

# GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

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## General Project Information

### Project Title

Scaling-up conservation and sustainable management of priority wetlands of the East-Asian Australasian Flyway in the Philippines (PHIL FLYWAY)

Region	GEF Project ID
Philippines	11578
Country(ies)	Type of Project
Philippines	MSP
GEF Agency(ies):	GEF Agency ID
ADB	
Executing Partner	Executing Partner Type
Department of Environment and Natural Resources /Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB)	Government
GEF Focal Area (s)	Submission Date
Biodiversity	3/21/2024

### Project Sector (CCM Only)

### Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Chemicals and Waste, Sound Management of chemicals and waste, Disposal, Best Available Technology / Best Environmental Practices, Pesticides, Plastics, Land Degradation, Food Security, Land Degradation Neutrality, Carbon stocks above or below ground, Land Cover and Land cover change, Sustainable Land Management, Sustainable Livelihoods, Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques, Ecosystem Approach, Sustainable Agriculture, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands, Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach, Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Climate Change, Climate Change Adaptation, Ecosystem-based Adaptation, Mainstreaming adaptation, Community-based adaptation, Sea-level rise, Innovation, Disaster risk management, Complementarity, Private sector, Climate finance, Livelihoods, Climate Change Mitigation, Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use, Financing, Biodiversity, Financial and Accounting, Payment for Ecosystem Services, Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Community Based Natural Resource Mngt, Productive Seascapes, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Coastal and Marine Protected Areas, Productive Landscapes, Species, Invasive Alien Species, Threatened Species, Wildlife for Sustainable Development, Biomes, Rivers, Tropical Rain Forests, Lakes, Mangroves, Coral Reefs, Sea Grasses, Wetlands, Tropical Dry Forests, Mainstreaming, Tourism, Agriculture and agrobiodiversity, Fisheries, Certification -National Standards, Ceritification - International Standards, Influencing models, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Deploy innovative financial instruments, Demonstrate innovative approache, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Stakeholders, Type of Engagement, Consultation, Information Dissemination, Partnership, Participation, Beneficiaries, Communications, Public Campaigns, Education, Behavior change, Awareness Raising, Civil Society, Community Based Organization, Non-Governmental Organization, Academia, Local Communities, Private Sector, SMEs, Financial intermediaries and market facilitators, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Indigenous Peoples, Gender Equality, Gender results areas, Participation and leadership, Capacity Development, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Access and control over natural resources, Access to benefits and services, Gender Mainstreaming, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Gender-sensitive indicators, Women groups, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Knowledge Exchange, Learning, Indicators to measure change, Theory of change, Adaptive management, Enabling Activities, Knowledge Generation

Type of Trust Fund	Project Duration (Months)
GET	48
GEF Project Grant: (a)	GEF Project Non-Grant: (b)
2,660,600.00	0.00
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c)	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant (d)
239,400.00	0.00
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d)	Total Co-financing
2,900,000.00	6,783,591.00
PPG Amount: (e)	PPG Agency Fee(s): (f)
91,745.00	8,255.00
PPG total amount: (e+f)	Total GEF Resources: (a+b+c+d+e+f)
100,000.00	3,000,000.00
Project Tags	
CBIT: No NGI: No SGP: No Innovation: No	

## Project Summary

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

Wetlands in the Philippines are a crucial part of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF) that provide 50 million migratory waterbirds, including 36 globally threatened species and 19 near threatened species, with shelter, food, roosting, and nesting habitat during their migration. These wetlands not only benefit migratory waterbirds, they also support many other species and provide valuable ecosystem services to local communities, through livelihood provisioning and climate resilience.

Unfortunately, the EAAF is under great threat and is the most vulnerable of all the nine global flyways. In most countries along the EAAF including the Philippines, the quality of coastal and inland wetlands is in serious decline. The drivers are numerous and include land conversion for agriculture, human habitation, shipping, invasive species, industrial development and pollution. Climate change is also beginning to have a profound impact on these wetlands.

The Government of the Philippines recognizes that it requires assistance to effectively address the myriad issues that continue to lead to degradation and loss of critical wetlands in the country while building on successes already achieved so that they can be brought to scale. This proposed project will provide assistance to protect, restore, and sustainably manage key wetland habitats in the Philippines, ensuring the conservation of migratory waterbirds and overall biodiversity, maintaining ecosystem services that these wetlands provide.

Flyways have the ability to link countries together and so this project will not only contribute to the Philippines, but also the wider conservation strategies of other countries along the EAAF for which these migratory waterbirds migrate.

The proposed project will promote investments in nature-based solutions (NbS) such as sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and eco-tourism, as well as sustainable financing, in order to eliminate or reduce drivers of land and water degradation, protect habitats and enhance ecosystem integrity, and support the overall effective management of the highest priority wetlands for migratory waterbirds in the Philippines. These priority wetlands were selected through the Regional Flyway Initiative (RFI) which is supported by a technical assistance<sup>[1]</sup> of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), in partnership with the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) and BirdLife International and with support from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Through the first phase of the RFI's science-based site selection process, a total of twelve (12) wetland sites were identified to be the most important to globally significant congregations of migratory waterbirds in the Philippines.<sup>[2]</sup> Further detailed consultations with the government and local stakeholders then narrowed down to three (3) sites of highest priority comprising – Candaba Wetlands in Pampanga province, Kabasalan-Siay Wetland Area (also known as Sibugay Wetlands) in Zamboanga-Sibugay province, and Lake Mainit in Agusan del Norte and Surigao del Norte provinces – covering an area of 196,008.6 ha.

The project will deliver at least one site as a model for wetland protection and sustainable management that can be replicated within the Philippines, and the EAAF more broadly. This project is expected to directly benefit around 262,000<sup>[3]</sup> people in and around the top priority wetland sites through, for example, sustainable provision of natural products, access to jobs in nature tourism, and protection from storm surges and coastal erosion.

The approach is in line with the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (PBSAP) 2015 – 2028 which details the government's commitment to the CBD, including the monitoring of migratory birds in selected inland and coastal wetlands to ensure their populations are maintained. This project is also aligned to the strategic plans formulated by the EAAFP to develop a network of wetlands of international importance for the conservation of migratory waterbirds along the flyway to enhance the conservation status of both birds and wetlands. Importantly, the project is aligned to the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) through the following goals: Goal A on enhancing ecosystems integrity and connectivity and reducing loss of biodiversity; Goal B on sustainable use of wetlands; and Goal D on closing the gap in sustainable financing.

The project complements other GEF funded projects on wetlands and migratory water birds including the ongoing GEF7 project in the People's Republic of China (PRC) (ID10073) which is focused on strengthening the protected area network for migratory bird conservation along the EAAF within the PRC.

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[1] ADB. 2021. [Regional Technical Assistance: Scaling Up the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Initiative](#)

[2] ADB. 2023. [Regional Flyway Initiative: 147 RFI Priority Wetland Sites](#)

[3] Total population based on census data from the Municipality of Candaba in Pampanga Province; Municipalities of Tungawan, R T. Lim, Talusan, Olutanga, Ipil, Naga, Kabasalan, Siay, and Payao in Zamboanga-Sibugay Province for Sibugay Wetlands; Municipalities of Jabonga and Kitcharao in Agusan del Norte Province and Municipalities of Alegria and Mainit in Surigao del Norte Province for Lake Mainit.

## Indicative Project Overview

### Project Objective

To protect, restore, and sustainably manage priority wetland habitats in the Philippine segment of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway to ensure the conservation of migratory waterbirds and overall biodiversity while providing ecosystem goods and services for local communities.

### Project Components

#### 1. Nature-based solutions (NbS) for conservation of wetlands for migratory waterbirds and for climate adaptation.

Component Type	Trust Fund
Investment	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
1,325,000.00	3,356,454.00

Outcome:

Outcome 1: Appropriate NbS implemented in selected priority wetlands considering landscape-seascape interactions to enhance migratory waterbird conservation and management.

Output:

Output 1.1 Building on existing ecosystem management modalities in the Philippines e.g. Protected Areas or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs), assessment for enhanced site-level protection, restoration, and sustainable management at the priority sites completed.

Output 1.2 To address threats (e.g. land degradation; over utilization for production), at least three NbS implemented across the priority sites to enhance protection and restoration of wetlands critical to migratory waterbirds, and reduced vulnerability to impacts of climate change within the sites and in adjoining communities

Output 1.3 Established a model managed wetland in at least one of the three priority sites, to improve protection and restoration at the landscape level through interventions such as sustainable agriculture and fisheries and sustainable tourism or other NbS that can also provide practical entry points for gender mainstreaming

#### 2. Governance

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
400,000.00	1,268,982.00

Outcome:

Outcome 2: Strengthened governance leading to effective management of priority wetland sites through institutional and capacity building, and policy reform.

Indicative targets:

150 number of training participants (at least 50% of them women) with extent of learning assessed; 3 priority sites with improved level of protection; 4 number of policies mainstreamed.

Output:

Output 2.1 Building on the results of the assessments from the RFI, comprehensive stakeholder analysis and consultations at priority wetland sites undertaken, including gender analysis. Analysis findings assessed and incorporated into the model, training needs and required competencies assessed, and corresponding programs designed and implemented including key operational and practical entry points for gender mainstreaming.

Output 2.2: Facilitated designation of relevant priority sites as conservation areas and nominated or designated under the Ramsar Convention and/or as part of the EAAFP Network following from relevant assessments, thereby expanding the network of sites in support of the conservation of migratory waterbirds.

Output 2.3: National wetland conservation policy supported, including provisions for migratory waterbird conservation.

Output 2.4: Lessons on integrated approaches mainstreamed in conservation and development plans in the priority sites; supporting policies formulated to facilitate upscaling and replication in other sites.

### 3. Sustainable financing

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
265,000.00	806,115.00

Outcome:

Outcome 3: Sustainable financing mechanisms in priority wetland sites put in place to support long-term management.

Indicative targets:

At least 2 innovative mechanisms in place; At least 3 financial plans (at national and/or local level) with allocation for wetlands conservation.

Output:

Output 3.1 Financing gaps in priority sites estimated and innovative financing designed and implemented in at least two sites. Potential financing mechanisms include but not limited to blue carbon finance, payments for ecosystem services, conservation finance, nature credits, biodiversity offsets, corporate/private sector financing, incentives for private landowners to accommodate conservation in production decisions. Mechanisms must also consider gender elements and opportunities for gender mainstreaming.

Output 3.2 Secured continuing allocations from municipal, provincial, regional (Regional Development Council) and/or national budgets to support implementation beyond the life of the project.

## 4. Knowledge management and learning

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
460,000.00	889,607.00

Outcome:

Outcome 4: Knowledge management and sharing from priority sites enhanced to support learning across priority sites, other wetlands in the Philippines and the EAAF.

