

Taxonomy

Part I: Project Information GEF ID 10542 **Project Type FSP Type of Trust Fund** GET CBIT/NGI **CBIT No** NGI No **Project Title** Conservation of Atoll Ecosystems through an effectively managed national protected area Estate (CATENATE) **Countries** Maldives Agency(ies) **IUCN** Other Executing Partner(s) Ministry of Environment, Government of Maldives **Executing Partner Type** Government **GEF Focal Area** Biodiversity Sector Mixed & Others

Focal Areas, Biodiversity, Financial and Accounting, Conservation Finance, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Productive Landscapes, Community Based Natural Resource Mngt, Coastal and Marine Protected Areas, Mainstreaming, Forestry - Including HCVF and REDD+, Tourism, Fisheries, Biomes, Sea Grasses, Mangroves, Coral Reefs, Wetlands, Influencing models, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Stakeholders, Communications, Public Campaigns, Behavior change, Awareness Raising, Local Communities, Civil Society, Non-Governmental Organization, Community Based Organization, Private Sector, SMEs, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Type of Engagement, Information Dissemination, Consultation, Partnership, Participation, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Women groups, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Beneficiaries, Gender results areas, Participation and leadership, Access to benefits and services, Capacity Development, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Knowledge Generation, Learning

Rio Markers Climate Change Mitigation Significant Objective 1

Climate Change Adaptation

Significant Objective 1

Biodiversity

Principal Objective 2

Land Degradation

No Contribution 0

Submission Date

12/1/2021

Expected Implementation Start

1/2/2023

Expected Completion Date

6/30/2026

Duration

42In Months

Agency Fee(\$)

189,932.00

A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS

Objectives/Programs	Focal Area Outcomes	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
BD-2-7		GET	2,110,358.00	7,268,074.00
		Total Project Cost	(\$) 2,110,358.00	7,268,074.00

B. Project description summary

Project Objective

To safeguard nationally and globally significant coral reef biodiversity and associated ecosystems through a resilient network of equitably and effectively managed protected and conserved areas in the Maldives

Project Compone nt	Financi ng Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Tru st Fun d	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirme d Co- Financing (\$)	
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Project Compone nt	Financi ng Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Tru st Fun d	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirme d Co- Financing (\$)
Enabling policy, legal framework and capacity-building for good governance.	Technica l Assistanc e	1. Improved Protected Area network governanc e mechanis ms	1.1 Legal framework and diverse governance models (e.g. private sector, CBOs, PPP and OECMs) formalized and adopted for decentralized management of the Protected Area network.	GET	503,176.0 0	2,364,995. 00
		Governance e models developed and implemented is diverse and inclusive Target: Qualitative Assessment against existing Governance models in Maldives.	1.2 Capacity development of Councils and managers on; 1) implementing good governance provisions and effective Protected Area management, and use of science and standards in sectoral planning, 2) financial planning for sustained conservation outcomes.			
		e governanc e models developed for improved site- and system-	1.3 Conservation strategy including national and			

level decisionmaking, with 1 model adopted and implement ed at the project site global standards and guidelines for representative Protected Areas selection, assessment and monitoring formulated.

Target: 1

Indicators 1.2

National level Certificate course adapted for Maldives on PA manageme nt and widely delivered

Target 1

No. of resource materials (handbook s, standards) developed through Project

Target: 4

1.4 Integrated and results based management plans, and equitable governance established in selected Protected Areas using the IUCN Green List Standard and verification system and associated

PAME tools.

No. of trainers trained.

Target: 14 (male 7, female 7)

No. of councilors and staff trained

Target: 40 (male 20, female 20)

Protected Areas under improved manageme nt.

Target: 442 Ha of terrestrial protected area and 8867 Ha of marine protected area. Verified by atleast 30 percent increase on METT score from baseline to

be done at PPG

Indicators 1.3

No. of conservati on strategy developed inclusive standards and guidelines developed

Target: 1 conservati on strategy

Indicators 1.4

No. of manageme nt plans developed for Project site

Target: 1

Increased manageme nt effectiven ess over 509 Ha of Protec

Project	Financi	Expected	Expected	Tru	GEF	Confirme
Compone	ng Type	Outcomes	Outputs	st	Project	d Co-
nt				Fun	Financing	Financing
				d	(\$)	(\$)

ted Area (marine and terrestrial) ? Target: 200 % increase in METT over baselines for Shaviyani Farukolhu Protected Area

Project Compone nt	Financi ng Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Tru st Fun d	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirme d Co- Financing (\$)
ProtectedAr ea system financial management .	Technica l Assistanc e	2. The Protected Area network has an integrated and equitable sustainable financing system Indicators 2.1 No. of financial framework developed and implemented at Shaviyani Farukolhu Protected Area	2.1 Financial framework setting out budgeting guidelines and innovative funding opportuniti es for the Protected Area network in the Atoll developed and implement ed at Project site.	GET	1,365,687. 00	4,161,814. 00
		Target: 1 Indicators 2.2	2.2 Sustainabl			
		The Shaviyani Farukolhu Protected Area demonstrates a revenue trend towards sustainability	e financing demonstrat ed for the Protected Area manageme nt and associated			
		Target: Atleast 50 percent of operational costs secured from direct receipts and 50 percent from other sources.	communiti es, through investment for fair and equitable income generation			

Project	Financi	Expected	Expected	Tru	GEF	Confirme
Compone	ng Type	Outcomes	Outputs	st	Project	d Co-
nt				Fun	Financing	Financing
				d	(\$)	(\$)

Percentage
households aff
ected by
restrictions in
Shaviyani
Farukolhu with
alternative
income
generation
activities
identified and
markets
established

Target: 100 percent

Project Compone nt	Financi ng Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Tru st Fun d	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirme d Co- Financing (\$)
Knowledge management and communicat ion	Technica l Assistanc e	3. Effective communication and knowledge dissemination to communities and stakeholders.	3.1 Protected area management and knowledge dissemination platform established	GET	141,495.0 0	491,265.0 0
		Indicator 3.1 No. of knowledge platform established Target: 1 webpage or website	3.2 Develop a project communication strategy implemented 1) develop and disseminate knowledge products			
		No. of times site accessed on quarterly basis	2)mainstream gender equality in project activities			
		Target: 200 hits	3)promote uptake, replication and scaling up			
		No. of knowledge products and publications developed and published. Target: 10 Gender balance ratio achieved	3.3 M&E system incorporating gender mainstreaming developed and implemented for adaptive			

Project Compone nt	Financi ng Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Tru Outputs st Fun d	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirme d Co- Financing (\$)
		in project activities	project management		
		Target: 50 percent			
		No. of partnership and knowledge exchange established between Protected Areas in the network			
		Target: 10 (councils, CBOs and/or Private Sector)			
		Indicators 3.3			
		No. of M&E reports produced			
		Target: 10 quarterly reports against agreed indicators at PPG			
			Sub Total (\$)	2,010,358. 00	7,018,074. 00
Project Man	agement Cos	st (PMC)			
	GET		100,000.00	2	250,000.00
	Sub Total(\$)		100,000.00	25	50,000.00

Project Management Cost (PMC)

Total Project Cost(\$)

2,110,358.00

7,268,074.00

Please provide justification

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

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co- financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
Beneficiaries	Shaviyani Funadhoo Council	In-kind	Investment mobilized	102,343.00
Beneficiaries	Shaviyani Funadhoo Council	Other	Investment mobilized	165,731.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change & Technology	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change & Technology	Other	Investment mobilized	5,000,000.00
Donor Agency	REGENERATE Project	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,000,000.00

Total Co-Financing(\$) 7,268,074.00

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

The Government of Maldives, through the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology is working on a broad approach of connecting all the protected areas of the entire natural atoll system referred to locally as Boduthilandhunmathi atoll, this atoll comprises of 4 administrative atolls. The ultimate goal of the Government is to improve the management of the protected areas within the Boduthilandhunmathi atoll and potentially prepare for UNESCO Biosphere Reserve recognition for Boduthilandhumathi atoll. The Government also wishes to apply models developed through this project to other protected areas. Related activities that support the Project's objective have been identified for co-financing. The focus area of the project, Shaviyani Farukolhu, a protected area that encompasses an entire island, and shares its reef plateau with Shaviyani Funadhoo. The protected area falls under the jurisdiction of Shaviyani Funadhoo under the Decentralization Act. The community has expressed interest in managing the protected area and are willing to contribute their funds and management capacity. The co-financing from the beneficiary was identified through various consultations that have taken place since January 2020 with the Island Council and community. The Shaviyani Funadhoo Island Concil is contributing via a waste management project that will alleviate waste management issues on the island. This will have a direct impact on the adjoining Farukolhu protected area's health. Resources have also been identified and allocated towards the monitoring of Farukolhu Protected Area.

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

Agen cy	Tru st Fun d	Count ry	Focal Area	Programmi ng of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
IUCN	GE T	Maldiv es	Biodivers ity	BD STAR Allocation	2,110,358	189,932	2,300,290. 00
			Total Gra	ant Resources(\$)	2,110,358 .00	189,932. 00	2,300,290. 00

E. Non Grant Instrument

NON-GRANT INSTRUMENT at CEO Endorsement

Includes Non grant instruments? **No**Includes reflow to GEF? **No**

F. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required true

PPG Amount (\$)

100,000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

9,000

Agenc y	Trus t Fun d	Countr y	Focal Area	Programmin g of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
IUCN	GET	Maldive s	Biodiversit y	BD STAR Allocation	100,000	9,000	109,000.0 0
			Total P	roject Costs(\$)	100,000.0 0	9,000.0	109,000.0 0

Core Indicators

Indicator 1 Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
442.66	442.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

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

Name of				Total Ha		
the			Total Ha	(Expected at	Total Ha	Total Ha
Protecte	WDP	IUCN	(Expected	CEO	(Achieved	(Achieved
d Area	A ID	Category	at PIF)	Endorsement)	at MTR)	at TE)

Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial Protected Areas Under improved Management effectiveness

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
442.66	442.66	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protecte d Area	WD PA ID	IUCN Categ ory	Ha (Exp ecte d at PIF)	Ha (Expec ted at CEO Endor semen t)	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at MTR	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at TE)	METT score (Baseli ne at CEO Endor semen t)	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at MTR)	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at TE)
HA. Baarah	5556 9755 6	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	38.37	38.37					
HA. Bilehdho o Thila Area	5556 9757 2	Habitat/ Species Manage ment Area	14.70	14.70					
HA. Gallandh oo	5556 9756 7	Strict Nature Reserv e	10.90	10.90					
HA. Kela	5556 9756 5	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	26.00	26.00					
HDh. Innafushi	5556 9756 6	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	2.12	2.12					

Name of the Protecte d Area	WD PA ID	IUCN Categ ory	Ha (Exp ecte d at PIF)	Ha (Expec ted at CEO Endor semen t)	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at MTR	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at TE)	METT score (Baseli ne at CEO Endor semen t)	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at MTR	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at TE)
HDh. Keylakun u	5556 9756 3	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	89.32	89.32					
HDh. Neykuren dhoo	5556 9755 9	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	58.40	58.40					
N. Bodulhai mendhoo	5556 9757	Strict Nature Reserv e	38.10	38.10					
N. Fohdhipp aru	5556 9756 8	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	1.60	1.60					
N. Kendhiko Ihudhoo	5556 9756 4	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	87.40	87.40					

Name of the Protecte d Area	WD PA ID	IUCN Categ ory	Ha (Exp ecte d at PIF)	Ha (Expec ted at CEO Endor semen t)	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at MTR)	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at TE)	METT score (Baseli ne at CEO Endor semen t)	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at MTR	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at TE)
Sh. Bolissa Faru	5556 9757 0	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	3.20	3.20			24.00		
Sh. Farukolh u	5556 9757	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	72.15	72.15					
Sh. Naalahur a	5556 9756 2	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	0.40	0.40					

