of the ICMF (considering involvement of private sector, gender balance and trainings and workshops targeted for women and girls)</p> <p>1.1.5 Increased capacity on Integrated Conservation Management and Compliance designed and implemented across relevant ministerial sectors (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, trade, and environment) targeting national and sub-national professionals, administrators, NGOs, private sector and community leaders and other stakeholders considering gender appropriate responses particularly women on the field.</p> <p>1.1.6 The Integrated Conservation Management plan for the Middle Euphrates Landscape developed to identify and reduce the pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in Middle Euphrates landscape and disseminated to all relevant stakeholders (Implementation of the Plan formulated under Components 2, 3 and 4)</p>				

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
Outcome 2: Two new PAs established and sustainably managed in Razzaza Lake and Sawa Lake and surrounding areas.				
<i>Establishment of two new PAs proposed for protection of representative ecosystems covering up to 176,292 ha</i>	0	<p><i>Midterm</i> Baseline biodiversity and ecological survey of 2 pilot KBAs Baseline socio-economic and land use studies for 2 pilot KBAs Climate vulnerability assessments for 2 pilot KBAs</p>	<p>Baseline surveys and studies reports Consultation's report Two PAs proposals</p>	<Assumptions and Risks that affect processes by which outcomes contribute to objectives>
<i>Total protected areas in Iraq</i>	5 legally established PAs in Iraq for a total of 6,714km ² = 1.53% of the total land area in Iraq	<p>At least 2 consultations at each site to discuss PA proposals</p> <p>Two PA proposals formulated, submitted and under evaluation by National Committee for Protected Areas</p> <p><i>Project End</i> 2 new PAs gazetted officially by the Ministry of Environment</p> <p>PAN passes from 5 existing to 7 PAs (additional 176,292 ha)</p>	Official declaration of the 2 PAs	<p>MoE and National Committee for PA are determined to expand PAN</p> <p>New procedure for establishing PAs proposed by UNEP GEF GFL/5392 PAN project and IUCN is endorsed by MoE/Govt.</p>

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p><i>PA management plans adopted for the new PAs</i></p>	<p>0</p>	<p><i>Midterm</i> Two management plans agreed and developed (one for each of the PA) based on consultation with local stakeholders</p> <p>Two eco-tourism plans agreed and developed (one for each of the PA) based on consultation with local stakeholders</p> <p><i>Project End</i> Two new management plans for Razzaza Lake and Sawa Lake adopted by Ministry of Environment</p> <p>Two eco-tourism plans adopted by Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Tourism</p> <p>PA staff capacity building program</p>	<p>Stakeholder consultation reports</p> <p>Site specific management plans developed</p> <p>Site specific ecotourism plans developed</p>	<p>Stakeholders agree that the two KBAs are to be declared PA and to conserve biodiversity</p> <p>MoE allocates sufficient funds for staffing and equipment and operations in the PAs</p> <p>Youth engaged in the development of ecotourism plan</p> <p>COVID restrictions are lifted to support the engagement of stakeholders in the development of ecotourism plans</p> <p>Private sector endorses eco-tourism plan</p>

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p><i>Increase in Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool scores of the new 2 PAs</i></p>	<p>No management plans for the two targeted PAs</p> <p>A score of 0 (over a maximum of 126) in the management effectiveness tracking tool (METT-4 IUCN) for both Razzaza Lake and Sawa lake.</p>	<p><i>Midterm</i></p> <p>Assessment of the management effectiveness of the targeted 2 KBAs after completing scientifically based assessments</p> <p><i>Project End</i></p> <p>A score of at least 77 (over a maximum of 126) in the management effectiveness tracking tool (METT-4 IUCN) for both Razzaza Lake and Sawa lake.</p>	<p>Management Effectiveness Tool MEET-4 IUCN</p>	<p>Management plans are approved by end of second year of project and implementation is funded by MoE</p>
<p><i>Outputs</i></p> <p>2.1.1 The National Protected Area Network of Iraq is expanded by 176,292 ha through the declaration and establishments of new 2 PAs that are sustainably managed.</p> <p>2.1.2 PA Management plans factoring the resilience to climate change developed and implemented for Razzaza and Sawa lake and surrounding area</p> <p>2.1.3 Operationalization of habitat, biodiversity and land monitoring system aligned with the Integrated Conservation Management Plan in collaboration with key government stakeholders (Ministry of Health and Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water Resources and Ministry of Planning) taking into account gender disparities and empowering women in decision making processes</p>				
<p>Outcome 3: The replication/ scaling up of SLM in more areas of similar nature in Middle Euphrates Landscape in line with Output 1.1.6</p>				

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p><i>Basic data on LDN and SLM are collected or updated, and analyzed with priority SLM measures to be developed and implemented in 10,000 ha of agricultural arable land promoting climate smart agricultural practices</i></p>	<p>Existing data in the pilot SLM areas are in need for updating and/or review</p> <p>Capacity building programme through the Agriculture Extension Project is ongoing in all governorates of Iraq</p>	<p><i>Midterm</i></p> <p>One report with baseline surveys results and mapping of LDN and SLM issues including climate change vulnerabilities, sensitivity and adaptive capacity and hydrological modeling</p> <p>-</p> <p>One set of tools aimed at facilitating and support local decision making in relation to application of LDN and SLM measures</p> <p>One report identifying and analyzing agriculture practices and proposing climate smart agricultural practices</p> <p>One community based SLM strategy developed (in line with ICMF)</p> <p><i>Project End</i></p> <p>LND and SLM measures endorsed by 2 governorates and MoE</p> <p>One implementation plan for climate smart agricultural practices and specific LDN measures</p> <p>One set of baseline data and mapping for monitoring of results</p> <p>One report on lessons in best SLM practices is captured and disseminated</p>	<p>Analytical reports on baseline</p> <p>Studies and publications (including maps)</p> <p>Project reports and records</p> <p>Consultation meetings</p> <p>SLM strategy for the including climate smart agricultural practices defined</p> <p>LDN and SLM measures agreed for testing</p> <p>Baseline data for monitoring results</p> <p>Agreed and defined standard protocols for implementation of SLM measures at the 2 pilot SLM areas</p> <p>Definition of land extension (ha) under SLM testing in project site (at least 10,000 ha)</p>	<p>All stakeholders are interested in collaborative efforts for biodiversity and SLM</p> <p>No SLM strategy/Policy available</p> <p>FAO SLM National Strategy is developed and endorsed</p>

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p><i>Increased productivity of benefitting farmers participating in project pilots through Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and Office of Agriculture Training and Extension (MoA)</i></p>	<p>data on average household income from farming/month requested to MoA</p> <p>0 Farmer Field Schools in Iraq that combine vocational training with tangible socio-economic and social benefits</p>	<p><i>Midterm</i></p> <p>One training needs assessment report</p> <p>One implementation plan of SLM strategy in the 2 pilot SLM areas e.g., through the Farmer Field Schools</p> <p>Two Farmer Field Schools (one in each site) established and running led by the Office of Agriculture Training and Extension (MoA)</p> <p>One capacity building programme is developed with the Office of Agriculture Training and Extension (MOA) to integrate SLM and biodiversity conservation elements</p> <p><i>Project End</i></p> <p>One evaluation report for the pilot Farmer Field Schools with lessons learned captured and disseminated</p> <p>At least 4 FFS in SLM and biodiversity conservation established and running led by the Office of Agriculture Training and Extension (MoA)</p> <p>One report for each pilot site evaluating the productivity of land plots trialed with new agricultural techniques (<i>versus</i> the baseline data)</p>	<p>Training needs assessment report</p> <p>Detailed capacity building program</p> <p>Training workshop reports</p> <p>Project documents and reports</p> <p>Good practices and lessons learned</p> <p>FFS at two SLM areas</p>	<p>Farmers have interest</p> <p>They have access to workshops and trainings</p> <p>Engagement of women and youth groups in Farmer Field Schools</p>