Indicative targets:

6 knowledge products produced (2 per site); 25% of target population with enhanced knowledge of migratory birds and wetland habitats, improved knowledge on sustainable income-generating activities; Standardized methodology for monitoring priority sites completed.

Output:

Output 4.1 Knowledge Management Plan prepared for strategic implementation of knowledge sharing and dissemination of learning tools for various stakeholders, considering gender elements.

Output 4.2 Knowledge products produced in local languages for (i) site managers, particularly on wetland management techniques, habitat protection, restoration and management, including sustainable use of natural resources (e.g. sustainable rice farming); and (ii) other local stakeholders – women’s groups, school children, farmers, fisherfolks, and others involved in agriculture and aquaculture – for heightened public support for flyway wetlands and migratory waterbirds.

Output 4.3 Supplement available methodology for participatory and standardized metrics for monitoring habitats within priority sites to quantify changes in ecosystem services following land management interventions and to feed the monitoring results back into the management program.

Output 4.4 Management information system developed to serve as repository for migratory waterbirds and wetlands monitoring data, integrating existing database where possible.

## M&E

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
84,806.00	143,604.00

Outcome:

Annual report, Midterm review and terminal evaluation

Output:



Annual report, Midterm review and terminal evaluation reports

Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
1. Nature-based solutions (NbS) for conservation of wetlands for migratory waterbirds and for climate adaptation.	1,325,000.00	3,356,454.00
2. Governance	400,000.00	1,268,982.00
3. Sustainable financing	265,000.00	806,115.00
4. Knowledge management and learning	460,000.00	889,607.00
M&E	84,806.00	143,604.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2,534,806.00</b>	<b>6,464,762.00</b>
Project Management Cost	125,794.00	318,829.00
<b>Total Project Cost (\$)</b>	<b>2,660,600.00</b>	<b>6,783,591.00</b>

Please provide justification

PROJECT OUTLINE

A. PROJECT RATIONALE

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

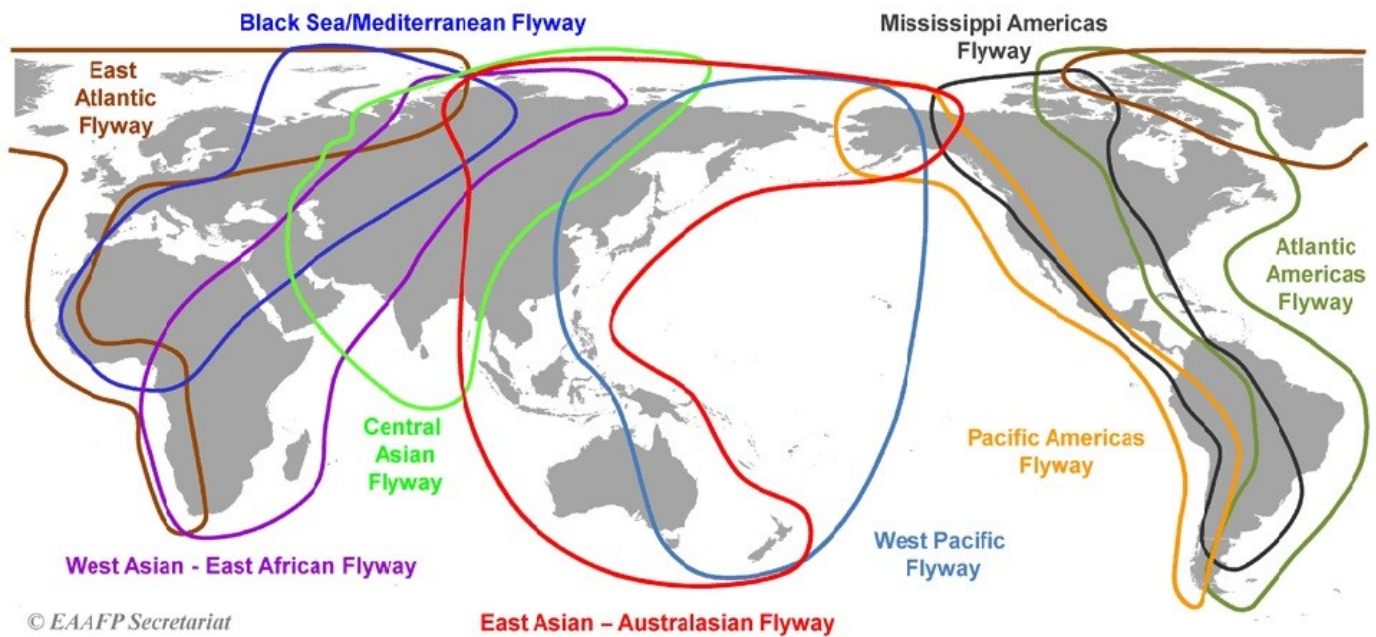
The Flyway Context

The East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF) as illustrated in Figure 1 is home to an estimated 50 million birds from 216 waterbird species of 20 families. The conservation of these migratory birds has been extensively studied and the results were published by Wetland International in 2022. [\[1\]](#)<sup>4</sup> Of the 159

populations with a known trend in the EAAF, 67 are decreasing while 43 are increasing and the remaining 25 are stable or fluctuating.

In the Philippines, the Influx of migratory birds starts around September of each year where they stopover in wetlands to rest and feed before continuing their journey southward. They return to their breeding grounds by March of the succeeding year stopping once again during their northward migration.

Figure 1: Map showing the EAAF (red outline)



## Drivers and Threats

In most of the countries along the EAAF, the area and quality of coastal and inland wetlands are in decline due to changes in direct drivers which are primarily population growth, economic development, and climate change. Population growth has triggered much of this change in land use, thus, conversion of wetlands into residential, commercial, industrial, agriculture and aquaculture, and other uses have been widespread. Moreover, reclamation of coastal areas to extend the land boundaries seaward has resulted in the large-scale loss of wetlands.

In remote areas where development pressure is not as pronounced as in urban areas, the loss of wetlands undergoes a progression starting from overharvesting of mangrove forest products to clearing and eventually to conversion into other uses such as for fishponds and in some cases, croplands.

Along with the growth of economic activity there is the associated exponential growth in the volume of waste, both solid and wastewater. Thus, pollution particularly in urban areas can impact critical migratory bird habitats.

Adding to the above threats to wetland ecosystems is the underappreciation of their values which are in the form of public goods. Compounding this issue, there is no comprehensive data of the extent and condition of

wetlands and there is a perception of unlimited resources meaning that conversion of ‘small’ peripheral areas would have marginal effect.

Climate change is an independent driver of environmental change and serves to amplify the existing drivers such as population growth and economic development. Climate change has already adversely affected many natural ecosystems and poses an existential threat to humanity. It has been estimated that nearly 50% of coastal wetlands have been lost over the last 100 years due to climate change and other localized human pressures. These impacts will continue and worsen as global climate model projections suggest that a significant proportion of present-day coastal wetland areas could be lost, and many permanent terrestrial wetlands could be turned into seasonal and ephemeral wetlands.

## Regional Response

To protect migratory waterbirds and the livelihoods of people dependent upon them, the EAAF Partnership (EAAFP) was launched in November 2006 with the Philippines included as a founding member. The EAAFP has in place a strategic plan, for the period 2019-2028<sup>[2]</sup><sup>5</sup>, its objectives include the development of a network of sites of international importance for the conservation of migratory birds along the EAAF (first objective) and the development, especially for priority species and habitats, flyway-wide approaches to enhance the conservation status of migratory birds (objective 5).

The ADB in 2021 launched RFI in collaboration with the EAAFP and BirdLife International. The RFI set out to support delivery of key actions within the EAAFP Strategic Plan (See Attachment 1 for progress to date). The RFI since its launch has worked across ten ADB Developing Member Countries (DMC) with a focus on three main outputs: i) undertake a needs assessment exercise; ii) develop a site selection framework to identify the sites of highest priority to migratory waterbirds (see Attachment 2) and then to develop early project concepts for 50 priority sites; and iii) develop a long-term sustainable financing mechanism. With the support of existing ADB grant financing, the RFI will continue to the end of 2025 across all 10 countries, complementing the work of this project within the Philippines.

In addition to the above, ADB investment projects are now starting to be developed in participating countries which will contribute to conservation and sustainable management of wetlands along the EAAF and the species that use them. To date, one project has been approved in Cambodia at Koh Kapik Ramsar site<sup>[3]</sup><sup>6</sup> and a number of further projects are now in development in the PRC, Philippines, and Thailand all linked to priority wetland sites identified through the RFI.

## The Philippine Context

This subsection examines the situation in the Philippines in more detail. Through the first phase of the RFI site selection process, the 12 priority sites (Figure 2) were identified through the site selection criteria of the RFI as outlined in detail in Attachment 2.

The 12 sites identified were then discussed in detail with the DENR Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) to identify the sites of highest priority to the government for support through this GEF project, based on the following ranking criteria: uniqueness of the wetlands (representation of wetland types), level of threat or opportunity to reduce threat, extent of existing support from GEF/donors, accessibility, opportunity to pilot NbS, and geographical distribution across regions in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao (see Attachment 4 for full ranking table). The resulting top three sites from the ranking were Candaba Wetlands, Sibugay Wetlands, and Lake Mainit. Focusing on these three sites at Sibugay Wetlands, and Lake Mainit also building on work

undertaken through the ASEAN Flyway Network Project from 2018 for (see below) while addressing a direct need at the Candaba Wetlands which are the least protected of all the 12 priority sites.

Figure 2: Priority wetland sites in the Philippines identified through the Regional Flyway Initiative



### Local Drivers and Future Narratives

The conservation status outlined in Attachment 3 and the discussion of drivers of change in the preceding paragraphs indicate that the sustainability of project results hinge on long-term stability and the ecological integrity of the priority wetlands. Key factors that may affect their stability include:

**Protection Status:** The level of protection currently accorded to each site varies significantly. Among the 12 identified RFI priority sites, some sites are covered by a national law, others by presidential proclamations, local government ordinances and municipal resolution. Congressional designation provides the strongest legal basis that could guarantee long-term protection while LGU ordinances and resolutions show commitment of local stakeholders but are sensitive to the political priorities. Ramsar designation indicates government support to keep the sites intact through international commitment. The likelihood of physical loss of wetlands due to conversion largely depends on the legal instrument employed in designation.

**Pollution:** Wetlands throughout the Philippines are degraded by pollution through the improper disposal of solid wastes and wastewater. Proximity to urbanized areas and industrial zones determines the level of wastewater discharges into the wetlands. In the Philippines particularly, wastewater treatment is limited, resulting in raw domestic, commercial, and industrial wastewater discharges. Excess feeds from adjacent fish farms (pens, cages, ponds), as well as fertilizer and pesticide in runoff from agricultural lands upstream worsen water quality within wetlands. Solid waste, primarily plastic, is transported over wider areas and trapped in mangroves that could be ingested as food by birds and other fauna species.