Indicator 2 Marine protected areas created or under improved management

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
8,867.19	8,867.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 2.1 Marine Protected Areas Newly created

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

Name of				Total Ha		
the			Total Ha	(Expected at	Total Ha	Total Ha
Protecte	WDP	IUCN	(Expected	CEO	(Achieved	(Achieved
d Area	A ID	Category	at PIF)	Endorsement)	at MTR)	at TE)

Indicator 2.2 Marine Protected Areas Under improved management effectiveness

Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
8.867.19	8.867.19	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protecte d Area	WD PA ID	IUCN Categ ory	Tota I Ha (Exp ecte d at PIF)	Total Ha (Expec ted at CEO Endor semen t)	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at MTR	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at TE)	METT score (Baseli ne at CEO Endor semen t)	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at MTR	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at TE)
HA. Baarah	5556 9755 6	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	12.40	12.40					
HA. Bilehdho o Thila Area	5556 9757 2	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	4,339 .30	4,339.3 0					

Name of the Protecte d Area	WD PA ID	IUCN Categ ory	Tota I Ha (Exp ecte d at PIF)	Total Ha (Expec ted at CEO Endor semen t)	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at MTR	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at TE)	METT score (Baseli ne at CEO Endor semen t)	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at MTR	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at TE)
HA. Gallandh oo	5556 9756 7	Strict Nature Reserv e	241.1 0	241.10					
HA. Kela	5556 9756 5	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	37.42	37.42					
HDh. Finey Thila	5556 9756 9	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	97.90	97.90					
HDh. Innafushi	5556 9756 6	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	1,363 .88	1,363.8 8					
HDh. Keylakun u	5556 9756 3	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	146.1	146.13					

Name of the Protecte d Area	WD PA ID	IUCN Categ ory	Tota I Ha (Exp ecte d at PIF)	Total Ha (Expec ted at CEO Endor semen t)	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at MTR	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at TE)	METT score (Baseli ne at CEO Endor semen t)	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at MTR	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at TE)
HDh. Neykuren dhoo	5556 9755 9	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	15.83	15.83					
N. Bodulhai mendhoo	5556 9757	Strict Nature Reserv e	282.9 0	282.90					
N. Fohdhipp aru	5556 9756 8	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	330.4	330.40					
N. Kendhiko Ihudhoo	5556 9756 4	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	406.5 0	406.50					
Orimas Thila	5556 9756 1	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	46.30	46.30					

Name of the Protecte d Area	WD PA ID	IUCN Categ ory	Tota I Ha (Exp ecte d at PIF)	Total Ha (Expec ted at CEO Endor semen t)	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at MTR	Tota I Ha (Ac hiev ed at TE)	METT score (Baseli ne at CEO Endor semen t)	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at MTR	MET T scor e (Ac hiev ed at TE)
Sh. Bolissa Faru	5556 9757 0	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	950.8 0	950.80			24.00		
Sh. Farukolh u	5556 9755 7	Protect ed area with sustain able use of natural resourc es	437.7	437.73					
Sh. Naalahur a	5556 9756 2	Habitat/ Species Manage ment Area	158.6 0	158.60					

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)				
3,521.79							
Indicator 5.1 Fisheries under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations							

Number (Expected	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
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Type/name of the third-party certification

Indicator 5.2 Large Marine Ecosystems with reduced pollution and hypoxia

Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (achieved at MTR)	Number (achieved at TE)
0	1	0	0

LME at PIF	LME at CEO Endorsement	LME at MTR	LME at TE
Indicator 5.3 Marine OECN	••	otal Ha	

			i otai Ha		
Name of		Total Ha	(Expected at	Total Ha	Total Ha
the	WDPA-	(Expected	CEO	(Achieved	(Achieved
OECMs	ID	at PIF)	Endorsement)	at MTR)	at TE)

Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	30,962	30,962		
Male	27,769	27,769		
Total	58731	58731	0	0

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

The targets listed for the terrestrial and marine protected areas in the above table are the cumulative numbers of the legally protected areas by the State in the Boduthiladhunmathi natural atoll system. Some of the Protected Areas in the atoll contain both terrestrial and marine habitats which has been disaggregated for this table. Calculation of figures are based on the gps coordinates designated for these protected areas. Marine areas listed under improved management practices are areas that are managed by the tourism sector, while not legally declared protected they are preserved for their economic benefits and thereby can be further strengthened to contribute to a connected and well managed PA network. This project will bring the Protected Areas in Boduladhunmathi under improved management through capacity building, guidelines, standards, financial frameworks and

exchange visits. Capital investments will be made by the Project in Shaviyani Farukolhu to demonstrate the implementation of an equitable and effective management of a Protected Area with investments supporting sustainable revenue stream. The population figures are totals of the disaggregated populations of the 4 administrative atolls in the region where GEF project will be implemented.

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

Overall there is no change from the PIF on any of the given components. The only change is inclusion of more detailed site-specific information obtained from the PPG stage. More stakeholder meetings were held, but overall the information received was very similar to the PIF.

1) global environmental problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed

The Maldives archipelago is a chain of coral reefs and islands lying along the Lakshadweep? Maldives? Chagos ridge of 21 natural atolls and 4 reef platforms and approx. 1200 coral reef islands[1]1, with a total land area of approx. 300km2. Located in Indian Ocean, approximately 340km southwest of southern India, the Republic of Maldives is one of only four atoll island nations around the world[2]2, and is unique with respect to the atoll reef systems and coral reef biodiversity it supports, the sheer abundance and variety of the islands, contrasting reef formations and associated flora and fauna, variety of reef structures it possesses and its value to human communities.

The country?s population of approximately 400,000 people lives on 187 of the 1192 islands in the Maldives. An additional 145 islands have private tourist resorts[3]3. About 70% of the inhabited islands have a resident population of less than 1,000 people. Male?, the capital city of the country, had, as of 2014, an estimated population of 153,379, or 45% of the country?s residents[4]4.

With an average ground level of 1.5m (4ft 11in), Maldives is one of the lowest-lying country in the world, making the country highly vulnerable to climate change, sea-level rise and various natural hazards such as tidal waves and storm generated inundations.

The reef ecosystem of the Maldives is the 7th largest in the world and the 5th most biodiverse, spreading over an area of 8920 sq.km and represents 3% of global coral reef cover[5]5. Coral reefs in the Maldives are characterized by a great variety of formations, which is reflected by the richness of local

dhivehi words used locally to describe different coral reef structures (e.g. faru, thila, giri, haa and gaa) based on their size and depth[6]6. The structurally complexity and ecologically diverse habitats are essential to large numbers of both resident and transient marine life. The country?s position, close to mid-point of the east and west margins of the ocean basin, means that its marine fauna has the characteristics of both the highly diverse reefs of the coral triangle and of east African reefs. This is indicative of the role the country?s reefs play as a biogeographic stepping stone for dispersal and maintenance of coral reef biodiversity throughout the Indian Ocean.

The biodiversity of the Maldives includes a relatively small number of terrestrial species and a large number of marine species. Maldives has a high diversity of coral species, with approximately 250 species of hard, reef-building corals[7]7. More than 1,200 reef associated fish species have been identified[8]8. There have also been 36 species of sponge, 285 species of algae, 5 species of seagrass, 400 species of molluses, 350 species of crustaceans and 80 species of echinoderms that have been recorded in the Maldives[9]9. The waters of the Maldives support a diverse megafauna of over 20 species of whales and dolphins, 5 of the 7 species of marine turtles and 40 species of sharks. 167 species of birds comprising of seabirds, shorebirds and terrestrial birds including 5 endemic to the country, have been recorded in the Maldives. They include breeding residents, southern winter visitors (shearwaters and storm-petrels), and northern winter visitors (mostly waders, raptors and passerines as well as some terms).

Among animal groups that are internationally threatened are populations of green (Chelonia mydas, IUCN Red List Category EN) and hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata, IUCN Red List Category CR) turtles. The Maldives is perhaps the most important feeding area for hawksbill turtles in the Indian Ocean. It is also home to globally significant populations of whale shark (Rhincodon typus, IUCN Red List Category EN) and manta rays (Manta birostris, IUCN Red List Category VU). Other globally significant coral reef species include the Napoleon wrasse (Cheilinus undulates, IUCN Red List Category EN), Giant Grouper (Epinephelus lanceolatus, IUCN Red List Category VU)[10]¹⁰. The Maldives Blenny (Ecsenius minutus) has so far been identified only in the Maldives, while the distribution of certain species, like the Maldivian anemone fish (Amphiprion nigripes) is restricted to the Maldives, Laccadives and Sri Lanka. A number of species in the Maldives are globally threatened or are listed on the CITES appendices and require particular protection and monitoring.

Though the Maldives may be best known for its marine ecosystem, the terrestrial environment has a diversity of habitats each with high ecological and social value. The coastal fringe habitat, made up

primarily of scrub vegetation consolidates sediment, aiding island development and limiting erosion. Where islands are large enough, forests develop with nutrient rich soils and dense vegetation growth. There are 583 species of terrestrial flora found, of which 323 are cultivated and 260 are natural[11]11. The farmed species are mostly used as a source of food and some for traditional medicine. Unique coral reef based Wetlands and marshes are also found in the Maldives, showcasing a significant and diverse community of flora and fauna within depressions on reef islands. Two types of mangrove ecosystems are found in the Maldives; 1) semi-enclosed bay areas with brackish water locally known as ?kulhi?, and 2) muddy areas without stranding water known as ?chasbin. Around 15 species of mangroves are found across 150 of the islands[12]¹². The largest mangrove systems in the Maldives are found in depressions inside islands or along the borders of bay areas. For example, Keylakunu in Maldives is known as one of the most diverse true mangrove forest in the region. The Avicennia marina found here is rare species throughout the world. One of the bigger trees of Avicennia marina found in Keylakunu is over 15m tall with a diameter at the breast height of 2.4m[13]¹³. Mangroves provide a range of ecosystem services such as protecting shorelines from storm as well as erosion, nursery grounds and carbon sequestration. Mangrove habitats also support a diversity of bird species and are likely to be amongst the most important areas for resident birds across the country.

The biodiversity of atoll ecosystems underpins at least 71% of national employment, 89% of GDP and 98% of exports[14]¹⁴. Tourism has rapidly become the nation?s largest sector and it now accounts for approximately 28% of GDP and more than 60% of foreign exchange receipts. Over 90% of government revenue comes from coral reef based tourism-related taxes. The rich marine environment also provides a wealth of fishing opportunities including tuna, groupers, barracuda, rainbow runner, trevally and many more. Reported tuna landings in 2017 were around 139,000 Mt[15]¹⁵. In 2017, exports of fish and fishery products were valued at USD 196.2 million[16]¹⁶. There also is a strong growth in the demersal reef fishery to meet demand from international visitors and an international reef fish market[17]¹⁷,[18]¹⁸. This industry concentrates on trevally, sea perch and sea bass with some cod, especially the coral trout. Reported heavy declines in the reef fishery, the bait fishery and the beche-demer fishery have led to these being targeted in the National Fisheries Management Plan, presently under preparation. These facts underline the significance of the conservation and sustainable management of the country?s coral reef biodiversity.

Ecosystem destruction, degradation and associated loss of biodiversity are a global concern which need to be urgently addressed. According to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity

and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), 75 % of the Earth?s land surface is significantly altered, 66 % of the ocean area is experiencing increasing cumulative impacts, and over 85 % of wetlands (by area) have been lost. The report identifies changes in land and sea use; direct exploitation of organisms; climate change; pollution; and invasion of alien species as the most direct drivers of change with the largest global impact on biodiversity loss. These main drivers result from underlying causes ranging from societal values and behaviours, production and consumption patterns, population dynamics, trade, technological innovations and local through global governance.