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<i>Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender</i>	0	<i>Mid-term 2000 beneficiaries (1000 women and 1000 men)</i> <i>Project End: 5000 beneficiaries (2500 women and 2500 men)</i>	Number of farmers who have attended trainings, workshops, etc. Number of women who attended trainings	
<i>Increased capacity of local banks at the 2 project SLM areas in providing financial support to farmers in relation to the sustainable management of agro-ecosystems</i>	0	<i>Midterm</i> One training needs assessment report developed by UNEP Climate Finance Unit One capacity building program tailored to the gaps in capacity identified among local banks in pilot site developed by UNEP Climate Finance Unit <i>Project End</i> One capacity program is implemented at governate level (Karbala and Muthanna) One training evaluation report	Agreement with UNEP Finance Unit to lead this output Training needs assessment report Capacity program implementation report Training evaluation report	UNEP Climate Finance Unit is available to lead this activity Local banks from 2 Governorates are interested in the program

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p><i>Outputs</i></p> <p>3.1.1 Decision support tools for locally adaptive LDN measures provided to support decision-making through assessments (ecological and vulnerability)</p> <p>3.1.2 Locally adaptive LDN measures to enhance water conservation and prevent changes in the characteristics of soil, wind erosion, salinization and loss of natural fertility of soil identified and validated by the governorates and Ministry of Environment</p> <p>3.1.3 Techniques and management practices including but not limited to the revision/reform of existing policies and possibly adoption of new policies for sustainable land management developed and tested in 10,000 ha (results will be monitored through the monitoring system developed under Output 2.1.3)</p> <p>3.1.4 In collaboration with the Office of Agricultural Extension Services and Training, capacity development program established and local stakeholders (e.g. farmers, farmer cooperative systems, agricultural associations, PA managers, women) trained on best practices for SLM, biodiversity conservation, water conservation, climate smart agriculture and agrobiodiversity.</p> <p>3.1.5 Training sessions on sustainable finance for the local banks in the Middle Euphrates landscape organized</p>				
<p>Outcome 4: Stakeholders apply their increased knowledge and take actions on land use planning, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services and LDN.</p>				
<p><i>Project database is uploaded into Environment Information System in the Ministry of Environment incorporating Biodiversity and SLM data and traditional management practices</i></p>	<p>EIS system is currently being developed through a UNEP GEF 6 9744 EIS project.</p> <p>PA Website developed through the UNEP GEF 5 GFL/5392 PAN project</p>	<p><i>Midterm</i></p> <p>Identification of a set of baseline data and information integrated into the established database (baseline data on biodiversity and LDN/SLM agriculture, monitoring parameters etc.) with existing information systems</p> <p><i>Project End</i></p> <p>One project database integrated into EIS System at Ministry of Environment</p> <p>Upload of 2 new PAs in the PA page of the Ministry of Environment website</p>	<p>Project records</p> <p>Baseline data records</p> <p>Official documentation on websites and EIS</p>	<p>EIS is operational and functional</p> <p>MoE is keen to store and organize information in existing system information and databases</p>

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p><i>Number of stakeholder engagement workshops (government level, local people, women, etc.)</i></p>	<p>0</p>	<p><i>Midterm</i> At least 12 stakeholder engagement consultations/workshops at national (4) and governate level (8) organized and implemented for PA management plans as well as SLM strategy and other project activities</p> <p><i>Project End</i> At least 16 stakeholder engagement consultations/workshops for project activities (6 national and 10 local)</p>	<p>Minutes of meetings and consultations and reports</p>	<p>Access to Governorates is possible</p> <p>Local stakeholders are engaged and interested</p>

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p><i>Increase stakeholder awareness in project objectives and activities</i></p>	<p>Awareness on PAN has increased nationally due to the UNEP GEF 5 GFL/5392 PAN project, however limited knowledge and awareness on integrated biodiversity conservation and SLM practices is measured in the project area</p> <p>One communication strategy is developed for PAN under the UNEP GEF 5 GFL/5392 PAN</p>	<p><i>Midterm</i></p> <p>One baseline report on stakeholders' awareness at the two project SLM areas</p> <p>One information/knowledge system appropriate and tailored on the users, with a focus on youth and women</p> <p>One communication and awareness strategy developed and operational</p> <p>At least 12 stakeholder engagement consultations/workshops at national (4) and governate level (8) organized and implemented</p> <p>Two awareness raising events organized at each of the 2 pilots SLM areas (including women, youth, farmers)</p> <p>Number of factsheets and infographics produced for each project site</p> <p>One developed project website</p> <p>One best practices handbook developed</p> <p><i>Project End</i></p> <p>One implementation report of the communication and awareness strategy</p> <p>At least 16 stakeholder engagement consultations/workshops for project activities (6 national and 10 local) engaging youth and women</p> <p>Four case studies</p>	<p>Project records</p> <p>Communication and awareness strategy is developed</p> <p>Information/knowledge system developed</p> <p>Awareness activities are held</p> <p>Project Website</p>	<p>Local stakeholders interested in receiving further information on environmental management and issues</p> <p>Accessibility to online websites and information</p> <p>Existing PA communication strategy is operational</p>

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<i>Availability of materials published and disseminated (# of fact sheets/infographics, # of awareness raising events)</i>	0	<p><i>Midterm</i> Factsheets/infographics for 2 pilot areas developed</p> <p>Two awareness raising events organized at each of the 2 pilot areas (including women, youth, farmers)</p> <p><i>Project End</i> Four case studies produced (2 for each site) focusing on SLM practices, agrobiodiversity, climate smart agriculture, gender</p>	<p>Materials and publications</p> <p>TV, videos, and radio events</p>	<p>Access of local communities to TV, radio, and internet for social media (as youth tend to focus mostly on the use of social media for information)</p>
<i>Project Reporting and M&E system operational and on time</i>	0	<p><i>Midterm</i> One M&E system is established and approved by UNEP</p> <p>One project midterm review completed</p> <p><i>Project End</i> One terminal evaluation report produced</p> <p>One lesson learned report produced and disseminated</p>	<p>Project management reports and M&E records</p> <p>PIRs, MTR and TE</p>	<p>M&E system can be established early on in project implementation</p>
<p><u>Outputs</u></p> <p>4.1.1 An information/knowledge management system developed and made accessible to stakeholders enabling learning from and upscaling of pilot activities (ensuring accessibility by men, women, and youth)</p> <p>4.1.2 A communication and awareness strategy is developed to support implementation of ICMF</p> <p>4.1.3 Awareness raising and technical materials, based on best practices identified through Component 2 and 3, developed in local languages, disseminated, and used for training of landowners, communities, and private sector, taking into account gender balance, to promote adoption of SLM practices and biodiversity conservation</p> <p>4.1.4 Project monitoring and evaluation system operating providing systematic information on progress in meeting project outcome and output targets</p>				

ANNEX B: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS (from GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF).

Part I: Project Information	Responses		UNEP Comments
GEF ID	10672		
Project Title	Promotion of Integrated Biodiversity Conservation and Land Degradation Neutrality in Highly Degraded Landscapes of Iraq		
Date of Screening	November 27, 2020		
STAP member screener	Graciela Metternicht		
STAP secretariat screener	Guadalupe Duron		

STAP Overall Assessment and Rating

Minor issues to be considered during project design

STAP welcomes UNEP's proposal ?Promotion of Integrated Biodiversity Conservation and Land Degradation Neutrality in Highly Degraded Landscapes of Iraq?. This project aims to strengthen governmental and non-governmental capacities to achieve biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality in Middle Euphrates landscape through integrated landscape management. The project identifies the interlinkages between land degradation and biodiversity loss, and the impacts of land degradation in the livelihoods and wellbeing of Iraq's population. The project identifies the natural and socio-technological and political drivers of environmental degradation (climate change, low rainfall levels, overgrazing of nature pastures, illegal urban expansion to agricultural land, unsustainable farming practices and old irrigation techniques, weak institutional governance, impacts of armed conflicts and political unrest), and barriers causing biodiversity loss and degradation of land that the project is targeting to remove. Project

Steering Committee has been revised to include local universities and other vocational training directorates such as the Office of Extension Services for Agriculture to further support youth involvement and engagement.