**Management Plan Implementation:** The existence of management plans that would be expected to address issues relating to conversion and pollution also contributes to the level of protection. The crucial factor though is not the development of the plan but the level of implementation and the enforcement of regulations arising from the plans.

The abovementioned local factors determines the status of priority wetlands. Conversion of wetlands into other uses will be least likely if the legal basis of designation is strong. Degradation from pollution and other factors is largely determined by development in adjacent areas. The existence and implementation of management plans will contribute to the preservation of ecological integrity of wetlands.

**Climate Change:** Climate change is a global phenomenon that is already affecting the status of wetlands in the Philippines and elsewhere. The impacts, are expected to vary from one region to another in terms of magnitude, but the general direction is expected to be the same - sea level rise, changes in the frequency and intensity of storms, changes in precipitation, and warmer ocean temperatures.

Four simple scenarios/narratives are briefly described in Attachment 5 to assess the durability of project impacts which can be summarized by stating that unless the current weak level of protection is addressed, the worsening situation from increased storm events, coastal erosion, sea level rise and changing rainfall patterns that have already resulted in losses and irreversible damages on wetlands, will be further worsened.

## Barriers

Addressing the global and local drivers of change and threats to wetland protection and conservation and making them suitable as seasonal habitats for migratory birds is not straightforward but complicated by several barriers. These are discussed below.

**Barrier 1:** Lack of political will and resolve to accord stricter legal protection status to some of the priority wetland sites

There is a common perception that a stricter declaration through legislative action or through national/local government pronouncement would limit options about future use of the wetland area. This is a disincentive to conservation. In public lands, residents and those with vested interests would oppose any declaration unless there are private benefits on top of the mostly public goods that will be generated. Private local benefits can be in the form of increased employment and ecotourism. However, since most sites are remote and ecotourism

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potential is limited, the usual option continues to be conversion into aquaculture ponds, agriculture, residential or a combination thereof.

The case of Candaba swamp is more complicated, as the wetland is on private land and the opportunity costs for farmers could be considerable. The season for planting rice and the duration of migratory bird wintering may coincide resulting in conflict of use. Setting aside the most critical areas for seasonal bird habitat comes at the expense of earnings from agriculture.

#### Barrier 2: Inadequate financial resources to implement meaningful wetland protection and conservation

The Philippines enacted two landmark laws for the establishment and management of protected areas: Republic Act No 7586 or the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992 and Republic Act No 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (E-NIPAS) Act of 2018. These define protected areas as “portions of land and water set aside by reason of their unique physical and biological significance, managed to enhance biological diversity and protected against destructive human exploitation”.<sup>[4]</sup> Currently, the Philippines has a total of 248 protected areas but only 74 have management effectiveness evaluations. Moreover, the results of a 2016 study<sup>[5]</sup> concluded that appropriate management and governance infrastructures, funding streams, management plans and capacity are present only in a few protected areas, and protected area land zonation regimes are not appropriately matched to biodiversity conservation priorities.

The Philippines issued a milestone policy to support the implementation of the PBSAP by calling for the mainstreaming of biodiversity down to the lowest government unit and across all sectors. Section 43 of the General Appropriations Act (GAA) for FY 2019 included a provision that “all agencies of the government shall ensure that protection of biological diversity is integrated and mainstreamed into their development programs and projects”. Moreover, DENR Administrative Order 2016-12 which called for the adoption of PBSAP directed the “integration of the Philippine Strategy for Biodiversity Conservation in the sectoral plans, programs and projects of the National Government Agencies”. These policies provided entry points into the annual government budget allocation although the extent of impacts is as yet unclear.

#### Barrier 3: Under appreciation and/or lack of awareness of the value of wetlands leading to conversion into other uses

Many studies have been conducted to estimate the value of wetlands. One of the more recent studies was by the World Bank’s Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services (WAVES) program. Working closely with the Philippine government, the program estimated the value of the coastal protection benefits of mangroves<sup>[6]</sup> for the entire country, which currently benefits about 613,000 people. The program showed that without mangroves, flooding and damages to people, property and infrastructure would increase annually by approximately 25% while restoring mangroves to its distribution and areal extent in 1950 would benefit an additional 267,000 annually and \$450 million in annual averted damages. These amounts represent only a single ecosystem function and do not include goods (e.g., fish, non-timber forest products, medicines) and other services such as habitat for migratory birds. Even with all this information published and accessible since 2017 there continues to be loss of mangrove ecosystems (and other wetlands), clearly indicating the continuing under appreciation of the value of public goods derived from mangroves and other wetlands.

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#### Barrier 4: Lack of an overarching wetland conservation policy

The Philippines has a total of 464 wetland sites composed mostly of lakes, swamps, creeks, marshes, and peatlands, but this number does not yet account for coastal, riparian, and human-made wetlands. Despite their importance, there is no legislation that advances wetland conservation and its wise use. While existing laws may include provisions directly or indirectly promoting wetland conservation, there is none specifically for wetlands that could serve as the ‘mother’ law that will address the gray areas on existing policies relevant to inland and coastal wetland conservation.

As of 2021, there are two pending bills in Congress on wetland conservation – “An Act Institutionalizing the National Wetlands Conservation Policy” and the other “National Peatland and Peatland Resources Act”. To date, there is no clear direction on the status of these bills.

#### Philippine Response

The project will focus on improving the protection and conservation status of priority wetlands to stabilize their ecosystem function as habitats for migratory birds and other wildlife, in the face of environmental fluctuations from both climate change and localized drivers of environmental change. The preceding analysis provides justification to the project results framework presented in section on Project Summary. This is further discussed in the succeeding section.

The Philippine response is aligned with national, regional, and global commitments. Nationally under the PBSAP Target 6, the country envisions that by 2028, the population of migratory bird species identified in selected inland and coastal wetlands along the EAAF will be maintained. Moreover, the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) calls for the conservation and rehabilitation of wetlands using NbS to enhance resilience to risks from climate change and natural disasters. It is also consistent with the NDC focus on the circular economy and climate change adaptation in sectors of coastal and marine environment, biodiversity, forestry and agriculture.

At the regional and global levels, the Philippines is committed to the wise use and conservation of wetlands as a signatory of the Ramsar Convention and as International Organization Partner of the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). The country is also a member of the EAAF Partnership (EAAFP) as earlier mentioned. The Philippines is also a signatory to all the Rio conventions and committed to the achievement of the SDGs.

A recent concrete Philippine initiative on the conservation of migratory birds is participation in the ASEAN regional cooperation project launched in 2018, entitled Improving Biodiversity Conservation of Wetlands and Migratory Waterbirds in the ASEAN Region<sup>[7]<sup>10</sup></sup>, with the support from the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) and Singapore. Implemented by the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity (ACB), it covered five sites: Agusan Marsh; Negros Occidental Coastal Wetlands Conservation Area; Olango Island; Sibugay Wetlands; and Lake Mainit. Following on from the extensive on-the-ground activities for these sites, the following were recommended: a) rehabilitation of wetlands through replanting of mangroves, reducing pollution, addressing land-use issues; b) addressing invasive species; c) intensified enforcement of laws; d) enhanced communication and awareness of the importance of wetland conservation; e) continuing monitoring of wetlands and migratory birds; f) designation/nomination of relevant sites as part of the EAAFP Network.

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[1] Wetland International. 2022. [Report on the Conservation Status of Migratory Waterbirds of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway](#)

[2] East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership. 2018. [EAAFP MOP10/D1: East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership 2019-2028 Strategic Plan](#)

[3] [Koh Kapik and Associated Islets | Ramsar Sites Information Service](#)

[4] <https://www.protectedplanet.net/en/country/PHL>

[5] Mallari, N.A. et al. 2016. Philippine protected areas are not meeting the biodiversity coverage and management effectiveness of Aichi Target 11. *Ambio*. 54(3): 313-322.

[6] Beck and Lange. 2017. [Mighty Mangroves of the Philippines: Valuing Wetland Benefits for Risk Reduction & Conservation \(worldbank.org\)](#)

[7] <https://asean.chm-cbd.net/news/asean-inspiring-action-wetlands-restoration>

## B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### **Project description**

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

This project aims to contribute to the protection, restoration, and sustainable management of the priority wetlands in the Philippine segment of the EAAF and ensure the conservation of migratory waterbirds and overall biodiversity while providing ecosystem good and services for local communities. This project will implement on-the-ground investment activities (NbS and sustainable financing) and support soft components (capacity building of stakeholders, providing a conducive policy environment and knowledge sharing) in the top 3 priority wetlands sites (Candaba Wetlands, Sibugay Wetlands, and Lake Mainit). These interventions are expected to address the identified threats and drivers of environmental change and the barriers to the achievement of project objectives which are discussed in earlier sections.

The project theory of change (TOC) is illustrated in Figure 3 below and is expressed as follows:

IF appropriate interventions in the form of NbS (such as sustainable agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and eco-tourism) are successfully implemented in the priority wetlands thereby eliminating or reducing causes of land and water degradation, protecting and enhancing the habitats for migratory waterbirds, and improving the wetlands' ecosystem integrity,

IF the NbS interventions ensure the sustainability of utilized ecosystem goods and services thus enhancing and improving livelihoods, and the priority wetlands are adopted as 'models' for other wetlands,

IF the governance of wetlands is made more conducive by enhancing the capacity of direct beneficiaries, the communities and their organizations, the national and local government stakeholders in the management of wetlands and by implementing a related policy reform agenda,



IF the outcomes are made ‘durable’ by generating adequate and sustainable stream of funds for wetland conservation and management beyond the duration of the project, which will be sourced from various parties including from regular allocations of government budgets at the local and national levels and from innovative financing schemes in partnership with the private sector, foundations and other international and national donors.