Maldives too is a country progressing towards development and as can be seen by several documented case studies, economic incentives (in the form of large-scale infrastructure development) are often favoured over environmental conservation. Globally coral reef ecosystems are identified as continuing in a downward degradation in the face of anthropogenic impacts and climate change. Therefore, the coral reef ecosystem of Maldives is especially significant in terms of global biodiversity conservation. Land/seascape change, especially from reclamation of coastal lagoons, for airports, resorts, and industrial land, pose the biggest threat to the coastal ecosystems, coral reefs and marine lifeforms of the Maldives. Such projects often involve dredging leading to sedimentation of large areas and direct impact on coral reefs and marine life. The societal values often dictate the need for such reclamation as development and progress is measured in terms of infrastructure and hence, economic development.

As identified by the IPBES, developing consideration for the multiple values of ecosystem functions and contributions to the economy is known to show better ecological, economic, and social outcomes for ecosystem conservation. The CATENATE project is designed to create such societal values through demonstration of economic and social benefits of PAs. In Outcome 2 of the project, innovative ways for sustainably financing PA management that rely on non-extractive use of the PA will be explored and implemented. The outcome will also provide alternative livelihoods mechanisms for community members whose livelihood was affected by the establishment of PA. Through the Farukolhu project site, the CATENATE project seeks to develop a more positive value towards ecosystem protection and conservation.

While the Government of the Maldives recognizes the positive impact of PA in ecosystem conservation, to date, due to lack of public resources and technical capacity, the majority of legally protected areas in Maldives (except the ones that are within the Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve, Addu and Fuvahmulah) are simply ?paper parks? without any established plans for their management. Therefore, activities that take place within those PAs are not monitored and regulations are not enforced. Thus, even though, PAs have a higher potential towards improving the protection of ecosystems, further work in the management of these areas would be needed to maximize efficacy as well as financial sustainability of PA systems. A better understanding of the value of these ecosystems, as well as needs and aspirations of the people using these natural resources needs to be considered and understood to achieve equitable and effective conservation goals.

The project will take a holistic approach to strengthen the governance, financing and decision-making process for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development of *Boduthiladhunmathi* atoll (the largest naturally formed coral atoll in the world with a surface area of approximately 3788.71 sq km) as whole and use the legally protected Sh.Farukolhu PA as a demonstration site for this proposed project.

The Project Area; Boduthiladhunmathi Atoll is the largest atoll in the world. It consists of 164 separate reefs and a combined reef area of 223.50 km2 and 150 islands with a total land area of 68.70km2. When combined with the natural atolls of Ihavandhippolhu and Makunudhoo that fall within the jurisdiction of the 4 administrative atolls of Boduthiladhunmathi Atoll the total combined reef area increases to 836.km2 and 171 islands with a total land area of 75.36 km2. Compared to other atolls in the Maldives, Boduthilandhunmathi contains more islands and sandbanks than any other. Notable are the number of islands with naturally formed bays that are important breeding and nursery ground for sharks and rays. The ecological value of the Project area is expected to represent be a sub-set of the overall national condition.

Within the Project Area, Boduthiladhunmathi atoll there are nine islands that are known marine turtle nesting sites, for both Green and Hawksbill turtles, among these are three islands that are Protected Areas including the project site Shaviyani Farukolhu Protected Area.

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IUCN ecological surveys (Dryden et al., 2020) undertaken in the Project Area including at Keylakunu (Haa Dhaalu) Farukolhu (Shaviyani), Medhufaru (Noonu) & Orimas Thila (Noonu) determined, hard coral cover by a number of methods depending on the site. The results notably varied within sites depending on the method. Indicative living hard coral cover was; Keylakunu (~10%), Farukolhu (~15%), Medhufaru (29%) and Orimas Thila (~15%). Keylakunu was mostly dominated by Poritidae and Merulidae with Acroporidae absent. Poritidae dominated both Farukolhu and Medhufuru. Fish family richness at all sites was broadly similar (around 15 per site).

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Coral recruits/m2 are reported fromwere Keylakunu (3), Farukolhu (5), Medhufaru (7). Structural complexity (scale = 1-5) for Farukolhu, Medhufaru and Orimas Thila iswas between 2 and 3, and for Keylakunu between 3 and 4. Herbivore densities arewere between low and highvariable relative to all other sites considered. Compared to current national coral reef condition and resilience levels, the reefs studied within the Boduthiladhunmathi area are comparable to the national condition in that the capacity for coral reefs to recover from disturbances still appears to be moderate to high overall, although variable. The ?phase shifts? that prevent recovery of former intact habitats and integral ecosystems are yet to irreversibly occur. Protecting a network of area-based atoll conservation designations will increase the resilience of the whole atoll system to further biodiversity loss and adverse climate impacts.

The coastal and coral reef ecosystems of Maldives, including the Project site Farukolhu PA, are under threat from both anthropogenic and natural causes. In recent years, large scale development projects involving reclamation and coastal modification, for airport, resort and other land requirements has seen irreversible damage caused to many island environments of the Maldives. Communities desire for these changes in the hope to develop local tourism, increased land for building guest houses and airports for easy access to the islands. In the past we have seen uninhabited islands with unique and biologically significant ecosystems being developed as tourism resorts. Farukolhu is one such island which had been recognized for its pristine environment and unique beauty and was considered for tourism development[19]19. The designation of Farukolhu as a PA has assured the protection and conservation of this unique and pristine island. The establishment of PAs and designation of ecologically significant sites by the Government has been a proactive initiation to protect these sites. However, the conservation objectives of many of these PAs are not achieved due to lack of management. The support from CATENATE to implement appropriate and progressive management actions will measurably enhance the effectiveness of these PAs.

Farukolhu, having been established as a PA, does not currently face large-scale anthropogenic threats. The only anthropogenic impacts are local level impacts from sustainable use of resources such gathering of dead wood, coconut and palms fronds and fishing by local communities. These are allowed under the PA rules. The most frequent use of the island is recreational for picnics by local groups often with the permission of Atoll Council. With this project, these activities can be carried out sustainably with proper access and use guidelines and monitoring and enforcement of these guidelines. Natural threats like mangrove diebacks which recently impacted a large number of mangrove ecosystems in the north had also been reported in Farukolhu PA.

Farukolhu is a long, narrow uninhabited island on the eastern edge of the Shavyani atoll. The southern half of the island is split in two lengthways by a long mangrove bay. The northern end has several brackish water ponds, many of which are connected by narrow channels. The island's vegetation was made up primarily of coastal scrub vegetation typical of the region. *Scaevola taccada* and *Talipariti tiliaceum* dominated on the sheltered inner atoll facing shore and *Pemphis scidula* on the exposed outer atoll edge. Ponds may have been formed by seawater flowing through channels which have now closed or filled by rainwater or water transported through the porous underlying rocks. Only two of these ponds had mangrove trees present, and in both cases the trees appeared to be dying. There is also an area of coconut grove in the centre of the island that is regularly harvested. The mangrove bay was dominated by *Ceriops tagal* though much of the outer bay was *P. scidula. Rhizophora mucronata*. A fringing reef is present around the outside of the island. The outer atoll facing reef had many small branching and table corals. The inner reef slope was generally

rubble with small rocky patches of coral growth.

Farukolhu is home to 46 different fish species as well as two shark species; Blacktip reef shark (VU) and Sicklefin lemon shark (EN) and three ray species among which are Mangrove whipray (VU), Porcupine ray (VU), 18 genera of corals, 16 different flora species including three different species of mangroves, and 14 avifauna species.

A number of threatened species observed at the project site during the 2017 ecological survey include humphead wrasse (Cheilinus undulates, IUCN Red List Category EN), green turtle (Chelonia mydas, IUCN RedList Category EN), hawksbill turtle (Eretmochelys imbricate, IUCN Redlist Category CR), brown-marbled grouper (Epinephelus fuscoguttatus, IUCN Red List Category VU), square-tailed grouper (Plectropomus areolatus, IUCN Red List Category VU), and saddled-back grouper (Plectropomus laevis).

A high number of birds inhabit the island and the mangrove bay has an abundant and diverse fish community sheltering or hunting amongst the mangrove roots. This habitat is also an important nursery ground with a high number of juvenile sharks, notably, juvenile sicklefin lemon sharks (Negaprion acutidens), IUCN RedList Category Endangered species, which are also observed in high numbers. There are also juveniles of commercially important fish species such as blue-fin jacks, and snappers and groupers. The importance of these mangrove bays as nursery habitats is undervalued across the country, and a proper evaluation of the goods and services provided by the different mangrove, sea grass and wetland habitats need to be conducted and effective management measures needs to be implemented to conserve and manage through this project. Overall, this will help further secure a significant part of Maldives? important biodiversity and natural heritage, and the broader ecological, social and economic services they provide, as well as the area?s contributions to regional connectivity in the Indian Ocean, and to enhance conservation of globally significant marine and atoll biodiversity. this nationally as well globally significant biologically diverse area.

The establishment of PAs and designation of ecologically significant sites by the Government has been a proactive initiation to protect these sites. However, the conservation objectives of many of these PAs are not achieved due to lack of management, which is the case for Farukolhu PA too. The support from CATENATE to develop decentralised governance models, demonstrate appropriate and progressive management actions and develop knowledge products will measurably enhance the effectiveness of PAs in Boduthiladhunmathi as well as enable better management in other PAs of thecountry.

The coral reefs are continuously threatened by the increases in the sea surface temperature which have caused severe coral bleaching events. The Indian Ocean region temperatures are expected to increase by 2.1 °C by the 2050s and 3.2 °C by the 2080s. The maximum daily temperature in the Maldives is projected to increase by around 1.5 °C by 2100. Although the figures need to be interpreted carefully, a significant decline in the average hard coral cover in the Maldives over the past 50-60 years has been noted. In 1958, coral cover was estimated at 65%, falling to 56% in 1964 and 27.5% in 1992. Since

then, Maldivian coral reefs have suffered two severe nationwide coral bleaching events (El-Nino related), the first in 1997/1998 and the second in 2016. During the 1997/1998 event approximately 80% of corals either completely or partially bleached in shallow areas. In 2016, the bleaching affected approximately 73% of corals on shallow (<13 m) reefs. Coral bleaching risk mapping from 2020 Multihazard Risk Atlas of Maldives shows that Shaviyani Farukolhu lies within an area that is mostly expected to suffer from ?low chronic, low acute? to ?low chronic to high acute? stress.

There are several causes of these threats to the destruction of the coastal and marine ecosystems. One among which is the growth in population and the demand for space and resources for socio-economic development. The current population growth rate of Maldives is 1.65% according to the last census in 2014. The population in Sh. Funadhoo, the closest inhabited island to Farukolhu, has increased from 799 to more than 2104 in the last 2 decades. The demand of resources for sustenance, housing and livelihood for the growing population has added to the pressures on the natural resources. Unsustainable management of resources and urban development associated with population and economic growth are root causes of these destructions.

Insufficient knowledge among local actors as well as policymakers on ecosystems, health and the financial value of associated goods and services and natural capital has led to insufficient recognition or undervaluation of marine and coastal natural capital in macro-economic and sector policies. At the local level, while communities continue to desire economic development the true value of the benefits and contributions of the natural environment to the economy as well as the society are not truly understood or appreciated by the people. There is a need to create awareness and educate people on the importance of protection and conservation of natural resources. Most community level activities are not intended to educate to make the community aware and that has resulted in short term and unsustainable activities which have not resulted in positive attitude changes at community level. The PA benefits assessments to be done prior and after the CATENATE projects will give an indication of how the perceived benefits of PAs has changed within the community.