Part I: Project Information B. Indicative Project Description Summary	What STAP looks for	Response	UNEP Comments
Project Objective	Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?	Yes	
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	Yes	
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits?	<p>Yes. See the overall assessment mention about the need to revise the metrics and indicators that map GEBs, which can be better measured through properly designed locally relevant indicators that can be aggregated as evidence of generating GEBs. STAP suggest reading: UNCCD-SPI Scientific conceptual framework for LDN (https://knowledge.unccd.int/knowledge-products-and-pillars/guide-scientific-conceptual-framework-land-degradation-neutrality) and to consult the toolset available for implementation of LDN through project interventions. https://knowledge.unccd.int/knowledge-products-and-pillars/guide-scientific-conceptual-framework-ldn/tools-and-resources-land and the STAP guidelines for LDN, chapter on indicators: https://stapgef.org/guidelines-land-degradation-neutrality</p> <p>Sims, N.C., England, J.R., Newnham, G.J., Alexander, S., Green, C., Minelli, S. and Held, A., 2019. Developing good practice guidance for estimating land degradation in the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. <i>Environmental Science & Policy</i>, 92, pp.349-355.</p> <p>Sims, N.C., Barger, N.N., Metternicht, G.I. and England, J.R., 2020. A land degradation interpretation matrix for reporting on UN SDG indicator 15.3. 1 and land degradation neutrality. <i>Environmental Science & Policy</i>, 114, pp.1-6.</p>	

	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Yes, provided the ToC considers also the risk elements cited in section 5, and alternative pathways that could be implemented (ie. adaptive management) to overcome these risks.	
Outputs	A description of the products and services which are expected to result from the project. Is the sum of the outputs likely to contribute to the outcomes?	Yes, the outputs associated to each of the components add up to deliver the outcomes, and STAP congratulates the team for graphically showing this links in the ToC	
Part II: Project justification	A simple narrative explaining the project's logic, i.e. a theory of change.	The project presents a good graphic and narrative of the ToC, and STAP encourages the ToC becomes an iterative process in the PPG preparation, where activities are mapped against proposed outputs, as well as key stakeholders relevant in the delivery of those outputs, plus external and internal factors that may affect achieving outcomes and proposed deliverables. STAP recommends the project team to think on whether the durability and ability to scale out some of the interventions may be dependent on behavioral change. In this regard, the STAP document on Multi-stake holder dialogues and the forthcoming review on levers for behavioral change are thought to be relevant to this project for the PPG phase. STAP recommends an exercise of taking one of the assumptions (e.g. uptake of knowledge and implementation) and work the 'ToC' for that assumption (who needs to be involved, when, what activities need to be done, what levers are best?, what external and internal factors can affect the deliveries, what investment is needed, how could te private sector be involved, etc). In doing this, a clear pathway can be established that will anticipate whether the assumption holds, and will deliver on the set 'vision'.	Stakeholder dialogues are a key component of the project that will be carried out on multiple levels and engaging with local stakeholders, private sector as well as vulnerable and marginalized groups. This is critical for behavioral change.
1. Project description. Briefly describe: 1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)	Is the problem statement well-defined?	Yes, a very coherent narrative of drivers of environmental degradation and barriers that need to be addressed is presented.	

	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Barriers and threats are well described, though the project fails to provide good references. (Section 1.1 of the project)	
	For multiple focal area projects: does the problem statement and analysis identify the drivers of environmental degradation which need to be addressed through multiple focal areas; and is the objective well-defined, and can it only be supported by integrating two, or more focal areas objectives or programs?	N/A	
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Yes	
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the Yes project's benefits?	Yes	
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the Yes incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Yes	
	For multiple focal area projects:		
	are the multiple baseline analyses presented (supported by data and references), and the multiple benefits specified, including the proposed indicators ;		

	<p>are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and</p>	<p>Current and past GEF and non-GEF projects in the area are identified and cited as sources for collaboration and learning. STAP recommends consultation with representatives of these projects occurs in the PPG to avoid duplication, and to build on activities that these projects have initiated and are relevant to the outputs and outcomes of this project. STAP also recommends the team searches the database of GEF projects with 'similar' objectives undertaken in other geographies with similar socio-ecological and/or cultural and political contexts; extend this search to non-GEF projects. For instance, there is a mention on the difficulties of reaching out to women in patriarchal societies. There are lessons and recommendations in the literature on how this could be done, and it is worth this be considered in the design of activities related to components 2 and 3. See for instance: Design Within a Patriarchal Society: Opportunities and Challenges in Designing for Rural Women in Bangladesh. https://doi.org/10.1145/3173574.3174110</p>	<p>Consultation with ongoing projects have taken place and are reflected in the project document. There have been delays in implementation, largely due to the COVID pandemic.</p> <p>This is reflected in the gender action plan.</p>
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	<p>how did these lessons inform the design of this project?</p>	<p>Pages 16-18 explain aspects of the baseline projects that have been identified and used to inform the design of this PIF. Pg 15 also describes how current work of relevant Ministries has helped in designing this PIF (E.G. ? For example ..the Ministry of Agriculture is also working with several UN agencies, funded by the EU on addressing creation of livelihood and employment and will increase smallholder farming families food security, raise their income and therefore improve their health and living standard. These efforts will establish the baseline on which the project will further build on, by local land use planning with conservation planning to achieve a more comprehensive approach to habitat and biodiversity preservation?. Another good example is how the project team plans to use information and knowledge from the GCG funded project ?Building capacity to advance the National Adaptation Plan process in Iraq to help identify the climate change scenarios, and options to enhance resilience of Protected areas to climate change. STAP congratulates the team for identifies these synergies that will avoid duplication of efforts and unnecessary expenditures.</p> <p>STAP also recommends to reach out to initiatives of the UNCCD that are relevant to drought and youth (e.g. the drought initiative and its tool box, https://www.unccd.int/actions/drought-initiative , the 3S initiative https://www.unccd.int/actions/sustainability-stability-security-3s-initiative). Mechanisms of two way learning and knowledge sharing can be established that will benefit this project and advance GEBs through knowledge sharing.</p>	<p>UNCCD will be a key partner during project implementation.</p>
<p>3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project</p>	<p>What is the theory of change?</p>	<p>Page 54 provides a graphic and short narrative of the project?s ToC. See earlier comments on the aspects of that ToC that needs more consideration/development in the PPG phase.</p>	
	<p>What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?</p>	<p>The ToC list the outputs and their linkages with desired outcomes. The four project components describe the activities that will deliver those outputs. More work is needed in the PPG to develop the ?sequence of events? (methodological framework) of this project, including the activities to avert risk (mentioned in section 5). The STAP</p>	

	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	Described in the four components.	
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	See earlier comments, change is plausible, but the assumptions need to be "mapped" through the interventions and "agents" that will make change possible.	Done.
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	The Risk section somehow address this point, STAP recommends revision of the ToC to include "external" factors that may affect project delivery and the adaptation pathways that may be needed to achieve the target outcomes. Of relevance for this work are the STAP primer on Theory of Change https://www.stagef.org/theory-change-primer STAP recommends attention to climate change adaptation and the projections on future climate variability. STAP also recommends that knowledge and information on assessments related to climate change vulnerability (sensitivity, exposure and adaptive capacity of the target beneficiaries and ecosystems) are included in the design of interventions. Lastly, STAP recommends that propositions around nature-based solutions, such as eco-tourism, be "wind tunneled" for the impacts of COVID	Indeed, these will be established during the implementation phase. The National Adaptation Plan is currently ongoing and will be developing key climate change scenarios and recommendations that will be considered during implementation.
5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEF trust fund, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing	GEF trust fund: will the proposed incremental activities lead to the delivery of global environmental benefits?	The narrative presented in section 1.5 points to a high likelihood of the activities delivering GEBs identified in the PIF. STAP recommends revising/enhancing indicators associated to the GEBs that are to be delivered; ensure the indicators are suitable to the track and measure progress of the proposed GEBs; align with global core indicators of LDN and others related to biodiversity gains from creation of Protected Areas; complement with indicators of locally-relevant ecosystem services, and propose the latter to be aggregated to add evidence-base towards the achievement of the GEBs the project claims will deliver. Consult the LDN guidelines and the Good Practice Guidance on LDN mentioned earlier.	