IF the status of wetlands and migratory waterbirds are properly monitored using standardized tools and the data and lessons learned from the implementation of project activities are managed and made accessible and exchanged for potential application in other wetlands,

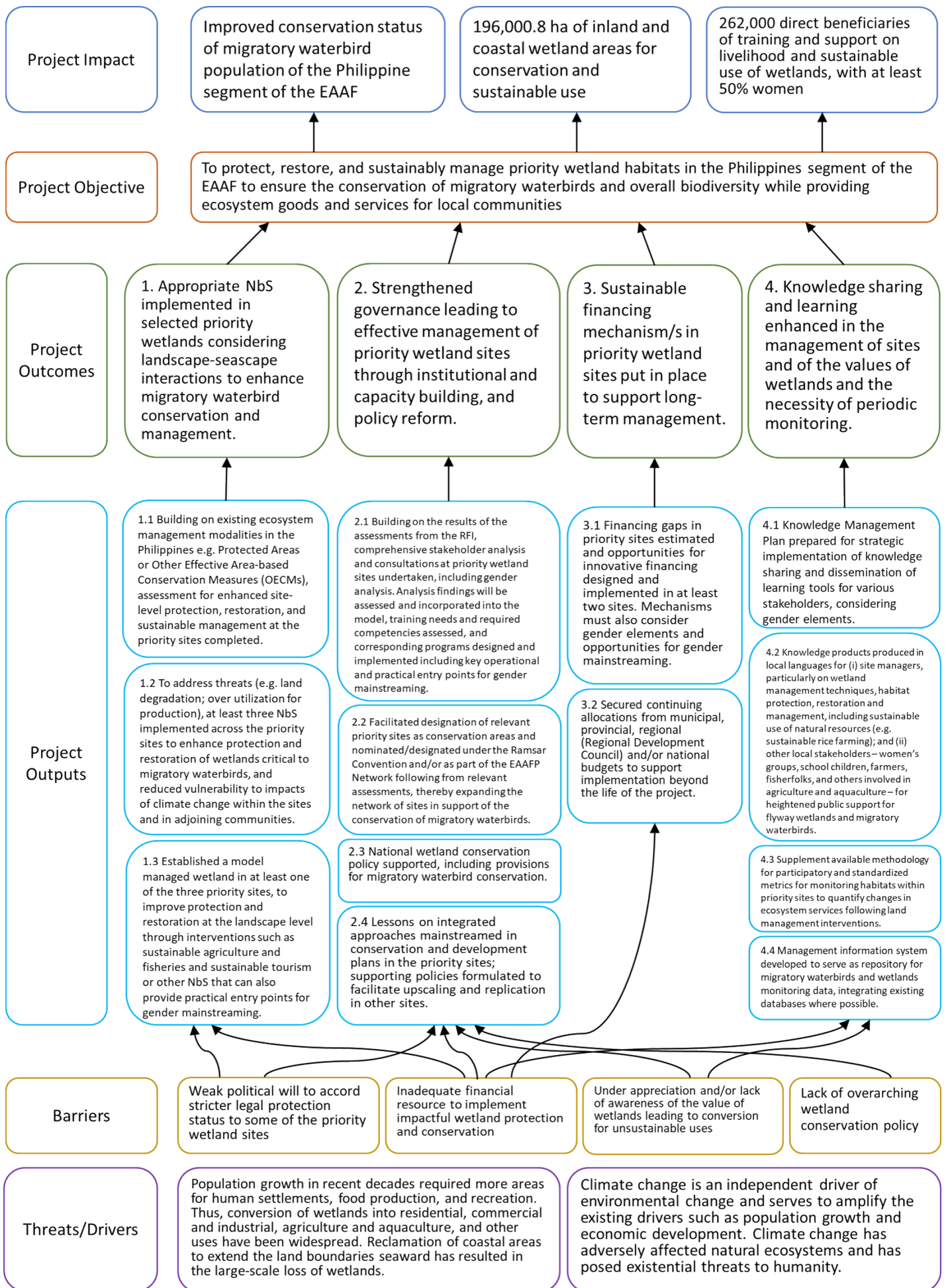
THEN the priority wetland sites and other wetlands in the Philippine segment of the EAAF are protected and conserved to support a stable population of migratory waterbirds that move along the regional flyway as well as provide long-term livelihoods to communities,

BECAUSE, the project has demonstrated that wetlands critical to the survival of migratory birds and to the well-being of local communities can be protected and sustainably managed through a combination of: a) concrete on-the-ground investments in NbS; that eliminate existing threats and sustain ecosystem services; b) stronger governance through stakeholder and community capacity building and participation in project activities, and policy reform; c) increased flow of funds for wetland conservation; d) shared knowledge and methodologies for potential application in other wetlands.

The TOC is based on the following assumptions:

- a) In the priority sites, the value of wetlands is recognized by local communities including particularly the private landowners in the Candaba Wetlands, resulting in their full support of the project. Moreover, local government officials share the same understanding and are also in full support of all the interventions following thorough consultations. NGO/CSO project partners continue to share the objectives of the project leading to a long-lasting partnership.
- b) Local political officials take leadership in advocacy to put the wetlands under some form of protection such as protected area, local conservation area through ordinances or as OECM. At the national level, DENR and Congress prioritize the pending National Wetland Policy bill to provide an overarching policy for wetland conservation that will include a provision on migratory waterbird protection.
- c) Local governments and national agencies routinely include allocations for wetland conservation in their respective annual budgets to support actions in the priority wetlands and other wetland sites that are important for migratory waterbird protection. Equally important is that the private sector – corporations, tourism establishments and small and medium businesses – welcome the opportunity to financially support wetland conservation in the medium to the long-term.

Technologies adopted for periodic monitoring, including the waterbird census is available and accessible to local volunteers and community leaders while for the knowledge portal, the information is also accessible and applied across project sites and other wetlands in the country.



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### Figure 3. Theory of Change

Further on the incremental cost analysis of this project at the PIF stage, and informed by the TOC above, the diagram below explains the impact that the GEF funding will provide compared to a business-as-usual scenario taking into account the existing situation at the three priority wetlands.

Currently, the conservation status and management, and threats affecting the three sites are described in the PIF Attachment 3. All three sites are being used by locals for various livelihoods (agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries) and in some sites like Lake Mainit, industrial use (hydropower), as well as recreational and cultural uses.

With the current baseline level of conservation (as per Attachment 3), local level measures to protect the sites are not enough to control overexploitation, land conversion, and to change wetland use to more sustainable practices and therefore with business-as-usual scenario, there is a high risk of continuing overexploitation of resources and land conversion leading to a loss of habitats for migratory waterbirds plus associated increased risk from climate change related disasters.

With the incremental GEF funding, there will be a push for strengthened implementation of the national level policy for wetlands to which local level policies will be grounded. Through the project this will be combined with sustainable financing for NbS to ensure that improved practices not only deliver biodiversity gains for migratory waterbirds, but also equitably share long-term gains in enhancement of ecosystem services and improved livelihoods for local people, while also improving climate change adaptation and resilience.

Baseline - Existing Situation	Business -as-usual Scenario	Incrementality through GEF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak implementation of policies and conservation measures to protect and sustainably manage priority wetland sites.</li> <li>• Ongoing overexploitation, degradation and loss of wetland habitats and the species they support resulting from a lack of enforcement of existing legislation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing overexploitation of natural resources within priority wetland sites.</li> <li>• Unchecked land conversion and degradation of priority wetlands</li> <li>• Continuing losses of migratory waterbirds not able to use key stopover sites within the Philippines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NbS to replace unsustainable use of wetland resources in order to eliminate or reduce causes of wetland degradation, and to protect and enhance habitats for migratory waterbirds</li> <li>• Support for sustainable financing and governance to strengthen wetland management and improve implementation of policies for wetland conservation</li> <li>• Improved engagement with wetland stakeholders through participatory consultations, capacity building, and awareness raising.</li> <li>• Maintenance or increase in wetland bird populations.</li> </ul>

While GEF funding for the project will be essential, co-financing from ADB and other partners will also be essential to fully explore opportunities at each of the three sites such as at Candaba with sustainable production, flood management, and habitat restoration, and the potential for carbon credits at Sibugay Wetlands as examples.

The project is summarized below, and this section demonstrates that the proposed project is aligned with the GEF Biodiversity focal area in delivering the specified Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs)

#### Project Objective:

To protect, restore, and sustainably manage priority wetland habitats in the Philippine segment of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway to ensure the conservation of migratory waterbirds and overall biodiversity while providing ecosystem goods and services for local communities.

### **Component 1: Nature-based solutions (NbS) for conservation of wetlands for migratory waterbirds and for climate adaptation**

NbS are defined by IUCN as “actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.’ The NbS framework emerged from the Ecosystem Approach, which underpins the CBD and considers biodiversity conservation and human well-being to be dependent on functioning and resilient natural ecosystems (CBD, 2004). The identification, design and implementation of

NbS will be guided by the extensive lessons learned from the vast GEF portfolio in this area, e.g., from various STAP documents.

In this project, NbS will be the centerpiece as these constitute concrete interventions on the ground. The soft components will be designed to support NbS and other equally important outcomes and outputs. Considering the limited resources available, NbS will initially target three priority wetland sites but coverage may be expanded depending on the availability of cofinancing mobilized during project design and implementation. Further considering the limited financial resources and short project duration, this component will build on existing management plans following review and updates, as necessary.

Outcome 1: Appropriate NbS implemented in selected priority wetlands considering landscape-seascape interactions to enhance migratory bird conservation and management

Output 1.1 Building on existing ecosystem management modalities in the Philippines e.g. Protected Areas or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs), assessment for enhanced site-level protection, restoration, and sustainable management at the priority sites completed.

#### Indicative Activities

- Baseline studies, biophysical and socio-economic assessments including SWOT analysis and problem identification and stakeholder analysis and consultations (by year 1).
- Identification, feasibility study, and prioritization, planning and design of NbS in at least two sites to address environmental concerns through sustainable agriculture / aquaculture, ecotourism, biodiversity-friendly enterprises, DRR-CCA to promote harmonization/co-existence of humans in priority wetlands.
- Community preparation (e.g., organizing) especially for livelihood- and socioeconomic-based components of NbS interventions
- Capacity-building among implementing and local partners on NbS approaches, e.g., field exposure, learning exchange, training (Y2)

Output 1.2 To address threats (e.g. land degradation; over utilization for production), at least three NbS implemented across the priority sites to enhance protection and restoration of wetlands critical to migratory waterbirds, and reduced vulnerability to impacts of climate change within the sites and in adjoining communities[.

#### Indicative activities

- Assess existing management plans towards integration landscapes and seascapes in target locations to highlight connectivity of habitats and as input to the design of NbS (Y2-Y3)
- Implementation of appropriate pilot NbS (Y2-Y3).· NbS may include minor civil works and/or purchase of equipment as recommended in the completed assessments in Output 1.1
- Monitoring (including comparison against baseline biophysical and socio-economic assessments), documentation, and evaluation (Y2-Y4)

Output 1.3 Established a model managed wetland in at least one of the three priority sites, to improve protection and restoration at the landscape level through interventions

such as sustainable agriculture and fisheries and sustainable tourism or other NbS that can also provide practical entry points for gender mainstreaming.

#### Indicative activities

- Update existing management plans to include NbS design, implementation, and results from the pilot, plus the recommendations, gender elements and measures to ensure effective long-term implementation (Y3-Y4). · The model managed wetland to showcase benefits to biodiversity generally and migratory waterbirds specifically.
- Identify potential sites for replication in other RFI sites in the country (Y3-Y4)

## Component 2: Governance

This component will focus on providing a conducive policy and regulatory environment for the entire project and specifically the other project components to achieve their intended outcomes and outputs. Governance will include the national and local government institutions and non-government and community-based partners, the local communities, including indigenous peoples. The strengthening of institutions and stakeholders through a variety of modalities – formal trainings, partnerships, etc. – will be instrumental towards effective management of wetlands. A policy agenda is identified as one of the priorities. The project will advocate for the declaration of the priority sites as either a protected area, a local conservation area, or OECM, to ensure continuity of their protection and of conservation actions beyond the duration of the project. At the national level, the proposed National Wetlands Conservation Act which has been pending for years will be advocated as part of this project, as well as the inclusion of provisions for the conservation of migratory birds.