In addition to the local level causes, climate change is a major driver of the threats to our natural ecosystems. Coral bleaching due to the increasing of sea surface temperatures is one of the biggest threats to the coral reefs of the Maldives. According to the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change 2021 report, the scope and severity of coral bleaching events have increased in recent decades. In addition, the more frequent extreme events, such as flooding and storms, forecasted due to climate change pose high threat to the coastal environment of the Maldives. Being a low-lying country with small islands these impacts are highly attenuated.

The Government of Maldives fully recognises that it is necessary to ensure environmental sustainability in the country?s development policy and planning frameworks across all sectors to sustain the economy and livelihoods which the country is reliant on. The need to mainstream environmental preservation into sectoral policies is acknowledged in the administration?s Strategic Action Plan, which outlines the developmental targets and priorities of the Government for the five-year period 2019? 2023. To ensure progress in this front, the increment of the Project will seek to address three barriers to effect change in the Maldives. These three barriers were identified during the PIF stage have not changed as these issues have persisted in the Maldives for a long time. Further analysis during the PPG stage did not reveal anything new.

Insufficient institutional and financial capacity for protected area management and biodiversity conservation

Limited financial resources as well as technical and institutional capacities within various government institutions to formulate and implement policies to establish and manage protected areas is a key barrier. The capacity to develop and operationalise protected area and natural resource management plans continues to be limited, largely due to insufficient staffing and incentive mechanism and lack of technical tools and systems to enhance different management models. There is little integration of scientific data and information about environmental change into policies and action plans, hampering the ability of informed decision-making to ensure biodiversity conservation in face of ongoing and future threats. This is evident from the fact that, majority of legally protected areas in Maldives (except the ones that are within the Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve, Addu Atoll and Fuvahmulah Island) lack management plans, defacto converting most protected areas into ?paper parks? (i.e. protected areas legally declared and existing on maps but with no conservation/management regulation in place). Due to budget and logistics challenges, assessing biodiversity and threat monitoring and law enforcement efforts are inadequate across the country. Key protected corals reef areas for marine biodiversity remain largely unmanaged and rangers do not have a permanent, visible or significant presence in the areas.

Lack of capacity in local Island councils to implement the broad mandate of natural resource management as specified in the Decentralisation Act is a key concern. Due to this, the formal authority and resources continue to be retained by the national ministries and there is hesitation to devolve responsibilities as outlined in the Decentralisation Act. There is limited capacity to assess or monitor key habitats and formulate management actions within local councils. The ability of the councils to make a case for increased protected area investments and ensure adequate protection of nation?s biodiversity is furthermore hampered by the fact that there is little knowledge about the economic value of the services that are provided by marine ecosystems. In addition, there is insufficient understanding and capacity to implement the type of reforms that would be required for financial sustainability of protected area management. Thus, it is imperative to develop capacity of managers and councils on

financial planning as well as sustainable management of natural resources to ensure environmental sustainability of economic development in key biodiversity areas.

Inadequate policy and regulatory framework to support systematic governance of natural resources

Even though there are national processes underway with the aim of improving the broad environmental preservation as well as management agenda and its policy and regulatory basis, gaps continue to exist in legal frameworks, particularly those related to natural resource use, protected area management and protection of natural resources. Governance in the Maldives has historically been driven from the top, with a centralised governance structure for the management of geographically isolated marine resources. Due to logistics as well as communication challenges, regular interventions and resource management at a local community level has been insufficient in the current system. To address these systematic challenges, a Decentralisation Bill was enacted and passed in Maldives for the first time in 2010. The Article 151 of the current Decentralisation Act of the Maldives prescribes that Atoll and Island Councils have the power to formulate regulations and to make decisions on matters which fall within their jurisdiction, including rules governing use of the reefs, lagoons and other natural resources within the island boundaries. While on paper the Decentralisation Act provides for effective local governance, the implementation of the Act has not been effective as of yet. In addition to that, the current legal and regulatory frameworks are inadequate in addressing the sectoral conflicts and issues in biodiversity conservation. Policies and strategies pertaining to economic growth and development have not yet been sufficiently aligned with existing environmental legislation, including that relating to protected areas. Thus, the policy frameworks often conflict, which lead to confusion across different sectors, and cause difficulties in making biodiversity conservation a priority sector with adequate enforcement.

The recent ratification of the 8th amendment to the Decentralization Act (Act no. 07/2010) on 15 December 2019 holds promise for changes to be implemented. With this amendment the decentalization act now provides local councils with more fiscal and legal autonomy and allocates a third of the council seats for female councillors. The bill will ensure the finances of local councils also include revenue from leasing land, islands and lagoons and 100 percent of the revenue generated from land and other resources in the direct jurisdiction of the council. In addition, all Public Sector Investment Programmes (PSIP) under the value of MVR 5 million (equivalent to approximately USD 325,000) will fall under local councils as sectoral grants.

Apart from the Protected Area Regulation, there is no specific document that outlines the standards or provides guidance in identifying key environmental habitats for management or standardised monitoring protocols in place. There is therefore an urgent need to review and align policies and development planning across sectors, and to ensure integration of up-to-date information on sustainable natural resource use and biodiversity conservation alongside economic development strategies. Legal instruments need to be adaptive to support management actions in different atoll ecosystems. For the decentralised natural resource management to work, it is imperative to explore and identify various governance models that would align with the existing legal framework as well as formulate guiding documents to ensure private sector participation in natural resource management. Given that biodiversity is a multi-sectoral asset spread amongst variety of institutions, clarifying the legal roles and jurisdictions of variety of natural resources will be an important part of this project. Additionally, understanding how effective management plans crafted with site specific characteristics would become part of the existing regulatory framework and the importance laid on community participation in the development of management plans is also a priority area of this project.

Weak knowledge management and gender mainstreaming in natural resource management

Gender considerations are not routinely taken into account in design and implementation of biodiversity conservation interventions. Traditional gender division of labour is well defined in Maldives, and continues to prevail even in natural use and management. Women?s roles in resource use tend to be restricted to domestic-oriented roles tasks that are considered more suitable for women. For instance, within the fisheries sector, women are more involved in making of shorts eats rather than going fishing or being involved in wholesale/retail. Even when they were more engaged within the fisheries sector in the past, they were involved in activities such as boiling, drying or salting of fish. In most cases, women?s participation in natural resource management is limited to being informed of and executing council?s plans. Women are underrepresented in the decision making sphere in marine and coral reefs resource utilization, and thus their knowledge and skills are not reflected in resource management plans. Given the differentiated roles among men and women in natural resource use, their knowledge, skills, and practices towards natural resources management are bound to vary, and identifying them is important in order to improve natural resource conservation. Moreover, identifying the structures, conditions, and processes by which people make decisions and share power can enable managers to design a more contextually appropriate management plans.

Lack of reliable data and insufficient information sharing remains an impediment to ensuring effective support for biodiversity and ecosystem management. Despite a heavy reliance on natural resources on livelihoods as well as for a sustained economic development path, there is a general lack of awareness among the people of Maldives about the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Environmental issues continue to be perceived by many in government, various industries and the general population as a constraint on economic growth, rather than as an opportunity to improve competitiveness and sustainability. This is partly due to lack of practical examples on how sustainable resource uses and environmentally responsive development designs can deliver economic outcomes

that are sustainable; as well insufficient knowledge on the direct and indirect value of the marine environment, dependencies and opportunities. This creates challenges for scaling-up of successes and lessons learned of efforts being supported by international, national and local actors. Thus, preparing, communicating robust participatory and communication strategy to provide citizens and decisions makers with knowledge on the value of biodiversity, ecosystem services and lessons on best practices are thus essential for improved management of environmental governance and upscaling of project results.

2) the baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects

Due to rather limited Government budget resources available for environmental conservation and protection, projects from international donor partners constitute the great part of current baseline spending that addresses the environmental resilience and ecosystem recovery in the Maldives. Thus, the key projects that provide a baseline scenario for CATENATE are outlined below.

Atoll Ecosystem-based Conservation of Globally Significant Biological Diversity in the Maldives, Baa Atoll (AEC)

This completed GEF supported project (2003-2012), was the stepping stone to a collaborative management of integrated conservation and sustainable development of natural resources in the Maldives. An ecosystem approach for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development was proposed through a participatory design, based on the recognition of: i) the undeniable linkages between natural coastal resources and biodiversity with the country?s economic prosperity and social development, and ii) the fact that conventional approaches to conservation had not proved effective. An integrated perspective on conservation and resource management was taken where biological diversity was not accounted for simply as the number of species but for the complex interaction between the physical environment and the biological communities. In this front, the project piloted UNESCO Biosphere Reserve model in Baa Atoll which has been received extremely well for ecosystem based conservation in the Maldives. The model has been a particularly accepted model due to the integrated nature of its technical, financial and institutional implementation practices. This led to the Hanifaru Bay Protected area within Baa Atoll, with a management plan and enforcement mechanims in place. Since then there have been decisions by the government on declaring various parts of the Maldives as Biosphere Reserves.

The completed World Bank funded Climate Change Adaptation Project? CCAP (USD4.3 million 2015-2018) enabled local governments and communities to implement a clear strategy for wetland conservation, coral reef monitoring, solid waste management, and mainstreaming of climate change in island development planning for the two southern most atolls of the Maldives: Addu Atoll and Fuvahmulah Island. This project actively worked on environmental education and communication; strengthening of the national Coral Reef Monitoring Framework for improved decision making and management of coral reefs; and provided support for local eco-friendly livelihood activities in these two atolls. This proposed GEF project will build on the results and lessons learnt from the above mentioned two projects in establishing well managed protected areas in the country.

Reefs Generate Environmental and Economic Resilience for Atoll Ecosystems (Project REGENERATE)

Another important baseline project is Project REGENERATE, a government of Maldives project, implemented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and generously funded by USAID. The project aims at developing an operational and applicable framework for incorporating resilience into management and adaptation decisions in the Maldives for coral reefs. The project works to help local communities and government to measure and understand the impacts of climate change, and to develop management strategies that build resilience, mitigate impacts and promote adaptation. The project aims to first build the evidence base for understanding the impacts of climate change through social and ecological scientific assessments; secondly build capacity and awareness of local communities and government through trainings and public awareness campaigns; thirdly assist the government in developing management plans for coral reef ecosystems and reef-dependent people; and fourthly develop strategies for sustainability of management plans. The project has a total investment value of USD 8 million and is designed to be implemented in two phases. Phase 1 (2013-2015) played a key role in setting up institutional structures for the establishment of a network of Biosphere Reserves across the country to promote decentralised monitoring and management of marine resources, and bottom-up management practices of Marine Managed Area (MMA) in partnership with key government agencies, tourism sector and local communities. Using North Ari as a demonstration atoll, it laid strong foundation for detailed marine spatial planning by collecting detailed ecological, sexdisaggregated socio-economic data for the coral reefs to identify management interventions for the atoll. Phase 2 (2016-2022) has focused on assisting the Ministry of Environment in identifying and setting up biosphere reserves in the country. In this aspect, in September 2019, nomination dossiers to declare the southernmost two atoll of the Maldives, Addu Atoll and Fuvahmulah Island was submitted to UNESCO. In addition to that, the project is working towards identifying key habitats for protection as well assisting the government in developing management plans for key protected areas. Through this project?s capacity building component, an awareness campaign, ?Muraka Meehun? was launched which emphasises the critical relationship and interdependencies between coral reefs and human populations and promotes positive changes in the behaviour of citizens in order to reduce pressures on coral reefs. In addition to that, a management plan for South Ari Marine Park, the largest marine

protected area in the Maldives has been formulated through the project and management actions have been initiated in the region. Through this project, Ministry of Environment is providing approximately USD 1,500,000 annually (total grant and recurrent) in support of biodiversity assessments and environmental conservation work. These investments as well experience of the project REGENERATE and its transference to national institutions will prove to be an important baseline for all the components of the proposed GEF project.