	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	N/A	
6) global environmental benefits (GEF trust fund) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)	Are the benefits truly global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits, and are they measurable?	See above comments on the need to improve the indicators and metrics associated to those indicators	
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Yes, projected benefits are plausible, and the team is encouraged to map co-operation and collaboration with projects of the baseline to generate 'positive' spillovers that can extend to areas that are neighboring the selected project area.	
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits explicitly defined?	Global benefits are explicitly defined; links between proposed interventions and GEBs can be made more explicit through the ToC. (e.g. link outputs to GEBs, and map activities that enable those outputs and stakeholders, funding, etc needed). Do consider how climate change projections for the project area will affect (or not) the achievement of GEBs. Do consider if, for instance, proposed nature-based solutions, are effective to address exposure, sensitivity, and/or adaptive capacity to a changing climate in the project area.	Climate Change projections will be carried out during implementation to further support relevant nature-based solutions.
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	More work on the specific methodology and approaches (e.g. what set of nature based solutions?) needs to be included in the PPG; more work is needed to define metrics and associated indicators that can facilitate tracking progress of the activities during project implementation, and that can help assessing the achievement of set project outcomes.	These solutions will be based on the climate change projections and baselines developed.

	<p>What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?</p>	<p>The PIF mentions an IFAD funded project on Building Resilience of the Agriculture Sector to Climate Change in Iraq, and how this baseline Project will provide climate smart solutions, which the proposed Project will ensure these solutions are also part of the LDN implementation actions. Component 2 will also factor climate resilience in the management plans of Protected Areas. Component #4 envisages that all stakeholders must have the capacities, knowledge, resources, and support from enabling policies to plan and manage land use for sustainability and resilience to climate change. This is an ambitious goal and STAP recommends the application of multi-stakeholder dialogue processes, and the use of tools such as the RAPTA (https://www.stagef.org/rapta-guidelines), GIS multi-criteria based prioritization that can account for spatial variations of factors related to climate change vulnerability.</p>	
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<p>7) innovative, sustainability and potential for scaling-up</p>	<p>Is the project innovative, for example, in its design, method of financing, technology, business model, policy, monitoring and evaluation, or learning?</p>	<p>Project proponents claim innovation is present in this PIF because project will develop an Integrated Conservation Management Framework which has yet to be established in Iraq. This will be achieved after the identification of legal, policy, and institutional gaps. Innovation will also happen through the inclusion of interventions focused on smart agriculture, land management and nature- based solutions. The project offers more avenues for innovation in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? the design of activities (e.g. community based management of PAs); consider SLM activities that include local and traditional knowledge; ? in the method of financing (e.g. consider PPP and the use of market based instruments such as payments for ecosystem services), ? in the monitoring (through identifying locally relevant indicators for LDN progress and improvement in conservation of biodiversity). ? More innovation could be added in monitoring through identifying co-benefits (job opportunities created for youth and women; etc.), and their associated indicators. ? Incorporate Earth Observation and GIS technologies for prioritization, baseline assessments, monitoring. See https://www.stapgef.org/earth-observation-and-get for examples ? Explore market based instruments (Component #3): STAP recommends also the IUCN publication Enabling Investments for Sustainable Land Management https://www.iucn.org/downloads/investing_in_drylands_latest_comprehensive_ver_2_.pdf and the publication Baumber, A., Berry, E. and Metternicht, G., 2019. Synergies between Land Degradation Neutrality goals and existing market-based instruments. Environmental Science & Policy, 94, pp.174-181. ? Introduce innovation in training and education; component #4 and component #3 will benefit from including Universities of Iraq. It is a form of build capacity and transfer knowledge on 'how to?' and transfer technology (GIS, earth observation) that can also inform development of curriculum of university degrees pursued by the youth of the country. ? Do consider land rehabilitation and land reclamation as part of the 'LDN interventions. The Scientific Conceptual framework of LDN recommends those in charge of designing interventions do consider that there are a range of pathways leading to LDN, and in that some instances land rehabilitation or land reclamation may be more feasible/effective than attempting costly land restoration (particularly in areas 	<p>These have been reflected in the project design.</p>
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	<p>Is there a clearly articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?</p>	<p>The vision and scaling up are described; the team needs to also think how to ensure durability of the project outcomes through scaling deep (what cultural changes are needed -> is behavioral change needed?); and scaling out. The project component#1 will contribute to scaling up of the project outcomes. Recommended papers that can help articulate how to scale up, out and deep the vision: https://www.stagef.org/achieving-enduring-outcomes-gef-investment ;</p>	
	<p>Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?</p>	<p>Incremental adaptation in the way components of the project have been designed suffices. However, there are opportunities that can be explored in the PPG on how to achieve longer term sustainability if the project considers aspects of transformational change related to scaling deep (cultural changes, behavioral change). (see comment above)</p>	
<p>1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.</p>		<p>Yes</p>	

<p>2. Stakeholders. Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase: Indigenous people and local communities; Civil society organizations; Private sector entities. If none of the above, please explain why. In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement.</p>	<p>Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?</p>	<p>Groups of relevant stakeholders are mentioned. See earlier comments about mapping them into the ToC. STAP recommends that ?champions of the youth sector be identified and included in the design of interventions; STAP also recommends that interventions for LDN and nature-based solutions include actions to improve future prospects of this sector, whether through training, micro-finance of startup business, job opportunities.</p>	<p>This has been integrated within the activities of the project, identifying potential job opportunities, micro-financing, training, etc.</p>
	<p>What are the stakeholders? roles, and how will their combined roles contribute to robust project design, to achieving global environmental outcomes, and to lessons learned and knowledge?</p>	<p>The section on coordination and stakeholders provides an overall description of roles of main stakeholders. STAP recommends further work in mapping stakeholders roles into activities and outputs.</p>	<p>This has been identified during the stakeholder analysis. Further analysis will be carried out during implementation.</p>

<p>3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. Please briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis). Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment? Yes/no/ tbd. If possible, indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality: access to and control over resources; participation and decision- making; and/or economic benefits or services. Will the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators? yes/no /tbd</p>	<p>Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?</p>	<p>Yes, the section on gender is well developed, and STAP recommends the use the following documents in the preparation of the PPG, as these were developed with ?gender-responsive actions? to LDN in mind: Collantes, V., Kloos, K., Henry, P., Mboya, A., Mor, T. and Metternicht, G., 2018. Moving towards a twin-agenda: Gender equality and land degradation neutrality. Environmental science & policy, 89, pp.247-253. A Manual for Gender-Responsive Land Degradation Neutrality Transformative Projects and Programmes. https://www.unccd.int/publications/manual-gender-responsive-land-degradation-neutrality-transformative-projects-and</p>	
	<p>Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?</p>	<p>N/A</p>	

<p>5. Risks. Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design</p>	<p>Are the identified risks valid and comprehensive? Are the risks specifically for things outside the project's control? Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project? For climate risk, and climate resilience measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? How will the project's objectives or outputs be affected by climate risks over the period 2020 to 2050, and have the impact of these risks been addressed adequately? ? Has the sensitivity to climate change, and its impacts, been assessed? ? Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these be dealt with? ? What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will be needed to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures? 	<p>Risk section is comprehensive, and it includes climate change risk. STAP recommends to fine tune the addressing of climate risk by using approaches like RAPTA (see earlier comments) a GEF designed technique to help project designers and planners build the ideas of resilience, adaptation and transformation into their projects from the start, to ensure outcomes that are practicable, valuable and sustainable through time and change.</p> <p>There is no evidence of aspects of climate change related to exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity being assessed, but the PIF is clear in that a great deal of data, information and knowledge on climate change that is relevant to this project will be generated through other ongoing projects that are part of the projects baseline.</p>	
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<p>6. Coordination. Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other related initiatives</p>	<p>Are the project proponents tapping into relevant knowledge and learning generated by other projects, including GEF projects?</p>	<p>Yes, and STAP recommends the project has a Project Steering Committee that includes representatives from other GEF and non-GEF projects that are named in the project baseline. Furthermore, STAP strongly recommends to include experts from Universities that can help mainstreaming learning from this project into undergraduates degrees to continue building human capital of the 60% of youth population that makes up this country.</p>	<p>Done.</p>
	<p>Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the Yes learning derived from them?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	
	<p>Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been Yes cited?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	
	<p>How have these lessons informed the project's formulation?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	
	<p>Is there an adequate mechanism to feed the lessons learned from earlier projects into this project, and to share lessons learned from it into future projects?</p>	<p>Yes, the component #4 of knowledge management could be strengthened by considering how the knowledge of this project can be incorporated into other global knowledge hubs such as the UNCCD Knowledge Hub</p>	<p>Done</p>
<p>8. Knowledge management. Outline the Knowledge Management Approach for the project, and how it will contribute to the project's overall impact, including plans to learn from relevant projects, initiatives and evaluations.</p>	<p>What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?</p>	<p>This section needs improvement, the current indicators are not enough to build a coherent narrative of the success that could be achieved through the way in which knowledge management and sharing is proposed in this project.</p>	

	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	Component #4 details those plans, and STAP recommends they be revised during the preparation of the PPG, incorporating the different suggestions provided in this screen template.	Done.
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Notes:

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

3. Major issues to be considered during project design	STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical methodological issues, barriers, or omissions in the project concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. The proponent is strongly encouraged to:
	(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised; (ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development including an independent expert as required. The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.