The major stakeholders are the local communities that depend on the wetlands partly for food and livelihood (fishing and gleaning), for coastal protection against storm surges, for recreation and other services. They are the primary beneficiaries of the project. The project will collaborate directly with these communities and through their formal and informal associations, e.g., community-based organizations. Other cause-oriented groups such as NGOs working in the priority sites will also be relevant. The project will explore modalities for collaboration with these stakeholders.

Local governments as well as national government agencies constitute one of the major stakeholder groups of the project whose support and leadership in some activities are essential in the success of the project and in the delivery of GEBs. Development partners and private sector groups will also be consulted to identify areas for synergy.

**Outcome 2: Strengthened governance leading to effective management of priority wetland sites through institutional and capacity building, and policy reform.**

**Output 2.1: Building on the results of the assessments from the RFI, comprehensive stakeholder analysis and consultations at priority wetland sites undertaken including gender analysis. Analysis findings will be assessed and incorporated into the model, training needs and required competencies assessed,**

and corresponding programs designed and implemented including key operational and practical entry points for gender mainstreaming.

#### Indicative activities

- Validate/update/expand recent stakeholder mapping and capacity needs assessment results, such as the output from the RFI workshop in the Philippines in 2023 with participating stakeholders from national and provincial government agencies and civil society organizations and additional consultations with local government and community representatives of the top 3 sites, and other relevant assessment, to ensure gender mainstreaming, the inclusion of local communities, indigenous peoples where present, NGOs, CBOs, local government units, relevant local entrepreneurs, among others
- Training needs assessment (TNA) related to wetland conservation at priority sites
- Develop training workplan and modules based on capacity needs and with clear gender targets, including use of online resources (to ensure long-term viability)
- Conduct of capacity-building including with gender targets based on TNA and required competencies with participation of stakeholders from both priority and non-priority sites

Output 2.2: Facilitated designation of relevant priority sites as conservation areas and nominated/designated under the Ramsar Convention and/or as part of the EAAFP Network following from relevant assessments, thereby expanding the network of sites in support of the conservation of migratory waterbirds.

#### Indicative activities

- Undertake stakeholder consultation on appropriate conservation target for each priority site;
- Gather of stakeholder support/commitment for the designation (e.g. LGU Resolutions, Letters of Support, etc);
- Compile information needs for the designation (RIS, SIS, PASA, wetland profile etc); documentary requirements;
- Determine boundaries of the management area; prepare maps
- submit to appropriate authority
- Facilitate approval of designation instrument;

Output 2.3: National wetland conservation policy supported, including provisions for migratory waterbird conservation.

### Indicative activities

- Review and enhancement of draft Wetlands bill and include explicit provisions for migratory waterbird conservation
- Support to enactment of a national wetland conservation legislation
- Conduct communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) for policy support through development of policy briefs and awareness materials on the need for a national wetland policy, and conduct of legislators forum

Output 2.4: Lessons on integrated approaches mainstreamed in conservation and development plans in the priority sites; supporting policies formulated to facilitate upscaling and replication in other sites.

### Indicative activities

- Facilitate enhancement/development and adoption of wetland management plan;
- Advocate inclusion of migratory waterbirds and their wetland habitats in local and regional development and sectoral plans
- Present project and subsequent results to concerned LGUs, Regional Development Council; River Basin Council, other management bodies etc

## **Component 3: Sustainable Financing**

This component will explore both innovative and traditional sources of financing for wetland and migratory waterbird conservation to ensure the durability of outcomes beyond the project. It will also serve as an important component of the project exit strategy. The GEF grant will be expected to catalyze the flow of funds to narrow the financing gap that will be identified. Traditional sources include local and national budgets for which annual allocations for the priority sites will be pushed. Bilateral and multilateral sources will also be tapped to the extent possible through joint conduct of activities during implementation. While the magnitude of these funds remains small, these sources present opportunities for growth. Innovative financing schemes will primarily involve the private sector through schemes that may include, biodiversity offsets, nature credits, insurance and corporate social responsibility, among others. The project will support the ongoing discussions on biodiversity offsets, for example in sites with various public and private sector developments such as in Manila Bay.

Outcome 3: Sustainable financing mechanism/s in priority wetland sites put in place to support long-term management.



Output 3.1 Financing gaps in priority sites estimated and opportunities for innovative financing designed and implemented in at least two sites. Potential financing mechanisms include but not limited to blue carbon finance, payments for ecosystem services, conservation finance, nature credits, biodiversity offsets, other corporate/private sector financing, incentives for private landowners to accommodate conservation in production decisions. Mechanisms must also consider gender elements and opportunities for gender mainstreaming.

#### Indicative activities

- Estimate and analyze financing gap (Y1); formulate a financing plan that will identify gaps and opportunities, including those for gender mainstreaming) (Y1-Y2)
- Create a database of potential donors, particularly from the private sector and explore collaboration in all activities in this output (Y2)
- Participate in discussions between government and relevant organizations regarding biodiversity offsets such as in the Manila Bay wetland sites (Y2-Y3)
- Market wetland conservation through a partners and donors forum to match required investments in NbS and other management activities (Y2-Y3)
- Assess the feasibility of insurance for loss of ecosystems services -“parametric insurance” and other schemes (Y2-Y3)

Output 3.2 Secured continuing allocations from municipal, provincial, regional (Regional Development Council) and/or national budgets to support implementation beyond the life of the project.

#### Indicative activities

- Lobby for inclusion of wetland and migratory waterbirds conservation and management in landscape (subnational) and national action plans/ frameworks (Y2-Y3)
- Facilitate discussions with LGUs and national government agencies for inclusion of wetlands management in annual budgets

## **Component 4: Knowledge management and learning**

This project, while national in scope, is part of the RFI which focuses on migratory bird flyways and includes 10 countries. The knowledge generated in terms of the bird census data, lessons learned on the implementation of NbS and other interventions will be disseminated to improve the conservation of migratory birds and their wetland habitats beyond national borders. As the RFI has been developed in partnership with the EAAFP, this knowledge will also be shared to all 22 members ensuring that knowledge and learning are accessible to all countries within the EAA Flyway.

Nationally, only 3 of the 12 priority wetland sites listed in Attachment 3 are covered in this project. Thus, the methodological approaches and the lessons learned will be useful for the remaining 9 RFI priority sites as well as the many other wetlands within the country.

Approaches to generating data will be consistent with regional guidelines to allow for cross country aggregation of data and comparisons of results, particularly in Outputs 4.3 and 4.4. One of the main outputs is the development of a national management information system using the latest technology for online uploading field data directly into the portal.

Outcome 4: Knowledge sharing and learning enhanced in the management of sites and of the values of wetlands and the necessity of periodic monitoring.

Output 4.1 Knowledge Management Plan prepared for strategic implementation of knowledge sharing and dissemination of learning tools for various stakeholders, considering gender elements in integrated protected area management.

#### Indicative activities

- Produce a Knowledge Management Plan based on due consultation with wetland site managers and local stakeholders with support from knowledge management, learning, and communications expert/s.

Output 4.2 Knowledge products produced in local languages for (i) site managers, particularly on wetland management techniques, habitat protection, restoration and management, including sustainable use of natural resources (e.g. sustainable rice farming); and (ii) other local stakeholders – women’s groups, school children, farmers, fisherfolks, and others involved in agriculture and aquaculture – for heightened public support for flyway wetlands and migratory waterbirds.

#### Indicative activities

- Produce knowledge products in the local language/s and English that can be used for activities from Output 4.2 (AVPs, Posters, Signages, etc.)
- Conduct awareness-raising activities for community and stakeholders: ‘town hall’ meetings; seminars/webinars; social media IEC postings
- Install and develop visuals: posters, signages at the site; visitor interpretation center/bird hides/boardwalk, depending on budget
- Conduct Wetlands, Waterbirds, and Seabirds Forum in year 2 involving network of researchers and enthusiasts with DENR as coordinator; “sharing” event may be held annually
- Based on Stakeholder Interest and need, conduct gender specific events at key wetlands.

Output 4.3 Supplement available methodology for participatory and standardized metrics for monitoring habitats within priority sites to quantify changes in ecosystem services following land management interventions.

## Indicative activities

- Building on existing documents and in line with regional EAAFP guidelines, produce Basic Waterbird Monitoring Guide – both general and localized (in English and local language/s) to include species identification guide, methodologies in waterbird counting and monitoring (point count, boat survey) and summary of relevant laws and policies
- Provide basic equipment for waterbird count/census capable for uploading data while on the field to the online portal (Output 4.4)
- Adopt relevant ecosystem services tools such as the Toolkit for Ecosystem Service Site-based Assessment (TESSA), Rapid Assessment of Wetland Ecosystem Services (RAWES), and others.

Output 4.4 Management information system developed to serve as repository for migratory waterbirds and wetlands monitoring data, integrating existing databases where possible.

## Indicative activities

- Review existing/completed related work of GIZ, SCPW and other development partners
- Create an Online/Cloud-based Portal specifically for Asian Waterbird Census (AWC) purposes, which will include online submission of AWC reports through regional coordinators; portal will store waterbird and wetland information, wetland maps; developer for domain and server maintenance and incorporating security measures on the portal;
  - User training / rollout upon completion of the portal

## Coordination and Cooperation with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

Does the GEF Agency expect to play an execution role on this project?

Yes

If so, please describe that role here. Also, please add a short explanation to describe cooperation with ongoing initiatives and projects, including potential for co-location and/or sharing of expertise/staffing

The DENR will be the GEF Executing Agency for this project. For ADB, as the GEF Agency, the role will comprise general oversight (technical and financial). The project will be delivered over four years. Exact arrangements as to how the project will be structured will be confirmed during the PPG stage, however, they will likely consist of setting up a Project Management Office (PMO) within DENR housed within BMB to run the project on a day-to-day basis.

ADB will also play a key role in linking with other relevant programs and projects including existing ADB technical assistance and investments and the wider work of the RFI in EAAF.