Enhancing National Development through Environmentally Resilient Islands (ENDhERI)

Other key investment that will function as a foundation for this proposed project is the recently approved GEF project, ENDhERI (USD 3,532,968). This project will work to enhance reef protection, resilience and ecosystem recovery by reducing development impacts in the Laamu Atoll, enabled for replication nationally through public awareness and integrating the values of marine biodiversity and other natural capital in national policies and budgets. ENDhERI proposes a practical agenda of change in the Maldives towards national adoption of Green Growth atoll development, aiming at maintaining its marine natural capital as well as specifically strengthening the resilience and recovery of reefs

The above mentioned two projects, Project REGENERATE, and ENDhERI constitutes baseline funding for the proposed project and establish incremental support to the GoM. The projects were not designed to focus on sustainable financial management of a PA system and do not contain activities specifically to strengthen institutional and technical capacity of Councils. There are also gaps in policy support needed which the project will address through developing governance models, standards and guidelines on identifying and managing key biodiversity areas across the country.

Community Conserved Area Project (CCA)

This is an ongoing 3-year project implemented by NGOs under a UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP). IUCN is a partner in the global initiative for this project, supported by the German BMU International Climate Initiative (IKI). The project focuses on establishing Community Conserved Areas (CCA) in the Maldives. During the initial stage of the project, a baseline assessment was carried out to evaluate the statuses of the existing CCAs in the Maldives. While many local level initiatives for environmental conservation existed, no CCAs that fit the technical definition of ICCAs existed. Therefore, 6 potential NGOs from 5 islands were identified to build capacity and establish CCAs. Two out of the six NGOs were from Noonu Kendhikulhudhoo island, which is a designated Protected Area. The NGOs had started work in late 2019 but activities were on hold due to the Covid-19 global pandemic and associated travel restrictions and social distancing. Work has been resumed with baseline

biodiversity surveys, development of biodiversity-based teaching material for schools, and establishment of nature parks and visitor centres. The project also includes the development of the CCA network by promoting partnerships, information exchange and enabling access to support mechanisms for local communities with such initiatives. The project will also explore governance models that include public and civil society partnerships. The project components are very similar to the Outcomes proposed in the CATENATE project and the lessons learnt from the project will benefit CATENATE implementation.

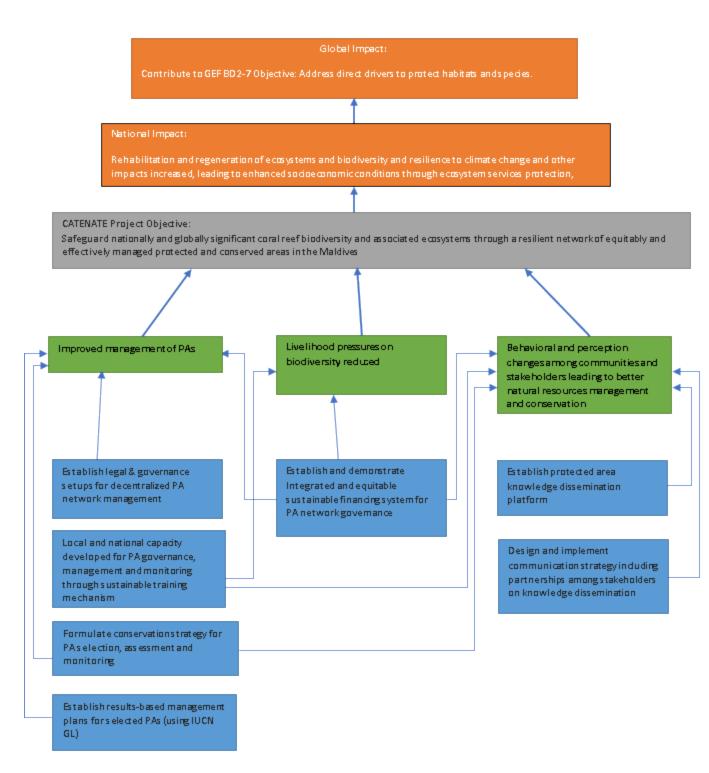
Current investments in PA management by Government and projects are insufficient to demonstrate equitable and effective management of PA system and do not address sufficiently financial sustainability. There is limited financing available for conservation of coral reef and associated ecosystems as a result of more pressing national priorities. And thus inadequate funds towards institutional and human capacity building for the management of the PA network.

The GEF funding through this project will develop institutional capacity and show how investment in the PA will be designed to generate, retain and manage revenue for conservation effectiveness. The 8th Amendment to the Decentralization Act ratified in December 2019 presents an opportunity for strengthening local governance capacity for environmental protection as part of sustainable development through PA planning and management. The Decentralization Act governs the powers and responsibilities of the local authorities empowered to carry out certain functions and describes the public services to be provided by local governments (atoll and island councils) and the responsibility of the councils to formulate and carry out plans for development of its constituencies in an equitable manner. The Act addresses the financial management of local councils, specifically relating to revenues, allocation of funds, financial grants, borrowing and management of accounts. There is a need to build local government capacity and the island and atoll level for this to be most effective. Many island councils will be looking for the potential for sustainable tourism development for their islands and atolls and (integrated) local spatial planning policy and regulations will be important tools. For many islands the concept of protected areas management as part of environment based tourism development, integrated into sustainable development is needed. Identifying the appropriate local financial mechanisms (e.g. PES) that support local environmental conservation agendas of island and atoll councils will be an essential part of the capacity development process.

The Project will build on the enabling environment granted by recent changes to the Decentralization Act, the assignment of Shaviyani Farukolhu to Shaviyani Funadhoo Island jurisdiction and the readiness of Shaviyani Funadhoo Island Council to contribute their own funds towards the management of the whole island of Shaviyani Farukolhu. The successful implementation of the Project will demonstrate the value of investing in PAs, the return on investment and will be used as a model for replication by other Island Councils.

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

This proposed project for GEF financing is required to address deficiencies in institutional capacities, human resources at local council and community levels, investment shortfall for effective, integrated and sustainable protected area management, as the Government of Maldives has undertaken bold steps in increasing the percentages of coral reefs and coastal terrestrial ecosystems under protection. The project will work closley with local communities to integrate traditional knowledge, cultural backgrounds and charecteristics of atolls and islands in management interventions. This Project will contribute to CBD Aichi Biodiversity Targets 1,2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 18, and thereby directly supports the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2025. The proposed Theory of Change is below.



Outcome 1: Improved Protected Area network governance mechanisms

Through Outcome 1, an improved governance framework for the PA network will be established, using diverse mechanisms to achieve effective area-based conservation. Currently, formulation of policies and strategies for biodiversity conservation and PA governance takes place centrally at a national level.

Implementation of such policies is compounded by the sparsely scattered island geography of the Maldives without establishing decentralized PA management mechanisms. Some of the main barriers to local level governance in the Maldives are 1) inadequate institutional capacity for PA management and biodiversity conservation, and 2) inadequate policy and regulatory framework to support systematic governance of natural resources. The four Outputs of Outcome 1 focus on addressing these barriers. They are;

- ? Output 1.1: Legal framework and diverse governance models (e.g., by private sector, Community Based Organizations, public-private partnerships and through recognition as Other effective areas-based conservation mechanisms (OECMs)) formalized and adopted for decentralized management of the PA network
- ? Output 1.2: Capacity development of Councils and managers on; 1) implementing good governance provisions and effective PA management, and use of science and standards in sectoral planning, and 2) financial planning for sustained conservation outcomes
- ? Output 1.3: Conservation strategy including national and global standards and guidelines for representative Protected Areas selection, assessment and monitoring formulated
- ? Output 1.4: Integrated and results-based management plans established, based on equitable governance mechanisms, in selected Protected Areas using the IUCN Green List Standard and verification system and associated PAME tools

Legal framework and diverse governance models (e.g., private sector, CBOs, PPP and OECMs) will be formalized and adopted for decentralized management of the Protected Area network in Output 1.1. Revision to PA regulation will be made to incorporate the models proposed by IUCN. The project would provide process detail, implement and demonstrate these models, which will be replicated at national level. One of the proposed models will be demonstrated at Farukolhu PA. Legal recognition for Atoll and Island Councils to govern the use of the reefs, lagoons and other natural resources within the island boundaries was only given following the passing of the Decentralisation Act (07/2010) in 2010. Translation of these powers from paper to implementation has not been effective. It is hopeful that the 8th amendment to the Decentralization Act (Act no. 07/2010) ratified in December 2019, which now provides local councils with more fiscal and legal autonomy, will pave an easier path for local councils to take on governance responsibilities.

Instead of one big network, 4 small atoll-based networks within Boduthiladhunmathi are proposed as a decentralized governance model. This model mirrors the atoll-based governance and government administration system traditionally practiced in the Maldives. The Atoll Councils of each atoll would have the role of local level regulation akin to the current role played by Environmental Protection

Agency (EPA) at a national level. The EPA would be the overall governing body for each network. It is envisioned that such a system of networks will provide an easy mode of overall PA monitoring and evaluation for the EPA.

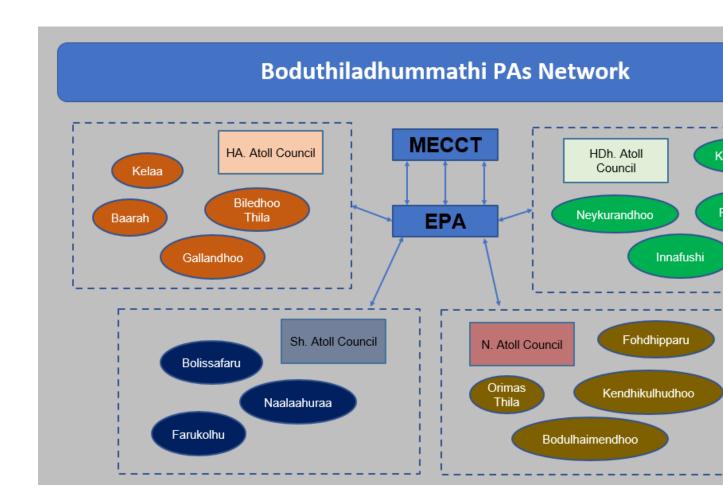


FIGURE 1. PROPOSED BODUTHILADHUNMATHI PA NETWORK CONCEPT

The governance within each network is proposed to be undertaken by the Island Council closest to the PA will be assigned the role of PA management. The specific governance models would be location specific and will be developed during the CATENATE project. These models will explore what roles that private sector, community-based organizations, women?s development committees and other groups of the community can play in the PA management. For each PA in the atoll, the management authority will be identified through a consultative assessment while the Atoll Council will be the local regulator.

The project will develop at least 3 governance models for managing PAs. The project will implement and demonstrate at least 1 of these governance models at the Project site, Shaviyani Farukolhu PA. A pre-capacity assessment of Funadhoo Island Council (FIC), the Island Council closest to Farukolhu PA, will be conducted to identify the existing capacity, strengths and weaknesses and gaps that need to be addressed for decentralised management of Farukolhu PA Based on the capacity assessments and following the development of a draft management concept and a financing plan , a MoU will be signed between the EPA and the Council to delegate management authority to the Council.