Promotion of Integrated Biodiversity Conservation and Land Degradation Neutrality in Highly Degraded Landscapes of Iraq		
GEF Secretariat Review for Full Sized Project ? GEF ? 7 Basic Information		
GEF ID	10672	
Countries	Iraq	
Project Title	Promotion of Integrated Biodiversity Conservation and Land Degradation Neutrality in Highly Degraded Landscapes of Iraq	
GEF Agency(ies)	UNEP	
Agency ID	UNEP: 01853	
GEF Focal Area(s)	Multi Focal Area	
Program Manager	Ulrich Apel	
Area	Clarification requested.	Agency Response

<p>1. Is the project/program aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions? Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>09/24/2020:</p> <p>The project is aligned with BD and LD objectives in Table A. However, the alignment and rationale of the project throughout the PIF text needs to be more consistent and further elaborated. Please note all relevant review comments made further below in the revision of the PIF.</p> <p>Please clarify if biodiversity conservation is going to be integrated in existing sector policies. If so, consideration should be made for BD Objective 1 which looks at mainstreaming. This can be in addition to the Objective 2-7 on Protected Areas.</p> <p>The same point applies to revision of policies/plans to integrate LDN. In this case the project should also consider Objective LD-2-5.</p> <p>Please explain how the project justifies the Rio-Marker "1" for CC-M. If a Rio Marker is selected, please enter an estimated target for land based mitigation under core indicator 6.</p>	<p>1. Yes, biodiversity conservation will be integrated into development policies. We included Programming Direction BD-1-1 in Table A.</p> <p>2. We included Objective LD-2-5 and ensured GEF Project financing and co-finance amount of component 1 provided in Table B is aligned with Table A.</p> <p>3. We marked Rio Marker CC-M as 0.</p> <p>Indicative project/program description summary</p>
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<p>2. Are the components in Table B and as described in the PIF sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project/program objectives and the core indicators?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>Not fully. See below comments and clarification questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project objective: "Middle Euphrates" can this term stand alone or is an addition like "basin" or "landscape" needed? <p>Overall, should be a mix of Technical Assistance and Investment, at the moment the Table only indicates Technical Assistance.</p> <p>? Component 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicators: how is support to BD conservation and LDN measured by the capacity development scorecard? What indicator is measuring the increased capacity of government stakeholders to implement the Integrated Conservation Management Framework? - Output 1.1.1: "to receive support" is not an output. The output should be the assessment itself. - Output 3.1.2: What are "local measures"? Does it refer to the "locally adaptive LDN measures" as referred to in 3.1.1? - Output 3.1.3: What is meant by "management mechanisms"? maybe practices? What is meant by "infrastructure"? - Is it ?adoption ?of new policies or revision/reform of existing policies? - Are there plans to include a monitoring framework for the implementation phase of the ICMF? Is there available baseline data to inform the development of the Framework and the mechanisms for monitoring and updating this data as the Framework is implemented? We note the inclusion of a habitat and biological monitoring system under Output 2.1.3. However, there is absence of a system to monitor land related data- degradation, vegetative cover etc. Please clarify - Output 1.1.4 should be not only be ?multi-stakeholder?, but also multi-sectoral. <p>? Component 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community based adaptation plans is not eligible for BD funding. What could be explored is ensuring that the PA Management plans factor in resilience <p>? Component 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It would be good to include an indicator that measures increased productivity for farmers and the # of farmers who will benefit 	<p>We included ?landscape ?in the project objective.</p> <p>2. The new GEF Portal doesn't allow to choose multiple options on the support type. We provided % of TA and INV of each component in the PIF file. We entered the highest % option on the GEF Portal.</p> <p>3. We revised the indicator definition. It now reads as: Increased capacity of the Ministry of Health and Environment to implement Integrated Conservation Management Framework as measured by the Capacity Development Scorecard.</p> <p>4. We revised Output 1.1.1 as advised.</p> <p>5. We revised Output 3.1.2. Now it reads "Locally adaptive LDN measures to enhance water?"</p> <p>6. We changed the statement to ?management practices?, we highlighted that the practices will include both revisions of the existing policies but also development of new policies. We revised Output 2.1.3 so that it will support monitoring of the health of the land and we linked that the results of Output 3.1.3 will be monitored with the system that will be developed under Output 2.1.3.</p> <p>7. We also mentioned that the working group will be multi-sectoral.</p> <p>8. Component 2. Our purpose was to enhance the resilience of new Protected areas to climate change with the involvement of the community. We included this as part of the management plan and removed Output 2.1.4</p> <p>9. Component 3: We included the suggested two indicators.</p>
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<p>Co-financing</p> <p>3. Are the indicative expected amounts, sources, and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines, with a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		<p>Yes</p>
<p>GEF Resource Availability</p> <p>4. Is the proposed GEF financing in Table D (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		<p>Yes</p>
<p>The STAR allocation?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		<p>Yes</p>
<p>The focal area allocation?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		<p>Yes</p>
<p>The LDCF under the principle of equitable access</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		<p>N/A</p>

<p>The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)? Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		<p>N/A</p>
<p>Focal area set-aside? Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		<p>N/A</p>
<p>Impact Program Incentive? Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		<p>N/A</p>
<p>Project Preparation Grant</p> <p>5. Is PPG requested in Table E within the allowable cap? Has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated? (Not applicable to PFD) Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		<p>Yes</p>
<p>Core indicators</p> <p>6. Are the identified core indicators in Table F calculated using the methodology included in the correspondent Guidelines? (GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01) Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>Indicator 6 should also be completed, to account for potential emissions avoided due to land-based interventions in case the project has selected 1 for the CCM Rio Marker.</p>	<p>We revised CCM Rio Marker from 1 to 0 as CCM is not one of the objectives of the project</p>

<p>Project/Program taxonomy</p> <p>7. Is the project/ program properly tagged with the appropriate keywords as requested in Table G?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>Does not reflect climate change or resilience although Mitigation and Adaptation are indicated as co-benefits.</p>	<p>We tagged adaptation since one of the targeted outputs is factoring enhancement of the new PAs' resilience to climate change. Mitigation is not one of the objectives of the Project and we revised the Rio marker accordingly</p>
<p>Part II ? Project Justification</p> <p>1. Has the project/program described the global environmental / adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers that need to be addressed?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>The description provided in the respective section 1.1 is more a general description of the situation, it does not really carve out the problems to be addressed and it does not provide a rationale for why interventions are needed, and it is not clearly connected with what the project proposes to invest in.</p> <p>Additional information on the socio-economic context of the landscape would be useful. For example, the main economic sectors, the overall population, and the number of farmers in the targeted region, the level of productivity, involvement of private sector, the gender dimensions etc.</p>	<p>1. We provided additional information about the environmental problems and their drivers. In addition, we provided the linkage between the environmental problems (e.g., salinity) and the needed interventions (e.g., lack of strategic frameworks).</p> <p>2. Socio economic data on the targeted landscape is not available however we provided the socio-economic profile of the country, which is same in the targeted landscape. We will refine our analysis at the PPG phase and will provide local socio-economic statistics.</p>