Ongoing Initiative/Proponent	Description and Nature of Cooperation
Regional Flyway Initiative (RFI), ADB	<p>Launched in 2021, this program aims to preserve wetlands across the developing country members along the EAAF. These wetlands are critical to the livelihoods of millions of people as well as to the annual migration of species of waterbirds. The RFI is currently funded at \$1.7 million and will run from 2021 to 2025. The RFI is spending approximately \$170,000 within the Philippines, including supporting the development of this PIF, which is one of the important outcomes of the ADB program. It will continue to provide support during the design and implementation phases of the project. The RFI will also fund a Nature Credits Scoping Study in 2024 which will also include the Philippines along with two further countries.</p>
ADB Loan In Pampanga River	<p>ADB is doing early work on a flood prevention project for the Pampanga River starting in central Luzon and going all the way to Manila Bay. This project has the potential to positively contribute to the Candaba Wetlands as well as a further three further sites in Manila Bay including Sasmuan, Pampanga wetlands which is listed as an alternate to the three selected as priority sites for the project. The relevant co-financing for the early work on this project is \$31,900,000 for the Detailed Engineering Design for Central-Luzon-Pampanga River Floodway Project. Of this total, at the PIF stage it is unclear as to the total amount that can be used as cofinancing so \$5,000,000 of the total has been included at this stage but it may be increased depending of the activities of this project. It would also be noted that ADB is also exploring further opportunities to work on marine and coastal ecosystems and biodiversity policy-based loan which would be very well suited for co-financing for this GEF project.</p>
Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) - Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) Projects	<p>The BMB (previously known as Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau) is a staff bureau under the DENR which formulates, reviews, and recommends policies, plans, programs and standards for the management of the country's biodiversity. Among its multifaceted activities, the BMB takes charge of executing national initiatives aimed at conserving and sustainably managing wetlands and migratory waterbirds across the country through the establishment and management of an integrated protected area system, conservation of the three (3) components of biological diversity: genetic resources, ecosystems and endangered species of Philippine flora and fauna, and the implementation and monitoring of a Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (CMEMP), and an inland wetland conservation and management program. The Bureau actively engages in various partnerships to advance wetland conservation efforts in line with the country's commitment to several multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) such as the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and the Convention on Biological Diversity. For the GEF Phil Flyway Project, the BMB will house the Project Management Office.</p>
East Asia-Australasia Flyway Partnership (EAAFP)	<p>The EAAFP undertakes the following activities that are directly related to this proposal: a) develop flyway site network of international importance for the conservation of migratory waterbirds; b) enhance Communication, Education and Participation Awareness (CEPA) of the values of migratory birds and their habitats; enhance flyway research and monitoring activities, build knowledge and promote exchange of information; build management capacity of natural resource managers, decision makers and local stakeholders; develop, especially for priority species and habitats, flyway wide approaches to enhance the conservation status of migratory birds.</p> <p>During the PPG, the synergies will be identified and opportunities for joint conduct of activities will be explored.</p>

<p><b>Bird Life International</b></p>	<p>BirdLife is an international NGO with 122 national Partners covering all continents, landscapes and seascapes. BirdLife is the official scientific source of information on birds for the IUCN Red List. ADB, through the Regional Technical Assistance: Scaling Up the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Initiative, has engaged BirdLife to deliver key outputs of the Regional Flyway Initiative (RFI) including work on prioritizing the wetland sites across the EAAF to develop project concepts on NbS for potential investments, as well as and development of a financing mechanism for the project concepts, and also capacity building activities to improve key wetland stakeholders' understanding of the EAAF. BirdLife will provide technical support during PPG, particularly on NbS aligned to the results of the ecosystem services assessment conducted in the Philippines through the RFI.</p>
<p><b>Wetlands International</b></p>	<p>Wetlands International is a global non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation and restoration of wetlands. It has started mangrove restoration projects in Manila Bay, specifically in Bulacan (Hagonoy and Paombong municipalities) and in Pampanga and Bataan, which are part of the RFI priority wetlands in North Manila Bay. Collaboration between the proposed project and WI will be explored since their project locations in Manila Bay are relatively close to Candaba Wetlands, one of the top three priority sites, which is very important in terms of flyway sites connectivity that can providing a network of habitats for migratory waterbirds during the migration season.</p> <p>Wetlands International is currently raising funds for an information campaign and to advocate for long-term conservation of the Manila Bay wetland sites.</p>
<p><b>Society for the Conservation of Philippine Wetlands (SCPW)</b></p>	<p>SCPW is a non-stock, non-profit corporation that promotes the wise use and conservation of wetlands in the Philippines by facilitating linkages and networking locally and internationally, engaging in wetland conservation activities, providing technical assistance and a forum for wetland-related issues, undertaking research, training and CEPA.</p> <p>SCPW has implemented several projects in the Candaba Wetlands which is one of the priority sites for this proposed project. These projects provided livelihoods to about 360 families. It supported the Paligui Wetlands which are part of Candaba Wetlands. It is a 135 ha of farmland that is also the habitat of migratory birds. It is owned by and managed by the Macagatal Irrigators Association. SCPW continues to support the Paligui Wetlands. Specific collaboration will be explored during the PPG.</p>
<p><b>ASEAN Center for Biodiversity (ACB)</b></p>	<p>The ACB is an international intergovernmental organization hosted by the Philippines that facilitate cooperation and coordination among ASEAN Member Countries and with relevant national governments, regional and international organizations on the conservation of biodiversity in the region.</p> <p>The ACB has implemented various programmes and projects on the conservation of migratory birds which include the Improving Biodiversity Conservation of Wetlands and Migratory Waterbirds in the ASEAN Region (AFN), now on its second phase, Is being implemented by ACB in partnership with Singapore and is supported by the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF). The project aims to sustain a well-functioning ASEAN Flyway Network and enhance the capacities of flyway site managers and other stakeholders in managing wetlands and monitoring migratory waterbirds. The project will be implemented for two years until June 2025.</p>

## Core Indicators

### Indicator 3 Area of land and ecosystems under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
1941	0	0	0

### Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
Cropland	1,911.00			

### Indicator 3.2 Area of forest and forest land under restoration

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

### Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and woodland under restoration

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

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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
30.00			

### Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

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

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

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

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

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

### Type/Name of Third Party Certification

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

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

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

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

#### Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

Name of the OECMs	WDPA-ID	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
Candaba Wetlands		9,706.80			
Lake Mainit		14,287.00			

#### Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

#### Indicator 5 Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity (excluding protected areas)

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

#### Indicator 5.1 Fisheries under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations

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

#### Type/name of the third-party certification

#### Indicator 5.2 Large Marine Ecosystems with reduced pollution and hypoxia

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

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

#### Indicator 5.3 Marine OECMs supported

Name of the OECMs	WDPA-ID	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
Sibugay Wetlands		172,007.00			

#### Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
<b>Female</b>	128,440			
<b>Male</b>	132,572			

<b>Total</b>	<b>261,012</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
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Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

The core indicators pertain to the top three priority sites that were selected from the 12 sites listed in Attachment 3. The selection process was guided by a set of agreed criteria, namely: uniqueness of the wetland which means various types of wetland ecosystems will be represented (coastal, lake/freshwater, agricultural); level of threat including opportunity to preserve an untouched wetland given recognition; extent of existing support from GEF and other donors with the least support given a higher score; accessibility in terms of physical accessibility and perceived cooperation from local governments and local stakeholders; opportunity to pilot NbS; geographical distribution across the Philippine archipelago, with sites in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao (see Attachment 4 for the full ranking exercise).

Participants of the workshop on November 16-17, 2023, include representatives from the national implementing partner, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (Biodiversity Management Bureau and the Foreign Assisted Projects Service), ADB, Wetland International, Society for the Conservation of Philippine Wetlands, Birdlife International, and EAAFP.

While the project will support three sites, the workshop agreed to list the top 5 in case some of those in the top 3 will drop out for any reason. The list is indicated below.

The values of the core indicators at PIF stage are indicated in the table above. It is noted that none of the top 3 sites are currently under any form of protection as a terrestrial or marine PA. However, as indicated in Attachment 3 there are plans to declare Sibugay wetlands and Lake Mainit (lake itself) and Kalinawan River Watershed in Agusan del Norte into PAs.

Rank	Wetland Remarks
<b>A. Priority Sites</b>	
1	Candaba Wetlands, Luzon: Ephemeral wetland, planted to rice in the summer
2	Sibugay Wetlands, Mindanao: Primary mangrove forest covering vast space
3	Lake Mainit, Agusan del Norte and Surigao del Norte, Mindanao: Lake ecosystem
<b>B. Alternate Sites</b>	
1	North Manila Bay (includes Sasmuan, Pampanga wetlands) Luzon: Coastal ecosystem next to fishponds
2	Negros Occidental Coastal Wetlands Conservation Area, Visayas: Long stretch of coastal wetlands

Note: Alternate sites will be considered 'replacements' in the event that any of the priority sites is dropped for any reason during the PPG.

## Key Risks

	Rating	Explanation of risk and mitigation measures
CONTEXT		



Climate	Moderate	Accessibility of the sites could be limited by climate-related events, e.g., flooding, intense rainfall or typhoons that could impact on visits during project design and implementation of project activities. The design and project teams will schedule field visits and activities taking note of climatic conditions. Adaptive management will be employed to ensure that target GEBs are delivered.
Environmental and Social	Low	Stakeholder consultations during project design and direct stakeholder involvement during implementation will ensure stakeholder support and social acceptance. As an environment project, all related environment risks will be built into the design of the project. ADB's rigorous safeguards policies will ensure environmental and social risks are addressed and mitigation measures put in place.
Political and Governance	Moderate	The priority and alternate sites are not in any conflict area. Early consultations with local stakeholders, including local government officials will ensure PPG and implementation activities are undertaken with full support. During implementation, site coordinators will be hired to work with local stakeholders on behalf of the project. Candaba could present some problems as the wetland is privately owned and may not be amenable to restrictive conservation measures. If Candaba will have to be dropped, the alternate sites will be considered.

#### INNOVATION

Institutional and Policy	Low	The existing policy environment is sufficient to the attainment of project objective. The enactment of an overarching legislation on wetlands conservation that is proposed will further strengthen the policy environment.
Technological	Moderate	The component on NbS would be the most relevant technical aspect of the project. Site selection included a criterion on the 'opportunity to pilot NbS'. ADB will ensure that adequate data is collected as basis for project design for all NbS as well as all activities in other components, rigorous consultations will be undertaken and the involvement of technical experts on the subject will be engaged in project design and implementation. The technical design will be aligned with local conditions and the financial resources available to the project.
Financial and Business Model	Low	Macroeconomic conditions may impact on the sustainable financing component although with the stable Philippine economy, the risk is considered low.

#### EXECUTION

Capacity	Low	The project recognizes the importance of institutional capacity in delivering the target GEBs and the durability of the results. Hence, an entire component on Governance is included in the project. Focus will be on capacitating local stakeholders and communities through the conduct of trainings based on needs, learning-by-doing schemes and participation in relevant aspects of the project.
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Fiduciary	Low	ADB and the Philippine government will agree on the financial arrangements in the implementation of the project, specifically on the flow of funds from ADB to the national implementing partner (Department of Environment and Natural Resources -DENR) and on procurement. ADB has worked previously with the DENR with no financial issues. Financial risks are considered low.
Stakeholder	Low	Thorough stakeholder analysis will be undertaken as part of the PPG which will guide project implementation. As mentioned in the above, the direct engagement at the local level, which is the most crucial, will be sought. The flexibility of the project in engaging with stakeholders will mitigate any risk.
Other		
Overall Risk Rating	Low	Based on the above analysis the projects overall risk rating is currently considered as Low. During the PPG phase of the project, the risks associated in above areas will be further assessed. All relevant stakeholders will be consulted during this process.