The baseline study highlighted the lack of technical expertise among Councils as a barrier for effective decentralised PA management. Both the Shaviyani Atoll Council and Funadhoo Island Council were confident in developing and implementing effective compliance monitoring mechanisms if given the adequate financial resources. However, there was a lack of understanding of governance and management beyond compliance monitoring. The Councils identified technical expertise in monitoring for effectiveness of PA management, knowledge management and communication as among some of the areas that need to be strengthened for PA management. Through Output 1.2, the project will focus on improving the technical and institutional capacity for fair and effective protected area management within the country. Tools, standards, manuals, and handbooks for sustainable management of the Protected Area network will be developed in this Output.

In order to continue the benefits of such capacity development activities beyond the life of the project, a Certificate level course on Protected Areas Governance and Management is proposed to be developed. The course will include a range of PA management topics including governance, sustainable financing, PA health monitoring, adaptive management, community outreach and engagement, Standards (IUCN Green List) and Monitoring tools for PA effectiveness (Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) and Green List) among others. This Output will include training of trainers as well a sdeveloping required training materials. An initial first batch of students will be trained for the Certificate level course in PA management. The staff or potential staff at Farukolhu PA office and FIC staff will be chosen as part of the first batch of students. Further, short trainings based on the Certificate course will be conducted for Councillors and Police in the Boduthiladhunmathi region. This will empower the Councillors and the Secretariat to promote environmental sustainability and facilitate political coordination for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation. The engagement of the Council Secretariat staff (civil servants) is crucial for continuity beyond the elected period served by Councillors. Ranger training for Farukolhu PA Office is also planned to train them on the specific PA management and the use of various tools and protocols developed for management at Farukolhu. Management at the project site at Farukolhu will be geared towards potential certification as an IUCN Green List Standard (GL) PA. To develop capacity for this process a training on GL certification process, targeted for MECCT, EPA, Councils and relevant stakeholders is included.

To support the effective management of the PA network, the project will support the development of a conservation strategy that identifies national standards and guidelines for representative PA selection, assessment, and monitoring standards in Output 1.3. These will be local and contextual adaptations of global Standards and best practice guidance, always with the relevance and applicability to Maldives. Key to these is the adaptation of the IUCN Green List Standard for protected and conserved areas to the Maldives context, which will help set criteria and indicators suitable for benchmarking progress of Maldives? protected and conserved areas.

The stakeholder consultation and baseline reviews identified that the current trends in local guesthouse tourism in island communities has the potential to be adopted as a biodiversity conservation strategy through development of ecotourism. Communities understand the role of the environment and its conservation as a means to attract potential tourists. Though local tourism has brought about positive environmental changes in islands (e.g., better waste management, beach clean ups, promotion of mangrove and coral reef ecosystems for tourism), the risk of increased guesthouse development will add to environmental pressures and ecosystem destruction as many islands see reclamation for land to develop more guesthouses and industries as a necessity for island development planning. Stakeholder consultations have identified developing ecotourism standards and guidelines as an immediate need to balance the economic desires needs vs ecological benefits linked to ecotourism. Therefore, this Output will also focus on development of such standards and guidelines for sustainable tourism development in PAs, based on existing international standards and adapting them to the Maldivian context.

Through Output 1.4, the Project will implement decentralised management at the project site at Shaviyani Farukolhu PA which includes 72.15 ha of terrestrial and 437.73 ha of marine areas respectively. The project site is selected to demonstrate project activities with the potential for upscaling to the remaining PAs in Boduthiladhunmathi. Currently the Shaviyani Atoll Council is delegated compliance monitoring responsibilities of Farukolhu PA under an MoU with the EPA. A detailed management plan will be developed and implemented at the demonstration site. Studies on current and potential resource use and limits of acceptable change (LAC) at Farukolhu will be undertaken to facilitate development of detailed management plans. Maps of current and potential resource uses at Farukolhu will also be produced. The management plan will include components on physical set up and enforcement guidelines for compliance monitoring, communication and knowledge management, monitoring of PA health, procedures and protocols for monitoring and collection of data to monitor effectiveness of PA; including involvement of visitors/users in data collection (citizen science) and capacity building and PA management improvement planning among others.

The goal of developing and implementing management plans is to continuously strengthen PA effectiveness. Activities on conducting METT assessments and utilisation of the IUCN Green List Standard to benchmark the PA management are also included in this Output. Site assessments and evaluation will diagnose needs in terms of good governance, improved design and planning, effective

management and monitoring for conservation outcomes. The necessary trainings to conduct the METT assessment will be carried out in Output 1.2.

The approach undertaken will demonstrate considerations of ecosystems, habitats and resource uses in the entire natural atoll system taken as a whole. Consideration of human-nature interactions, especially resource users and local communities and their roles and engagement in management will be included in the development and implementation of the management plan. Participatory management systems will be developed aimed at bringing together key stakeholders together to support decision-making relevant to PA management and species conservation, including local communities, private sector, civil society, research institutions and Government. Traditional users of the Farukolhu PA will be a direct group that will have some impact on their use of the area and hence, these groups will be included in management committees to ensure they are not marginalized. Activity 1.4.6. is conduction of a PA benefits assessment (PA-BAT+) which will help to understand ecosystem services as perceived by local stakeholders and this is planned to be done at the beginning of the project and at the end to see the changes in level of understanding by the community and stakeholders.

Outcome 2: Protected Area system financial management

Limited financial resources within various government institutions to formulate and implement policies to establish and manage protected areas has been identified as a key barrier for effective PA management. This is evident from the fact that, majority of legally protected areas in Maldives (except the ones that are within the Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve, Addu Atoll and Fuvahmulah Island) are ?paper parks? (i.e., protected areas legally declared and existing on maps but with no conservation/management regulation in place). The baseline study found that most activities are implemented on a project basis and often are not sustained beyond a project due to financial restrictions. The 2 Outputs of this Component address these barriers, especially focusing on sustainable financial management.

- ? Output 2.1 Financial framework setting out budgeting guidelines and innovative funding opportunities for the Protected Area network in the Atoll developed and implemented at the Project site
- ? Output 2.2 Sustainable financing demonstrated for the Protected Area management and associated communities, through investment for fair and equitable income generation

In order to increase the financial sustainability of the PA network, a national PA financing framework that identifies priorities and financing needs from both cost and revenue aspects based on jurisdictions

defined by the 8th amendment to the Decentralization Act will be developed. A decentralized atoll-based financing mechanism is proposed where an Atoll Council PA revolving fund will be established. The fund will be managed by the respective Atoll Council. CATENATE project activities will establish a revolving fund. Past experience on conservation funds in the Maldives shows that nationally managed conservation funds are not effective for local conservation activities as often national priorities override local needs. Therefore, it is proposed for atoll level revolving funds as governance and associated administration at atoll level has been successfully implemented in the past.

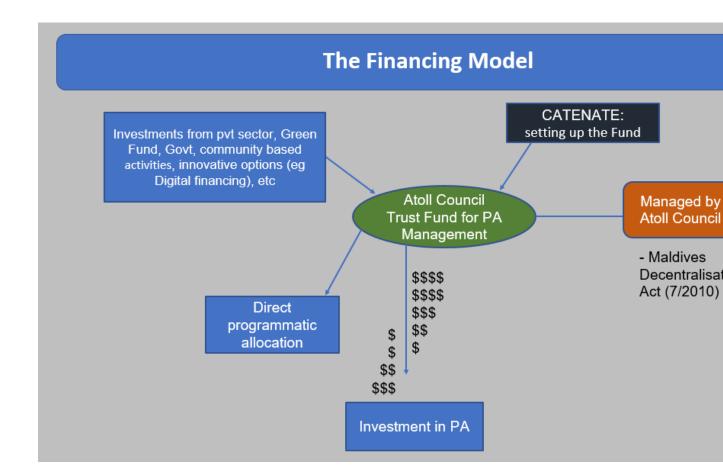


FIGURE 2. PROPOSED FINANCIAL MODEL FOR CATENATE

A financial management capacity assessment of Shaviyani Atoll Council will be conducted under Output 2.1 where the financial performance of the PA network will be evaluated, determining financial gaps, and identifying opportunities for improving overall functionality. It is highly important that the objectives of establishing the fund are clearly understood by the Atoll Councils and Management

offices. There should be a good understanding of the costs involved, and an understanding of the revenues required to ensure sustained and well managed protected area. The financial framework will provide a definitive baseline of expenditures and potential revenues. It will also cost details of appropriate investments such as information signs of unique biodiversity for public outreach, low-impact infrastructure in the form of visitor centres and/or ticket booths, boardwalks for a terrestrial protected area and/or equipment to patrol sites (e.g., Drones, small vessels etc.) and set out measures to ensure the cost effectiveness of management. The financial framework will provide existing revenue streams such as contribution from private sector through partnership arrangements, research permits, licensing of vessels, fee, or token sales for recreational use, ecotourism, rents from scientific research, video and photography etc. In addition, and most importantly, the Project will through this output identify additional revenue streams and innovative financing mechanisms that capitalize investments into the national conservation fund that the Government plans to establish. Innovative financing based on digital financing such as virtual tours, online adoption of species or location and gaming applications can be explored. The estimation of PA management costs and revenues will be done in a phased approach, with an initial period of 5 years.

The financial framework mechanisms and models for establishing a Shaviyani Atoll PA Fund will be developed and established under Output 2.1. This will be done in a consultative manner with national and local actors. There are plans within the Government for establishing a national level Conservation Fund. Once this national fund is established all Atoll level revolving funds are expected to be brought under its umbrella as individual accounts. The development of the guiding regulations, composition of the revolving fund governing board and other mechanisms as well as physical establishment of the revolving fund will be carried out within this Output. Further procedures for receiving and disbursing funds as well as monitoring mechanisms will be implemented. Funds can be generated from payment for ecosystem services, licensing, events digital finance innovations including blockchain-based verification and investment models, royalties etc. In addition, funds can be generated via further investments, such as aligned to finance for performance and progress against specific outcome goals. Investing is a method that has been used in other successful trust funds in the Maldives such as the Education Trust Fund and Heritage Trust Fund. The fund can be also utilised for community livelihood development (Output 2.2.) and procedure will also be developed for disbursing funds for community livelihood development.

The project will conduct financial planning for Shaviyani Atoll Conservation Fund based on the financial framework developed and make full use of an environmental economic case for increased investment in the PA system by quantifying the value of the national PAs in terms of use as well as non-use values, including the economic rate of return on investment in the PA system, and comparative cost-benefit analysis with other types of resource uses including tourism, agriculture, and fisheries. Revenue generation options identified will be implemented for the Shaviyani Atoll Conservation Fund.

Capacity building on financial management; especially on managing a revolving fund as a long-term financing mechanism will be very important, and these trainings will be incorporated into the capacity building trainings in Output 1.2. Programmatic and financial planning for continued improvement of PAs will be included in the capacity building.

In Output 2.2, Strategies developed through Outcome 1 and the financial framework developed in Output 2.1 will be implemented to demonstrate a financially sustainable conservation model in the Shaviyani Farukolhu Protected Area. This will involve developing a sustainable financing plan to operationalise the costs and revenues estimated. Pilot systems will be operationalised to engage communities and users of natural resources in Shaviyani Atoll to promote the sustainable use and the adoption of sustainable practices that reduce threats to biodiversity and support local livelihoods. A capacity assessment of livelihood will be conducted to understand the present practices in financial management in livelihood, such as record keeping on income and expenses and how resources are utilized by the communities near Farukolhu. Livelihood plans for the communities will be developed for an initial period of 5 years, and a support structure will be established via community-based networking, leadership, and monitoring. Technical support will be provided to community groups if formal registrations are needed. Vulnerable families will be considered for livelihood opportunities. The livelihood plan will include development of a procedure for the community to receive funds for livelihood development. The mechanism will include criteria on sustainable livelihood activities and practices.