<p>2. Is the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects appropriately described? Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>The baseline scenario is reduced to a discussion of the KBA areas. What is the baseline in terms of BD conservation in general? What is the LDN baseline? It is also recommended to move the discussion of drylands management and food systems (which is included in the innovation section) into the baseline discussion.</p> <p>The baseline projects are only listed and briefly described. This description does not explain on HOW they form a baseline, and on HOW the project will build on it and again doesn't have a clear rationale and connection to what the project proposes to do.</p> <p>Additional information is needed on how this project will build on the existing projects outlined in the PIF including GEF funded projects. The baseline should also explain what previous GEF SLM projects (i.e., the GEF-6 FAO SLM project) have achieved in this respect and how the proposed project will build on it.</p>	<p>1. After the reduction in the oil prices, the Ministry's budget has significantly been reduced and the major biodiversity conservation activities have been limited with internationally funded activities. We highlighted some of the major ones as baseline projects. We provided LDN baseline and moved the section on drylands management to baseline.</p> <p>2. We highlighted some key elements of these projects, which we consider how the proposed Project will benefit from the baseline portfolio and will build on. We provided what GEF funded PAN achieved. The GEF-6 FAO SLM did not start in 2019 as it was planned. The achievements are yet on formation of the Project team and exchanges with stakeholders. We expect to have a stronger engagement with the Project team at the PPG phase.</p>
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<p>3. Does the proposed alternative scenario describe the expected outcomes and components of the project/program? Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>The alternative scenario seems to focus on the BD conservation component of the project (especially in the bold text in this section). Further, the section should also include a concise summary description of the Theory of Change (ToC) and refer to the attached graphic of the ToC. It is appreciated that the ToC graphic is attached, but without a concise description in the text it is difficult to make a connection to it.</p> <p>Further, the project needs to explain how the BD component will contribute to NBSAP and how the SLM component will contribute to the LDN targets.</p> <p>This section also makes mention of the following ?The project will also demonstrate sustainable food systems through implementing nature based solutions to landscape restoration at the local level through (a) capacity development programme for farmers, including resource mobilization, advocacy and communication related to ecosystem valuation and (b) training for local stakeholders e.g. farmers, PA managers, agricultural associations on best practices for agrobiodiversity water conservation and climate smart agriculture?.</p> <p>Please clarify how working on food systems fits in with the overall proposal. Is Component 3 focused on rehabilitating degraded land in order to generate GEBs and increased productivity and livelihoods or is it focused on sustainable food systems. If the latter, we would need additional information on the food of focus and the context around the production/processing/stakeholders involved in this food system.</p>	<p>1. We revised the bold text in the alternative scenario, it was not highlighting the overall objective of the Project. The project aims to strengthen local and national capacity for biodiversity conservation and LDN implementation. We provided a short paragraph on the description of ToC and also linked how the Project will support SDGs.</p> <p>2. We briefly provided how the project contributes to NBSAP and LDN strategy in Section 7 Consistency with National Priorities. Based on the comment, we provided additional text in the alternative section, how the project contributes to NBSAP and LDN targets.</p> <p>3. We clarified that the Project actions under Component 3 is to improve sustainable flow of agro-ecosystem services to sustain food production. We removed misleading phrase on 'sustainable food systems'</p>
<p>4. Is the project/program aligned with focal area and/or Impact Program strategies? Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		<p>Yes</p>

<p>5. Is the incremental / additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		<p>Yes</p>
<p>6. Are the project/s/program/s indicative targeted contributions to global environmental benefits (measured through core indicators) reasonable and achievable? Or for adaptation benefits?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>Section 1.6 has several shortcomings that need to be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - include the BD targets that are listed in the core indicator table and an explanation. - Confirm in this section that the areas to be designated as PAs are KBAs. - include the SLM targets that are listed in the core indicator table and provide further detail on how they are derived at and what benefits will the project bring to those areas. - Make number of direct beneficiaries consistent with the core indicators table. Please clarify who is included in the 30,000 beneficiaries - Please also include the potential co-benefits for Adaptation as RIO 1 was selected for CCA (in PIF text) ? - It is not clear how this project is contributing the LDN targets outlined for Iraq in Section 1.2 	<p>1. We included the BD target (establishment of 182,081 ha new PAs by highlighting that they are KBAs</p> <p>2. We included SLM target under Component 3</p> <p>3. Finally, we revised the direct beneficiary numbers in the first paragraph and included the co-benefit for Adaptation.</p> <p>4. We provided additional explanation on how the project is contributing to LDN targets on pages 16, 21, and 23.</p>
<p>7. Is there potential for innovation, sustainability and scaling up in this project?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>This section is described in general and slightly superficial terms. Especially the part on sustainability is very generic. Please refer to STAP guidance of what elements of sustainability (durability) GEF projects should address and in which way. Questions of COVID-19 risk and opportunities and the context of a fragile situation in the country (which is discussed elsewhere in the PIF) may play into the sustainability assessment.</p> <p>The word "manpower" right in front of a sentence on gender empowerment is misplaced.</p>	<p>We revised the sustainability section in line with the comment and the suggested STAP guideline " Achieving enduring outcomes from GEF investment".</p>

<p>Project/Program Map and Coordinates</p> <p>Is there a preliminary geo-reference to the project?/s/program?s intended location?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		<p>Yes</p>
<p>Stakeholders</p> <p>Does the PIF/PFD include indicative information on Stakeholder?s engagement to date? If not, is the justification provided appropriate? Does the PIF/PFD include information about the proposed means of future engagement?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		<p>Yes</p>
<p>Gender Equality and Women?s Empowerment</p> <p>Is the articulation of gender context and indicative information on the importance and need to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, adequate?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>While there are references to gender throughout the PIF, the question of what the project specific opportunities are to promote gender equality and women empowerment is not clearly carved out.</p> <p>These dimensions should be integrated throughout the project and in particular in the Alternative Scenario</p>	<p>We integrated the gender related opportunities into the log frame and the alternative scenario.</p>

<p>Private Sector Engagement</p> <p>Is the case made for private sector engagement consistent with the proposed approach?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>Either provide a strong justification of why the project does not have any private sector engagement, or alternatively, make an effort to involve private sector into the approach. Table B mentions economic incentives and also the SLM component should offer opportunities for doing that. It is therefore difficult to understand how private sector does not have a role in a project that involves improving productive landscapes that utilize agriculture as a main income earner as well as given the mention that the designated PAs can be used as eco-tourism sites. It is also necessary to consider the role of private sector in Component 1.</p>	<p>We reflected that the private sector will be one of the key stakeholders in the working groups under Component 1. We highlighted that the project will collaborate with private sector on development and implementation of ecotourism plans. Finally, under component 3 has elements how private sector will play in SLM. A summary of these private sector partnership plans is provided in Section 4.4. Private sector engagement.</p>
<p>Risks to Achieving Project Objectives</p> <p>Does the project/program consider potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved or may be resulting from project/program implementation, and propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>What is needed in the PIF in further detail is a separate discussion of climate risks and of COVID-19 risks and opportunities (i.e. how the project can contribute to green recovery plans of Iraq). The brief mention of both issues in the risk assessment table is not sufficient. Throughout the text these issues need to be considered in the design and the activities.</p> <p>On climate risks: the issue of droughts needs to be further elaborated and a link made to the UNCCD agenda, and to national plans.</p> <p>On COVID-19 risks and opportunities assessment: please refer to GEF guidance paper on how to address COVID-19 risks and opportunities that has been sent out to all agencies.</p> <p>Please also include the potential mitigation measures should the government have to reallocate planned co-financing to address COVID related medium term impacts.</p>	<p>1. We inserted climate risks (specifically on droughts) and relevant measures under Component 1 and 3 descriptions on pages 19-20.</p> <p>2. By using the covid-19 risks opportunities guidance, we highlighted in the beginning of alternative scenario how this poses a risk on project and suggested some actions. We included our suggested mitigation measure on the co-finance in the risks section.</p>