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

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

Confirm if any country policies that might contradict with intended outcomes of the project have been identified, and how the project will address this.

For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e., BD, CC or LD), please identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and explain how. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

The project is aligned with the following objectives of the GEF-8 Biodiversity focal area strategy.

- Objective 1. To improve conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of natural ecosystems (Goals A and B of the Global Biodiversity Framework).

This project will protect, restore, and sustainably manage wetland habitats in the Philippine segment of the EAAF to ensure the conservation of migratory birds and overall biodiversity while providing ecosystem goods and services. The Candaba wetlands is included in the Philippines KBA list while Zamboanga-Sibugay is being considered. Lake Mainit, on the other hand is proposed protected area. As mentioned earlier, these three sites represent different types of ecosystems (agricultural, coastal, freshwater) that require protection for their globally significant waterbird assemblages and other biodiversity in a manner that will take a landscape level approach and integrate other land uses such as agriculture, fisheries and the collection of non-timber forest products in mangroves within the project.

The points of entry for the project also include attaining financial sustainability to support long-term conservation actions, strengthening of the policy environment through enactment of a National Wetlands Conservation Policy and enhancing the capacity of beneficiaries, communities and their organizations

(including local governments) in managing wetlands. The lessons learned from the on-the-ground activities will be upscaled by mainstreaming into local, provincial and regional policies and ordinances. Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into production sectors such as agriculture (Candaba), freshwater fishery (Lake Mainit) and coastal fishery (Zamboanga-Sibugay). The project will not only be focusing on the management of wetlands to support migratory bird conservation but also the sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services.

· Objective 3. To increase mobilization of domestic resources for biodiversity (contribution to Goal D of the GBF)

The Philippine situation mirrors the global financing picture for biodiversity conservation. The Biodiversity Financing Initiative (BIOFIN) estimated<sup>[11]</sup> that the implementation of the PBSAP requires Php 24 billion (equivalent to \$436M at current exchange rate), however, the current level of spending is at Php 5 billion which leaves almost 80% financing gap. This figure may change as the PBSAP that came out in 2015 and will run until 2028, is currently being updated to take into account of global developments (e.g., GBF, UNCBD agreements) as well as national developments (e.g., expanded NIPAS Act of 2018).

The financing gap, however, may be higher at the local level particularly for sites that have not been recognized as a formal protected area. Component 2 of the project is on Sustainable Financing where the financing gap will be assessed and traditional as well as innovative sources of financing will be sought from various sources, primarily the private sector. Traditional sources pertain primarily to domestic resources which pertain mainly to government budgets which could be more predictable. Innovative sources include emerging financial instruments such as insurance schemes, biodiversity offsets, nature credits, among others will be looked at through the project.

The importance of financing cannot be overemphasized as the durability of GEBs will be largely determined by the availability of financial resources to sustain the implementation of management measures. As a regional development bank, ADB is well positioned to support the entire project, and particularly this component.

In addition to the GEF-8 Biodiversity focal objectives and the associated Goals of the GBF which are listed within the GEF-8 Programming Directions, further analysis of the project components, and how they will deliver against the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity (KMGB) Framework Targets has also been completed and this is summarized in the table below.

KMGB Framework Targets	Project Outputs				Relevant Project Component
	1	2	3	4	
Target 1	x	x	x	x	The entire project (all components) aims to achieve a participatory, integrated and biodiversity inclusive sustainably managed wetlands important to migratory waterbirds through activities that will mitigate the ongoing impacts of overexploitation on land and sea and significantly reduce the loss of wetland habitats while providing conservation-focused livelihood for local communities including indigenous peoples (where present).
Target 2	x				Output 1 will directly contribute to the effective restoration of degraded wetlands (terrestrial and inland waters in Candaba site and coastal in Zamboanga-Sibugay site) to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity, particularly at site critical to migratory waterbirds.
Target 6	x				Output 1 includes activities that will assess and incorporate suitable methods to eliminate, minimize, reduce and/or mitigate the impacts of invasive alien species on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Candaba Wetlands and Lake Mainit, which are inland wetlands, and are already suffering from the spread of water hyacinth which can reduce the available habitats of migratory ducks and other species.
Target 7	x	x			As part of Output 1 components, reduction of pollution risks is included through the implementation of more sustainable agriculture and aquaculture, for example in Candaba Wetlands, reduction or elimination of the use of fertilizers and pesticides will improve water quality and improve habitats of migratory waterbirds. Improving governance through policy support under Component 2 also contributes to this target, as an example in the towns along Sibugay Wetlands, improving solid waste management through capacity building and stronger policies, reduction or elimination of plastic wastes that end up in the coastal and marine areas important to migratory waterbirds can be achieved.
Target 8	x				Output 1 components have been designed to deliver ecosystem-based approaches which will benefit biodiversity while enhancing sustainable, inclusive livelihoods, in increasing resilience against the impacts of climate change and reducing disaster risks.

Target 10	x				The priority wetland sites have areas under agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries in different scales and intensity of land and water use. Through Output 1 components, the project will ensure that these areas are managed sustainably with biodiversity friendly practices such as reduction or elimination of agrochemicals, changing planting regimes according to seasons wherein habitats for migratory waterbirds are also given a priority alongside people’s livelihoods, and developing ecotourism opportunities as supplementary livelihoods.
Target 11	x		x		With the implementation of Output 1 components, the overall restoration and improved management for the sustainable use of the priority wetlands is expected to also improve the ecosystem functions and services that people’s livelihoods and wellbeing depend on. Component 3 on Sustainable Financing will ensure the continuity of sustainable management of wetlands through innovative mechanisms with long term viability (at least in the next 10 years after project completion).
Target 19		x	x		Output 2 and 3 is primarily to increase the financial resources and opportunities for supporting sustainable production and other means to sustainably manage the priority wetlands. The innovative financing options will tap domestic, international, public and private resources, with due consultation with the wetland stakeholders, to ensure the financing mechanisms are effectively and efficiently executed.
Target 21				x	Output 4 on Knowledge Management and Learning will ensure that continuing consultations are conducted and important information about sustainable management and use of wetlands are effectively shared with all stakeholders including decision makers, local communities and indigenous peoples, and the general public. The communication strategies will vary depending on the audience and will be available in local languages as applicable. The database on migratory waterbirds and wetlands will also be made accessible to relevant stakeholders.
Target 22	x	x	x	x	This will be covered in all components of the project with stakeholders consultations and involvement of local communities and especially indigenous peoples who have traditional knowledge on local biodiversity—this will be helpful in planning NbS, for example in Lake Mainit which has a population of indigenous peoples living by and using resources from the lake ecosystem. CSOs have been consulted in the initial preparations of this PIF and will progressively be consulted during the PPG stage.

Target 23			x		The Gender Action Plan that will be prepared in detail during the PPG stage will ensure gender mainstreaming in all activities under the project. Specifically under Output 3 on Sustainable Financing, gender-responsive innovative mechanisms will be development as women may have unique roles within the local communities.
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[1] <https://www.biofin.org/philippines#:~:text=However%2C%20the%20current%20level%20of,leaves%20an%2080%25%20financing%20gap.>

#### D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

##### Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:

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

Yes

##### Stakeholder Engagement

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

Yes

##### Were the following stakeholders consulted during project identification phase:

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities: Yes

Civil Society Organizations: Yes

Private Sector:

##### Provide a brief summary and list of names and dates of consultations

A. Initial Consultations and 'Writeshop', November 16-17, 2023, ADB Headquarters	
Participants/Organizations	Outcome
1. Biodiversity Management Bureau, DENR Anson Tagtag; John Berhel Doria; Nancy Corpuz; Rowena Bolinas; Angie Lou Alacantara; Joy Navarro; Noele Felicilda; Jeffrey Jaymes Mesias	The Project Overview was presented and validated by the meeting.
2. Office of the GEF OFP, Foreign-Assisted and Special Projects Service, DENR William Romeo Bayhon; Maridel Villalon; Ma. Alma Sequi	The list of potential project sites (Attachment 3) was presented. The selection criteria were agreed on and applied to each site. The priority sites and alternate sites were the sites that were ranked in the top 5 (Attachment 4).
3. Wetlands International Noreen Marie Follosco	The NGOs represented delivered presentations about their respective organizations' activities that are related to the proposal.

<p>4. Society for the Conservation of Wetlands Darry Shel Estorba; Ma. Catriona Devanadera</p> <p>5. EAAF Partnership Secretariat Cynthia Layusa</p> <p>6. Birdlife International Ding Li Yong (online)</p> <p>7. Asian Development Bank Yoko Watanabe, Director; Duncan Lang, Senior Environment Specialist; Karen Grace Ochavo, Environment Officer; Arunkumar Samuel Abraham, Staff Consultant; Nina Narciso, Staff Consultant; Jose Padilla, Consultant</p>	<p>ADB discussed the possible modalities for implementation with feedback from DENR.</p>
<p>B. Hybrid meeting with DENR Regional Offices, December 12, 2023</p>	
<p>Participants/Organizations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DENR Regional Offices: III, VI, IX, and XIII</li> <li>DENR Provincial Environment Natural Resources Office: Pampanga, Zamboanga-Sibugay, Negros Occidental, Agusan del Norte, and Surigao del Norte</li> <li>DENR- Foreign Assisted and Special Projects Service (FASPS)</li> <li>BMB Wildlife Resources Division (WRD)</li> <li>BMB Biodiversity Planning and Knowledge Management Division (BPKMD)</li> <li>BMB Caves, Wetlands and Other Ecosystems Division (CAWED)</li> <li>East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) Secretariat</li> <li>BirdLife International</li> <li>Asian Development Bank</li> </ol>	<p>Outcome</p> <p>More details about the top priority sites were discussed with DENR representatives from the respective regional offices of the top priority sites. The current management status and plans for the sites were taken into consideration for input into the PIF.</p> <p>Additional information needs to be confirmed offline to clarify site boundaries (e.g. AWC sites in Candaba Wetlands outside of the initial RFI site boundaries; roosting areas of frigate birds outside the initial RFI site boundaries).</p> <p>Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process or Field-based Investigation (FBI) needs to be confirmed for Lake Mainit and, as applicable, to be budgeted and pursued during the PPG Phase. In the PPG Phase, other stakeholders to be consulted such as the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA).</p> <p>All regions were requested to provide details on the existing co-financing sources (e.g. NGOs, LGU, etc.) using the BMB's template. All sites (including alternative sites) shall conduct consultation meetings with the respective LGUs for the project.</p>
<p>C. Site Visit and Initial In-person Consultation at Lake Mainit, Municipality of Jabonga, Agusan del Norte, February 17, 2024</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jabonga LGU Staff Randy Mosca, Ancionito Lusotan, Edison Fugoso, Archie Deshie Miole</li> <li>DENR PENRO Agusan del Norte Chiqui Bayutas, Lifare Viduya</li> <li>DENR CENRO Tubay Ram Hezron Cubao, Joseph, Paquinol</li> <li>Asian Development Bank Karen Ochavo</li> </ol>	<p>Outcome</p> <p>From the site visit and interviews with the DENR and LGU staff, the impact of the hydropower plant at the southwest of the lake that was commissioned in late 2023 was raised— anecdotal decrease in the lake's water level has exposed lakeside land that locals started to use for rice planting, which possibly increased agrochemical runoff into the lake, although this needs verification through water quality monitoring. The recent AWC in January 2024 resulted in a drastic decrease in the number of migratory Tufted Ducks that stopover the lake during their non-breeding season; this needs to be closely monitored in relation to other renewal energy development being proposed in the lake. There is also a potential ecotourism development that would be an opportunity to incorporate Nbs and waterbird-focused nature tourism.</p>
<p>D. Site Visit and Initial In-person consultation at Candaba Wetlands, April 10, 2024</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Society for the Conservation of Philippine Wetlands (SCPW) Amy Lecciones, Darry Shel Estorba, Jose Carlo Quintos, Johnnery Aspera Jr.</li> <li>Macagatal Irrigators Association (MIA) Paul Cacho, Gaudencio de Leon, Christopher Manansala</li> </ol>	<p>Outcome</p> <p>ADB staff visited the wetland site of SCPW at Barangay Paligui and met with farmers and officers of MIA the Barangay Captain of Paligui. According to the interview with the locals, 70% of the households in the barangay are</p>