In parallel with the implementation of fair and effective management measures, this component will demonstrate engagement with the private sector (particularly tourism, fisheries, and agriculture) in sustaining the function of the PA management. Project support will include identifying opportunities for investments and developing partnerships with both the tourism, fisheries, and agriculture sectors with the goal to implement a decentralized network of effectively managed PAs on an atoll level.

Overall, through this Outcome, the project would aim to demonstrate tangible progress validated through benchmarking performance and generating metrics against the GL standard, building on METT results, by demonstrating the potential for upscaling and how improved governance, effective management and financial sustainability can be a vehicle for more socially, ecologically and climateresilient protected and conserved area systems in the atoll.

Outcome 3: Knowledge Management and Communication

Outcome 3 focuses on knowledge management and communication which is essential for effective management of PAs. It offers the opportunity for sustainable replication and uptake through the accumulation of resources, sharing of experiences and the creation of new knowledge products. In order to fulfil the needs of the project and to establish a sustainable knowledge accumulation and reporting mechanism, Outcome 3 will outline activities linked in their design to address both short and long term needs of PA management for the project demonstration site at Sh. Farukolhu. There are three outputs that will be addressed through the activities outlined under this component.

- ? Output 3.1 Protected area management and knowledge dissemination platform established
- ? Output 3.2 Develop a project communication strategy implemented to 1) develop and disseminate knowledge products; 2) mainstream gender equality in project activities and 3) promote uptake, replication and scaling up
- ? Output 3.3 M&E system incorporating gender mainstreaming developed and implemented for adaptive project management.

Baseline assessments show that attempts have been made in various projects to develop national level knowledge repositories and platforms. However, these have not been sustained beyond the life of any past projects. The main reason being often human and financial resources are not allocated within the government organizations to work on maintaining these digital platforms. In COutput 3.1, the consultants propose to trial a local level Protected Area Management System (PAMS) to be developed with involvement of staff who will be carrying over the implementation of the system as well. The advantage of a local level system will be that it is easier to manage and if successfully piloted can be linked to a national level platform in the future. When fully developed, the proposed components of the PAMS will include a knowledge repository, monitoring, evaluation and learning, citizen science portal, online forums and networks and grievance and complaints reporting mechanism. However, within the timeframe of CATENATE, basic components will be developed based on the existing capacity. Capacity building will be undertaken during the timeframe of the CATENATE project to enable future development. This proposed model is envisioned as the target as the PA management continues beyond the life of CATENATE.

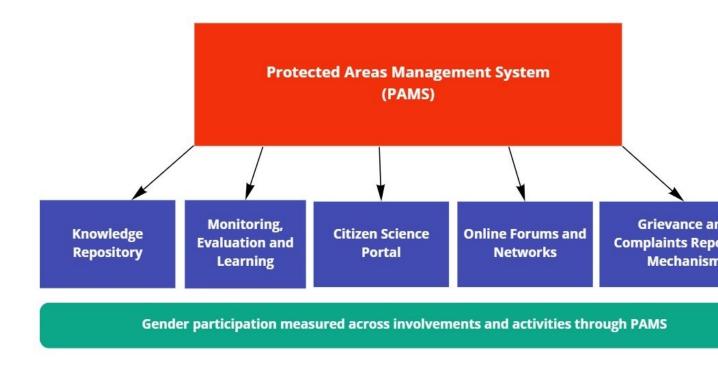


FIGURE 3. PROPOSED PAMS KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

Output 3.2 will involve developing and implementing a ommunication strategy and updating and reviewing the proposed Gender Action Plan during the initial activities of the project. The Communication Strategy will be designed with a focus on key areas to inform and educate the local community as well as other stakeholders and outline key areas and concerns in the accumulation and dissemination of information and the ways and means of doing so. In addition to developing knowledge products different forms of knowledge communication and management, including online, on-site and face-to-face, will be utilised. The Inception Workshop of the project will also be conducted under this Output. Some knowledge products include teaching and training materials, awareness materials including video documentaries and management handbooks for PA managers.

Activities under Output 3.2 include establishment of a physical knowledge hub and a visitor centre for knowledge sharing and exchange for visitors to Farukolhu PA as well as the local community. The infrastructure will be low-impact and will be established outside the PA in the nearby inhabited island of Funadhoo. The visitor centre is proposed to be developed for displaying of exhibitions and information on the Farukolhu PA; its history, biodiversity and importance to the community. The

visitor centre will also have facilities for hosting knowledge exchange events such as seminars, workshops and trainings.

Output 3.3 involves the development of a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plan with SMART indicators. This will be designed such that PAMS can be utilised for monitoring. The required MEL training for PA management office will be incorporated to the capacity development in Output 1.2. Annual review and update of the plan will be conducted or as needed for adaptive management.

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

The Project aligns with GEF7 Biodiversity Objective 2 - Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species with focal area investment in Improving Financial Sustainability, Effective Management, and Ecosystems Coverage of the Global Protected Area Estate.

The Projects objective is to safeguard nationally and globally significant coral reef biodiversity and associated ecosystems through a resilient network of equitably and effectively managed protected and conserved areas in the Maldives. The Project will focus on Boduthiladhunmathi Atoll system which contains 15 legally protected areas under the Environment Preservation and Protection Act (Law No. 4/93). Currently there is no management regime for any of these 15 protected areas. The project aims to utilize GEF7 funding to build institutional and technical capacity for effective management capitalizing on the enabling environment created by the amendment of the Decentralization Act. In addition, the Project contributes directly to GEF7 programming priority by addressing financial sustainability of the Protected Area network in Boduthilandhumathi atoll with scalability nationwide.

By the end of the project the strategies, plans and financial framework developed through the project will be demonstrated in Shaviyani Farukolhu Protected Area, legally declared protected on 7 October 2018. Shaviyani Farukolhu has the potential to be categorized as a KBA. With 7 wetlands, with mangrove species, an array of avifauna, diverse coral reef habitats and mangrove ecosystems provides breeding sites and nesting grounds for many globally endangered species.

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

The GoM has identified the need to preserve key biodiversity and habitats which are key to the country?s livelihood, economy, and survival. Preservation of biodiversity is also recognised in the constitution as well as the administration?s five-year strategic action plan. However, inadequate policy and regulatory framework to support systematic governance of natural resources inhibits the progress of this vision of the GoM. This effort is further hindered by lack of financial and technical capacity at national and local level to implement and manage PAs. While several donor-assisted projects have supported the GoM?s efforts, the limited financial resources and capacity prevents more effective management in the numerous sites across the country.

A more decentralized governance mechanism by financially and technically empowered local Councils would improve effective PA management. Only 5 of the 73 PAs in the country currently have a PA management plan and an office to implement it. While these PA management offices depend on financial support from the GoM, a more sustainable financing model needs to be demonstrated so that such a model can be replicated in other areas of the country. It is proposed through the CATENATE intervention to address these challenges.

Project Component	Scenario Without GEF Project	Scenario With GEF Project
1. Enabling policy and legal framework and capacity-building for good governance.	Limited financial resources as well technical and institutional capacities within various government institutions to formulate and implement policies as well as manage protected areas of globally significant biodiversity.	Technical as well as institutional capacity gaps for decentralized management addressed to monitor key habitats. In addition to that, enhanced capacity of managers and island councils on sustainable financial planning to implement actions

The GoM has identified the need to preserve key biodiversity and habitats which are key in the country?s livelihood, economy and survival. Preservation of biodiversity is also recognised in the constitution as well as the administration?s five-year strategic action plan. However, inadequate policy and regulatory framework to support systematic governance of natural resources inhibits the progress of this vision of the GoM.

Legislative frameworks are harmonized, institutional mandates and competencies are mapped, potential governance models identified and coordination is enhanced of public policies and investments between government institutions and sectors to foster protected area management and conservation of biodiversity, habitats and ecosystems. In addition to that, guidelines and standards for protected area selection as well as monitoring plans developed and communicated as well as private sector engagement in resource management strengthened.

2. PA system financial management

The USAID funded REGENERATE project and GEF funded ENDhERI provides some support in formulation as well as management of few ecologically significant sites across the country. However, limited resources prevents demonstration of financially sustainable and effective biodiversity conservation and habitat protection in more sites across the country.

Enhanced protection and improved management of globally significant biodiversity, including critically endangered species as well as other vulnerable, endemic and rare species in the Maldives. In addition, environmentally and the financial framework of the project will provide practical sustainable incomegenerating activities that can be implemented in communities around key protected areas. It will also demonstrate how community engagement and engagement of the private sector can be expanded through the provision of practical incentives. All of this progress will be measured and benchmarked through the IUCN Green List Standard and verification process.

3. Knowledge Management & Communication

There is only limited program out there trying to communicate the importance of biodiversity for the country. There is a lack of understanding among decisionmakers as well as the general public about the status of key biodiversity in the country and the benefits that can be derived from improved practices as well as reforms to increase investment in biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management. In addition, women participation in natural resource management is limited across the country.

The value of biodiversity and ecosystem services is understood and capitalized upon by decision makers as well the general public. Participatory management of natural resources enhanced across local communities as well increased participation of women in all aspects of natural resource management.

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

The main global environmental benefits are financially sustainable habitat preservation thereby biodiversity conservation in landscapes and seascapes. The project aims to safeguard globally significant biodiversity and ecosystems through improved financial sustainability, effective management of 15 legally declared PAs in the world?s largest atoll. The governance framework and management models developed through this Project will inform national adoption and application to prioritized Protected Areas of the 79 that have been legally declared as protected areas as of September 2022. More than 90 percent of legally Protected Areas in the Maldives are not effectively managed or operational at the time of writing.

The lessons learnt from decentralized local level revolving funds through this project will support to ensure that sufficient and predictable financial resources are identified to support protected area management costs. Maldives is an example of a society highly dependent on coral reefs for livelihoods, and social and cultural well-being, and thus the Government of Maldives recognizes the importance of biodiversity conservation and safeguarding ecosystem services. According to the Valuing Biodiversity Report (2009), biological diversity of the Maldives contributes to 71 percent employment, 89 percent of Gross Domestic Product and 98 percent of export. Significant efforts have been undertaken with the Government pledging to conserve 10 percent of every atoll comprising at least of one representative type of each habitat (e.g., Mangrove, reef, entire island) and as a result the total protected areas count in the Maldives has increased from 42 to in 2018 to 79 in 2022.

The Maldivian atolls represents the historical archetype of coral reef atolls. The Maldives is also globally important as it comprises the 7th largest and 5th most biodiverse coral reef system in the world, and its biogeographical position means that it supports critical populations connecting the coral reefs of Asia and the Pacific with those of East Africa. Costello et al. (2017)[1] delineated 30 distinct marine biogeographical realms globally, based on geographical distribution of 65,000 marine species of both

fauna and flora. The Maldives lies within their ?Tropical Indo-Pacific (East Indies) and Coastal Indian Ocean Realm? (No. 13) (Figure 4.1) that contains a total of 16,508 species, of which 31% are endemic to the realm. This suggests a large amount of biological and ecological connectivity of the Maldives to the western tropical Pacific, much of the Indo-Malay Archipelago, northern Indian Ocean waters close to the subcontinent, and western Indian Ocean waters down the east coast of Africa and including that around Madagascar.