<p>Coordination:</p> <p>Is the institutional arrangement for project/program coordination including management, monitoring and evaluation outlined? Is there a description of possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project/program area?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>The PIF should not include exceptional implementation/execution arrangements for which no official request has been made by the OFP in line with GEF policies and guidelines. Please remove those references (including the listing of UNEP as executing agency in Part I of the PIF). Alternatively, the OFP must submit the exception request now at PIF stage.</p> <p>As the agency is well aware of, the implementation and execution roles on GEF projects are meant to be separate as per GEF policy and guidelines. The GEFSEC will analyze any requests for dual role playing by an agency at the time of CEO endorsement and only approve those cases that it deems warranted on an 'exceptional' basis, based on country requests. We strongly encourage the project proponents to look at third party options as a preferred way forward. We also strongly encourage the agency to discuss any and all options for project execution that do not include the government with the GEFSEC early in the PPG phase. The technical clearance of this PIF in no way endorses or encourages any alternative execution arrangement.</p>	<p>We removed the execution modality suggestion from the PIF. We will revisit the execution modality during the PPG and if will consult with the GEF Secretariat on possible execution modalities at the PPG phase.</p> <p>The Ministry of Environment of Iraq is the governmental institution to provide political and institutional supervision and act as the National Executing Entity/Responsible Partner. The overall responsibility for the project execution and implementation by the Ministry of Environment implies the timely and verifiable attainment of project objectives and outcomes. The Ministry of Environment officially requested UNEP's support functions with regard to project execution with a OFP Letter of Support. This letter has been uploaded to the portal under the title 'Appendix 19 - Letter of Support Request for Execution of the Project.pdf'.</p>
<p>Consistency with National Priorities</p> <p>Has the project/program cited alignment with any of the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>While the alignment is cited in general terms, please elaborate on how exactly and to what extent the project will contribute to national plans and targets under the NBSAP and the LDN targets.</p>	<p>We provided further details on how the project will contribute to NBSAP and LDN in the alternative scenario section.</p>

<p>Knowledge Management</p> <p>Is the proposed ?knowledge management (KM) approach? in line with GEF requirements to foster learning and sharing from relevant projects/programs, initiatives, and evaluations; and contribute to the project?s/program?s overall impact and sustainability?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>Please elaborate on the experiences mentioned in context with the GEF-6 FAO SLM project that the proposed project may use.</p>	<p>There is not yet any experience shared by the GEF6 FAO SLM project. The Project has not started yet. Our assumption is that while this Project in its PPG phase, the FAO SLM Project will complete its first year and we will reflect those early findings in the design of this Project's knowledge management.</p>
<p>Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)</p> <p>Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately documented at this stage and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>While the reviewer is not in a position to comment on the content of the ESS assessment, it is surprising, that the overall rating is "low", which is very different from previous assessments. Please briefly explain of how the overall assessment has been derived at</p>	<p>Our ESS expert reassessed the Project's ESS and suggested to consider the project as a moderate risk Project. We revised the rating and the ESS document on the portal.</p>
<p>Part III ? Country Endorsements</p> <p>Has the project/program been endorsed by the country?s GEF Operational Focal Point and has the name and position been checked against the GEF data base?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>The OFP letter is accepted. However, please note that OFP letters should not include any reference to policy exceptions. The request for exceptional execution arrangements has to be made separately.</p> <p>The technical clearance of this PIF in no way endorses or encourages any alternative execution arrangement.</p>	<p>Well-noted, we will reassess the execution modality and if needed do an upstream consultation with the GEF Secretariat.</p>

<p>Termsheet, reflow table and agency capacity in NGI Projects</p> <p>Does the project provide sufficient detail in Annex A (indicative term sheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table in Annex B to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. After reading the questionnaire in Annex C, is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>		N/A
<p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>Is the PIF/PFD recommended for technical clearance? Is the PPG (if requested) being recommended for clearance?</p> <p>Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion</p>	<p>No. Please address comments made in the review.</p>	

Responses to the council comments

Question	Response
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Question	Response
<p>Canada's comment #1: Canada notes that this project seems to focus on achieving land degradation neutrality in the Middle Euphrates landscape through integrated landscape management. However, the primary mechanism for doing this seems to be by establishing four new protected areas, which is not really restoration and / or a seemingly new or innovative approach.</p>	<p>The primary mechanism and approach proposed for this project is actually a combination of sustainable land management agriculture and biodiversity conservation - mainstreamed into key national sectors- which overall should produce tangible positive outcomes in terms of achieving land degradation neutrality targets to which Iraq Govt. is committed to. The project components go into further details on the mechanism and approach. In particular, component number 3 focuses fully on land degradation neutrality while component number 2 addresses the establishment of the 2 new Pas. The first and the fourth components are overarching to address the institutional setup and the capacity building at the national level. We emphasize the innovative solutions aimed at tackling land degradation neutrality proposed by the project in Section 6/Innovativeness of the CEO letter.</p>
<p>Canada's comment #2: Canada notes that STAP welcomes this proposal and highlights minor issues to be considered during the project design. Assuming the appropriate steps are taken to ameliorate the components of the project that are currently lacking. However, Canada would welcome more detailed information about how the project will show that there will be clear activities to facilitate land neutrality other than by protecting areas.</p>	<p>Please refer to response above. All the activities under Components 3 will be directly aimed at achieving land degradation neutrality, while those under Components 1 and 4 were specifically designed to support and facilitate the process.</p>
<p>Germany's comment #1: Importantly, we endorse the project ?integration of gender in several components but recommend that the percentage of female beneficiaries is made more precise and is further targeted in stakeholder management.</p>	<p>In the project document, the percentage of women representation is specified at the minimum threshold of 50% as can be seen in item# 349 (gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section of the prodoc).</p>
<p>Germany's comment #2: Additionally, we recommend that local women's organizations be included as stakeholders in the project to better address gender aspects.</p>	<p>As specified in item# 350, women farming associations and NGOs will be consulted and invited to participate in project activities according to their interest and competence as stakeholders. The complete list of the NGOs can be found in Appendix# 16.</p>

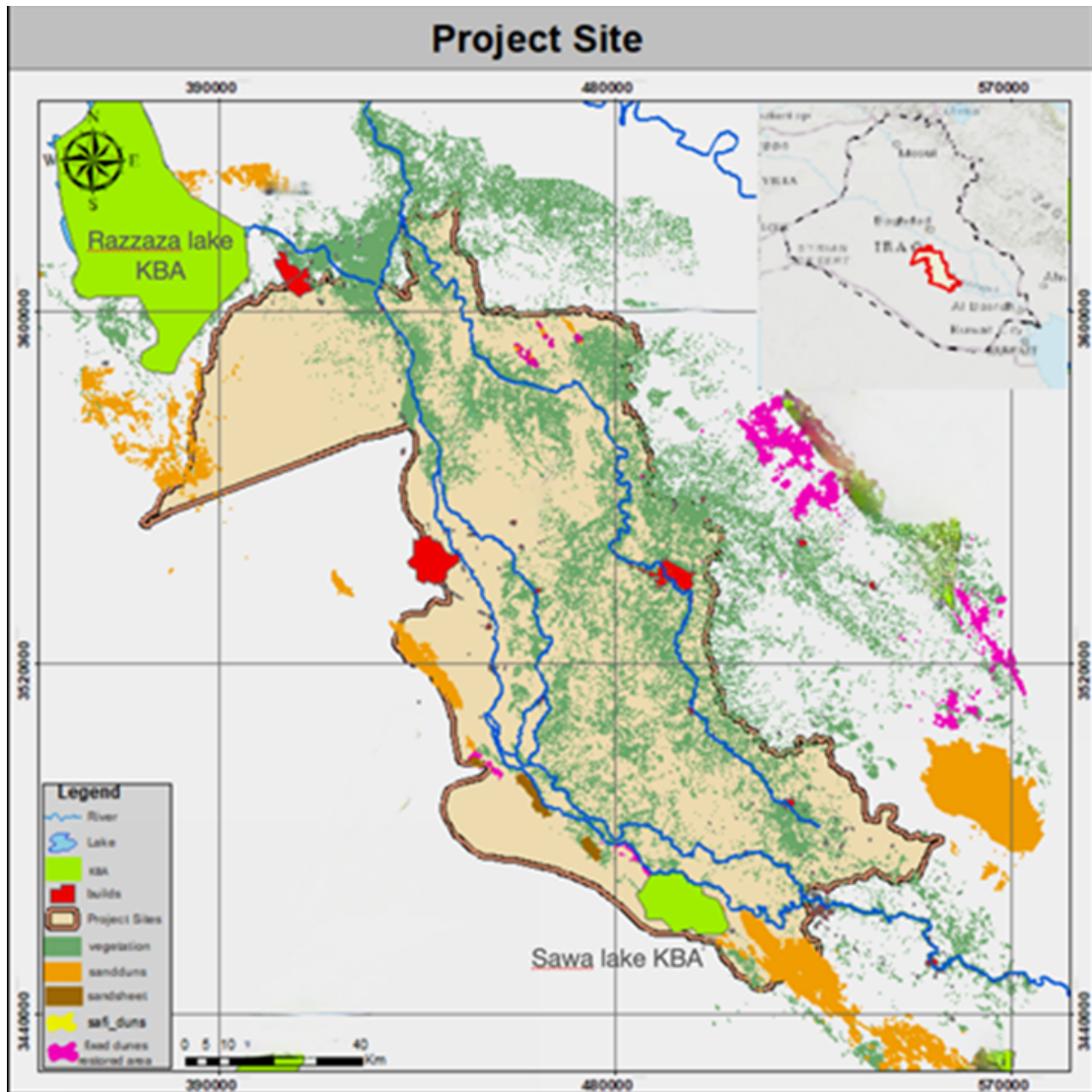
Question	Response
Germany's comment #3: Furthermore, while the proposal states relevant information on land degradation in Iraq, we recommend providing an updated land degradation baseline to better measure the project impacts in the future.	We provided the most updated information on the baseline for land degradation, available from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and other sources, in section 2.4 ?Threats, root causes and barrier analysis /Land degradation.? It is true that for certain topics information available from MoA and other sources, is not very updated.