3. Barangay Paligui  
Randy Alarcon Manio
4. Asian Development Bank  
Duncan Lang, Karen Ochavo, Martino Pelli, Jindra Samson,  
Dorothy Bantasan, Rowena Cham
5. Yale University  
Eli Fenichel

involved in farming. SCPW is collaborating with MIA in their project to build a wetland center and develop ecotourism potential to supplement livelihoods during non-planting season. The current rice planting regime and agricultural practices needs to be further assessed to determine the most appropriate NbS to be adopted by the farmers to benefit them in a way that doesn't neglect the habitats of migratory waterbirds (i.e. wild duck that prefer flooded wetlands, which Candaba was known for). Other issues raised and need to be addressed include hunting and poaching of wild birds in the area, illegal dumping and burning of solid waste, and conversion of land classification from agricultural land to industrial land.

(Please upload to the portal documents tab any stakeholder engagement plan or assessments that have been done during the PIF development phase.)

### Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

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

### Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

We confirm that we have provided indicative information regarding Environmental and Social risks associated with the proposed project or program and any measures to address such risks and impacts (this information should be presented in Annex D).

Yes

#### Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Low			

### E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

#### Knowledge management

We confirm that an approach to Knowledge Management and Learning has been clearly described in the Project Description (Section B)

Yes

## ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES

### GEF Financing Table

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



GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	GEF Project Grant(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total GEF Financing (\$)
ADB	GET	Philippines	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	Grant	2,425,600.00	218,250.00	2,643,850.00
ADB	GET	Philippines	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-3	Grant	235,000.00	21,150.00	256,150.00
<b>Total GEF Resources (\$)</b>						<b>2,660,600.00</b>	<b>239,400.00</b>	<b>2,900,000.00</b>

### Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Is Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount (\$)

91745

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

8255

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non- Grant	PPG(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total PPG Funding(\$)
ADB	GET	Philippines	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	Grant	83,640.00	7,526.00	91,166.00
ADB	GET	Philippines	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-3	Grant	8,105.00	729.00	8,834.00
<b>Total PPG Amount (\$)</b>						<b>91,745.00</b>	<b>8,255.00</b>	<b>100,000.00</b>

Please provide justification

### Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Sources of Funds	Total(\$)
ADB	GET	Philippines	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	3,000,000.00
<b>Total GEF Resources</b>					<b>3,000,000.00</b>

## Indicative Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Co-financing(\$)
BD-1-1	GET	2,425,600.00	5977476
BD-3-1	GET	235,000.00	806115
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>2,660,600.00</b>	<b>6,783,591.00</b>

## Indicative Co-financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
Recipient Country Government	Department of Environment and Natural Resources	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	552778
Recipient Country Government	Local governments of Candaba, Zamboanga-Sibugay, Agusan del Norte and Surigao del Norte (as applicable)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	337746
GEF Agency	Asian Development Bank	Grant	Investment mobilized	5170000
Civil Society Organization	Bird Life International	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	45000
Civil Society Organization	East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	48000
Civil Society Organization	Wetlands International	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	292000
Civil Society Organization	Society for Conservation of Philippine Wetlands	In-kind	Investment mobilized	71454
Civil Society Organization	CSOs in Zamboanga-Sibugay	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	167917
Private Sector	Greenstone Resources Corporation (Mining Company) for Lake Mainit	Grant	Investment mobilized	98696
<b>Total Co-financing</b>				<b>6,783,591.00</b>

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

ADB is supporting a large project preparation financing facility for the Government of the Philippines called "Infrastructure Preparation and Innovation Facility" (IPIF) for over \$ 200 million. Output 2 of the IPIF supports preparation of "water projects" - preparation, pre-implementation, and early implementation needs of climate-resilient flood risk management projects to support climate

adaptation, integrating sustainability and gender equality elements. One such project under Output 2 of the IPIF relates to "Central-Luzon Pampanga River Floodway Project". Funds for loan preparation are roughly \$ 30 million for an anticipated loan of \$ 1.8 billion. Part of the Pampanga River project The proposed Candaba site under the GEF project is located along the river, while the river also discharges directly next to another wetlands site called Sasmuan and two further ones in Manila Bay that could be indirectly affected. An amount from this large infrastructure lending program has been prorated as co-finance for the GEF project.

At Lake Mainit, another site, consultations have been undertaken with Greenstone Resources Corp., operating in the area, who have committed Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds to align with the GEF project.

## ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

### GEF Agency(ies) Certification

GEF Agency Type	Name	Date	Project Contact Person	Phone	Email
GEF Agency Coordinator	Yoko Watanabe	3/11/2024	Duncan Lang		dlang@adb.org

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

Name	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
Ms. Analiza Rebueta-Teh	Undersecretary and GEF Operational Focal Point	Department of Environment and Natural Resources	3/15/2024

## ANNEX C: PROJECT LOCATION

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

Candaba Swamp 15.07 N, 120.88 S



Zamboanga-Sibugay wetlands 7.7099 N, 122.8099 E



Lake Mainit 9.46 N, 125.52 S



**ANNEX D: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING**

**(PIF level) Attach agency safeguard screen form including rating of risk types and overall risk rating.**

Title

Environment and Social Safeguards Screening and Rating

ANNEX E: RIO MARKERS

Climate Change Mitigation	Climate Change Adaptation	Biodiversity	Land Degradation
Significant Objective 1	Significant Objective 1	Principal Objective 2	No Contribution 0

ANNEX F: TAXONOMY WORKSHEET

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>Influencing models</b>			
	<b>Transform policy and regulatory environments</b>		
	<b>Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making</b>		
	<b>Convene multi-stakeholder alliances</b>		
	<b>Demonstrate innovative approaches</b>		
	<b>Deploy innovative financial instruments</b>		
<b>Stakeholders</b>			
	<b>Indigenous Peoples</b>		
	<b>Private Sector</b>		
		Financial intermediaries and market facilitators	
		SMEs	
		Individuals/Entrepreneurs	
	<b>Beneficiaries</b>		
	<b>Local Communities</b>		
	<b>Civil Society</b>		
		Community Based Organization	
		Non-Governmental Organization	
		Academia	
	<b>Type of Engagement</b>		
		Information Dissemination	
		Partnership	
		Consultation	
		Participation	
	<b>Communications</b>		
		Awareness Raising	
		Education	
		Public Campaigns	

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
		Behavior Change	
<b>Capacity, Knowledge and Research</b>			
	<b>Enabling Activities</b>		
	<b>Capacity Development</b>		
	<b>Knowledge Generation and Exchange</b>		
	<b>Learning</b>		
		Theory of Change	
		Adaptive Management	
		Indicators to Measure Change	
	<b>Innovation</b>		
	<b>Knowledge and Learning</b>		
		Knowledge Management	
		Innovation	
		Capacity Development	
		Learning	
	<b>Stakeholder Engagement Plan</b>		
<b>Gender Equality</b>			
	<b>Gender Mainstreaming</b>		
		Beneficiaries	
		Women groups	
		Sex-disaggregated indicators	
		Gender-sensitive indicators	
	<b>Gender results areas</b>		
		Access and control over natural resources	
		Participation and leadership	
		Access to benefits and services	
		Capacity development	
		Awareness raising	
		Knowledge generation	
<b>Focal Areas/Theme</b>			
	<b>Biodiversity</b>		



Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
		Protected Areas and Landscapes	
			Terrestrial Protected Areas
			Coastal and Marine Protected Areas
			Productive Landscapes
			Productive Seascapes
			Community Based Natural Resource Management
		Mainstreaming	
			Tourism
			Agriculture & agrobiodiversity
			Fisheries
			Certification (National Standards)
			Certification (International Standards)
		Species	
			Threatened Species
			Wildlife for Sustainable Development
			Invasive Alien Species (IAS)
		Biomes	
			Mangroves
			Coral Reefs
			Sea Grasses
			Wetlands
			Rivers
			Lakes
			Tropical Rain Forests
			Tropical Dry Forests
		Financial and Accounting	
			Payment for Ecosystem Services

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
			Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting
	<b>Land Degradation</b>		
		Sustainable Land Management	
			Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands
			Ecosystem Approach
			Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach
			Community-Based NRM
			Sustainable Livelihoods
			Income Generating Activities
			Sustainable Agriculture
			Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques
		Land Degradation Neutrality	
			Land Cover and Land cover change
			Carbon stocks above or below ground
		Food Security	
	<b>Chemicals and Waste</b>		
		Sound Management of chemicals and Waste	
		Disposal	
		Plastics	
		Pesticides	
		Best Available Technology / Best Environmental Practices	
	<b>Climate Change</b>		
		<b>Climate Change Adaptation</b>	
			Climate Finance

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
			Disaster Risk Management
			Sea-level rise
			Ecosystem-based Adaptation
			Mainstreaming Adaptation
			Private Sector
			Innovation
			Complementarity
			Community-based Adaptation
			Livelihoods
		<b>Climate Change Mitigation</b>	
			Agriculture, Forestry, and other Land Use
			Financing