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

PPG Grant Approved at PIF: ?????			
<i>Project Preparation Activities Implemented</i>	<i>GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount (\$)</i>		
	<i>Budgeted Amount</i>	<i>Amount Spent To date</i>	<i>Amount Committed</i>
International Lead Consultant	56,250	39,375	16,875
UN 2 UN Agreement - with UNDP to cover (national consultants, events, and fees).	62,148	49,718	12,430
Gender and SRIF consultant	16,000		16,000
Travel	15,000		15,000
Communication	602		602
Total	\$ 150,000	\$ 89,093	\$ 60,907

ANNEX D: Project Map(s) and Coordinates

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



ANNEX E: Project Budget Table

Please attach a project budget table.

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Components (USD)					M&E	PMC	Total (USD)	Responsible Entity (Executing Entity Receiving Funds From)
		Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Sub-Total				
		Outcome 1.1	Outcome 2.1	Outcome 3.1	Outcome 4.1					
Goods		\$ 25,910	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 250,910	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 250,910	
	Office equipment (computer, printers, scanners, etc)	\$ 25,910	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 100,910	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100,910	UNEP - ROWA
	Protected area field equipment		\$ 75,000			\$ 75,000			\$ 75,000	UNEP - ROWA
	SIM field equipment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 75,000	\$ -	\$ 75,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 75,000	UNEP - ROWA
Grants / Sub Grants		\$ 160,000	\$ 640,000	\$ 1,150,000	\$ -	\$ 1,950,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,950,000	
	ACSAD will lead component 3 of the project	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 600,000	ACSAD - See Footnote 1
	Lead the SIM capacity building program under output 3.1.4	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 400,000	\$ -	\$ 400,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 400,000	MOA - AEST - See Footnote 2
	Providing technical expertise in establishing the Pas	\$ 60,000	\$ 440,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500,000	IUCN - See Footnote 3
	Providing legal and technical support in implementing component 1	\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100,000	MOE - See Footnote 4
	Provide logistics support in establishing the PA management site (offices)	\$ -	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 200,000	UNDP - See Footnote 5
	UNEP - CFU will lead the implementation of output 3.1.5	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150,000	UNEP - CFU - See Footnote 6
Sub-Contract to Executing Partner / Entity		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 85,000	\$ -	\$ 85,000	
	Mid-Term Evaluation		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 35,000	\$ -	\$ 35,000	UNEP - Implementing Agency
	Terminal Evaluation		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ 50,000	UNEP - Implementing Agency
Consultants		\$ 125,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 105,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 480,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 480,000	
	Institutional, legal and policy expert (Int)	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	UNEP - ROWA
	Institutional, legal and policy expert (Nat)	\$ 35,000				\$ 35,000			\$ 35,000	UNEP - ROWA
	Socio-economy and gender expert (Int)	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000			\$ 50,000			\$ 50,000	UNEP - ROWA
	Socio-economy and gender expert (Nat)	\$ 15,000	\$ 20,000			\$ 35,000			\$ 35,000	UNEP - ROWA
	Hydrology, GIS and mapping (Int)		\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000		\$ 70,000			\$ 70,000	UNEP - ROWA
	Climate Change expert		\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000		\$ 70,000			\$ 70,000	UNEP - ROWA
	Biodiversity expert (Int)		\$ 50,000			\$ 50,000			\$ 50,000	UNEP - ROWA
	Biodiversity expert (Nat)		\$ 35,000			\$ 35,000			\$ 35,000	UNEP - ROWA
	Land Management expert (Nat)			\$ 35,000		\$ 35,000			\$ 35,000	UNEP - ROWA
	Awareness and Communication expert (Int)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	UNEP - ROWA
Salary and Benefits / Staff Cost		\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 300,000	\$ -	\$ 216,101	\$ 516,101	
	Project Coordinator					\$ -		\$ 216,101	\$ 216,101	UNEP - ROWA
	Project Manager / (CTA)	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 300,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 300,000	UNEP - ROWA
Trainings, Workshops, Meetings		\$ 490,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 116,174	\$ 250,000	\$ 956,174	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 956,174	
	Knowledge Material (Communication, Publications, Reporting, Website, Printing)	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 290,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 290,000	UNEP - ROWA
	Events (Workshops, Consultation, Technical meetings, Conferences) includes (Venues, Catering, Transportation, Participation)	\$ 440,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 66,174	\$ 110,000	\$ 666,174	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 666,174	UNEP - ROWA
Travel		\$ 150,000	\$ 43,971	\$ 45,000	\$ 60,972	\$ 299,943	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 299,943	
	International Travel	\$ 100,000	\$ 23,971	\$ 25,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 183,971	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 183,971	UNEP - ROWA
	Local Travel	\$ 50,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 25,972	\$ 115,972	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 115,972	UNEP - ROWA
Grand Total		\$ 1,025,910	\$ 1,158,971	\$ 1,581,174	\$ 460,972	\$ 4,237,027	\$ 85,000	\$ 216,101	\$ 4,538,128	

Notes

1	ACSAD	ACSAD will lead the implementation of the first 3 outputs of the third component of the project. Under the supervision and management of the Project Steering Committee (PSC), ACSAD will utilize its expertise to lead the implementation of output 3.1.1 – Support Tools for Decision Makers, output 3.1.2– field survey and analysis, and output 3.1.3 – SIM trails in the field involving farmers.
2	MOA (office of agriculture extension services and training) - AEST	AEST will lead the implementation of output 3.1.4 of the project under the supervision and management of the PSC. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) will be signed between the project and AEST identifying the TORs listing all the activities needed with related indicators and benchmarks as per appendices 4 and 5 of the prodoc. AEST is expected to lead the implementation of the training programme that will be used as a model for Farm Field Schools.
3	IUCN	IUCN will provide the technical support in the establishment of the Protected Areas (PAs). IUCN will lead the implementation of the outputs (2.1.1, 2.1.2, and 2.1.3) within (component 2) of the project.
4	MOE	MOE will provide the legal and technical support in leading the implementation of (component 1) of the project outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3. this will lead to attaining the strengthened policies and framework for the management of SLM, Biodiversity and PAs.
		UNDP Iraq will provide the technical and logistic support to establish and build the site



ANNEX F: (For NGI only) Termsheet

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

N/A

ANNEX G: (For NGI only) Reflows

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

N/A

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

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

N/A