As described above, the Maldives is one of the most important feeding areas in the Indian Ocean for internationally threatened populations of green turtle (Chelonia mydas, IUCN Red List Category EN) and hawksbill turtle (Eretmochelys imbricata, IUCN Red List Category CR). In addition, protection for globally significant populations of whale shark (Rhincodon typus, IUCN Red List Category EN), manta rays (Manta alfredi & Manta birostris, IUCN Red List Category VU) and a diverse megafauna of over 20 species of whales and dolphins; reef dependent grouper species such as the Napoleon wrasse (Cheilinus undulatus, IUCN Red List Category EN)[2] and giant grouper (Epinephelus lanceolatus, IUCN Red List Category VU), will have increased protection. The Maldives blenny (Ecsenius minutus) has so far been identified only in the Maldives, while the distribution of certain species, like the Maldivian anemonefish (Amphiprion nigripes) is restricted to the Maldives, Laccadives and Sri Lanka. A number of species in the Maldives are globally threatened or are listed on the CITES appendices and require particular protection and monitoring. The project area and project site comprise a representative sub-set of the overall national ecological value and bio-cultural heritage.

Project area, Boduthiladhunmathi atoll, contains the second (Keylakunu) and third largest (Farukolhu, project site) uninhabited islands in the Maldives. Both these islands have limited human impact, retaining their natural habitats and biodiversity.

The specific benefits from Farukolhu Protected Area:

- Sustainable management of, Farukolhu Protected Area, the third largest uninhabited island in the Maldives, will contribute to the internationally threatened populations of the following species; hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricate*, IUCN Redlist Category CR), humphead wrasse (*Cheilinus undulates*, IUCN RedList Category EN), green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, IUCN RedList Category EN), brown-marbled grouper (*Epinephelus fuscoguttatus*, IUCN RedList Category VU), and square-tailed grouper (*Plectropomus areolatus*, IUCN Red List Category VU.
- ? Sustainable tourism practices demonstrated within a network of protected areas to safe-guard globally significant biodiversity and ecosystems.
- ? Improved habitat preservation, management and monitoring of the high number of birds observed in the island
- Penhanced habitat preservation, management and monitoring of the abundant and diverse fish community sheltering or hunting amongst the mangrove roots. This habitat is also an important nursery ground with a high number of juvenile sharks, notably, juvenile sickle fin lemon sharks (Negaprion acutidens), IUCN RedList Category Endangered species. The mangrove bays also are an important habitat for juveniles of commercially important fish species such as blue-fin jacks, and snappers and groupers.
- ? Farukolhu is one of the only islands in the country that has diverse and representative habitats; island forest, fresh/brackish-water wetlands, mangroves and various coral reef zones (lagoon, reef flat, reef edge, outer reef, etc.) in the Maldives. This diversity allows for several

niche ecosystems to flourish. Protecting a network of area-based islands will increase the resilience of the whole atoll system to further biodiversity conservation, minimize adverse climate impacts and will contribute towards post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

7) innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up.

Innovation

The Project will capitalize the enabling environment created by the recent 8th amendment of the Decentralization Act where by Island Councils and Atoll Councils will now be able to generate and retain revenue from natural resources in their jurisdiction. The Project will also capitalize on the willingness and contribution of financial resources by an Island Council towards Protected Area conservation and management. This will be the first Protected Area where investment?s will be made by an Island Council towards its management. All managed Protected Areas in the Maldives have in the past relied heavily on overseas development assistance and central Government finances to establish management systems. Demonstration of financial viability in the maintenance and use of Protected Areas for revenue generation will provide an evidence based incentive to for other parties to invest in the conservation of Protected Areas.

The Project will develop diverse and inclusive governance models supported by work on a financial framework that will identify revenue streams and innovative financing mechanisms that capitalize investments into the national conservation fund that the Government plans to establish.

The Project?s implementation will coincide with a time during which the Maldives is undergoing rapid changes to decentralized governance creating a demand for capacity in effective management of Protected Areas that fall within jurisdictions of the various Atoll and Island Councils. A huge burden will be placed on central agencies to cater for this demand. Among the new changes in structure of Island Councils is the increased and allocation of seats for the participation of females in decision-making, an opportunity to reinforce fair and equitable natural resource utilization. Thus, the Project will introduce the IUCN Green List Standard to implement an approach for equitable and effective governance in Protected Area management, establishing an inclusive bottom approach in Protected Area conservation in the country.

Management plans will be developed for specific sites through stakeholder wide participatory approach thus gathering traditional and local knowledge on resource use, significant environmental changes, observed changes from climate change and current resource use by engaging communities that reside nearby. The process documented and shared for usability at other similar sites. This application of

global standards (IUCN Green List) with local knowledge and context will greatly inform other SIDS in their efforts to link local practice to global standards.

Sustainability

Actions to secure sustainability are built into each project component and will act in an inter-connected fashion to improve the policy, capacity, environment and financial dimensions of sustainability in the management of Protected Area network. The proposed project builds on a strong and supportive government baseline for Protected Area management, including the government?s new Strategic Action Plan and amendment to the Decentralisation Act. The project will focus on financial and economic sustainability as well as strengthening institutional sustainability for management of PAs beyond the life of the project. Specific activities that will support sustainability of project impact include:

- ? Established legal framework, governance models and conservation strategy will put in place new standards and create and enabling policy framework needed for decentralized management of the protected area network within atolls. The governance model and conservation strategy will be implemented at the Project site; The project activities include financial planning for a period of 5 years (Outcome 2). The planning will be done by the Farukolhu PA management together with the Island and Atoll Council with support from the project. This will involve developing a programme for management of the PA, taking into account the improvements and next steps to reach for the IUCN GL certification. A financial plan for implementing the 5-year program will also be developed. Hence, capacity will be built within the PA management agencies to plan for PA management. This will ensure activities are planned for beyond the life of the project and will be sustained.
- ? Through the resource material produced and training of trainers, national capacity will be built in technical, administrative and financial disciplines with respect to Protected Area management. Additionally, training of councilors, civil service secretariats and Protected Area managers will provide the practical tools they need to implement effective governance and management measures as well as financial planning to sustain conservation outcomes for Protected Areas within the atoll;
- ? Management plans and equitable governance mechanism established in the demonstration site using the IUCN Green List and verification system will allow effective management of key biodiversity and ecological systems within the Protected Area network. The process will be documented to provide other Protected Areas to develop management plans based on this blueprint;
- ? Financial framework developed and innovative funding opportunities identified including but not limited to broaden investment of private sector will support ongoing management and financing of decentralised Protected Area network:

- ? Alternative and viable green enterprise options operationalised to engage communities and users of natural resources at and around the Protected Area site will promote the sustainable use and the adoption of sustainable practices that reduce threats to biodiversity and support local livelihoods; and
- ? Knowledge management and communication activities will provide an evidence base and engage wider constituencies to support and adopt decentralised PA management approached beyond the project term. The PAMS system initiated within the project timeframe will include training and capacity building to improve the system.

Potential for Scaling Up

The overall focus of the project is to establish equitable governance models, effective management and enhance financial viability in decentralised Protected Area network management to scale up the conservation and sustainability of Protected Area network management initiatives. The project processes will be documented through the knowledge management component and, guidelines, standards, and field handbooks developed will support replication of project activities across Protected Areas in Maldives. The Project also focuses on sustainable financing mechanisms, capacity in revenue generating and financial management to secure scaled up and longer-term investments in Protected Area network management. Identifying and mobilising investment options are a key focus and through the project, continued engagement with potential partners and options to seek additional financing to support scaling up will be ensured. Capacity building through the project also contributes to scaling up by including local councillors, civil service secretariats and park managers in capacity-building activities that will promote effective management of Protected Areas and impact beyond the project geographies and project term. The successful demonstration of the Project?s approach, will be disseminated across atolls in the Maldives. The implementation of these standards on good governance and sustainable financing can be replicated across the protected area network for effective decentralized management.

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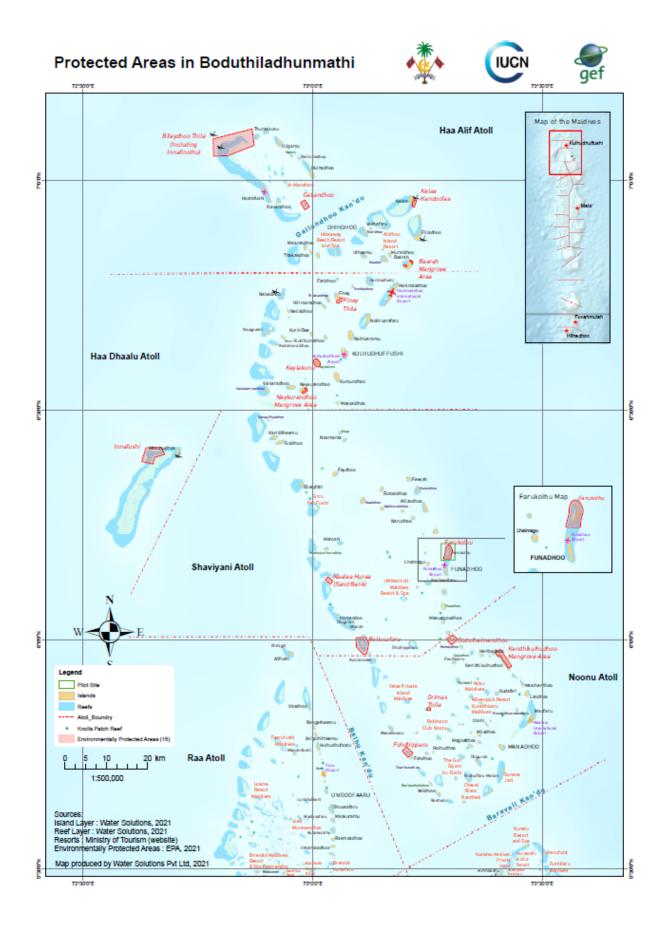
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1b. Project Map and Coordinates

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



1c. Child Project?

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

2. Stakeholders

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

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

Private Sector Entities

If none of the above, please explain why:

Please provide the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent assessment.

Stakeholders will be engaged in decision making for the governance of the PA, awareness and capacity building programs to enhance livelihoods opportunities related to agricultre, fisheries, tourism and other support services and products. Small businesses directly related to or supporting the sectors will be encouraged to engage in activities among the community. Stakeholders and community members will contribute to data and information provision on the PA and related services. Capacity building will target government agencies and PA managers in different capacities through a certified course as well as awareness programs and workshops conducted by academicians and technical experts to enhance the project outcomes and to promote better livelihoods for stakeholders and communities. The Shaviyani Atoll Protected Area Trust Fund will have capacity building sessions and the Fund will be disbursed by the Shaviyani Atoll Council, in cooperation with project implementation agencies. PA managers and

implementing agencies will work with stakeholders through representation on the Project Steering Committee, Technical Committees for project implementation, governance framework, Trust Fund disbursements, and the launching of PAMS for Sh. Farukolhu PA.

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

Select what role civil society will play in the project:

Consulted only;

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor;

Co-financier;

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

Executor or co-executor;

Other (Please explain) Yes

Will be consulted during planning and implementation, involvement in technical and advisory committees, knowledge sharing and dissemination events, social mobilization for awareness raising, community participation and livelihood opportunities.

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Provide the gender analysis or equivalent socio-economic assesment.

Activities - by type Project outputs concerned	What gender equality objectives		Monitoring What types of indicators can be used?
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Consultations and strategy development? including thematic workshops, validation workshops, partner meetings, etc. - Green Listing (GL) Workshop - National standards for PA selection - Sustainable Tourism Guidelines for PAs - Communication Strategy - Project implementation consultations and workshops	Output 1.2.6 Output 1.3.1 Output 1.3.2 Output 3.2.2	- Women are represented and participate meaningfully, including in decision-making - Women?s access to, use of and control over natural resources are considered alongside those of men - Dialogue promoted and awareness raising of gender-related concerns - Women actively engaged in decision making processes and economic/business opportunities - Engage Communication Strategist for meaningful inclusion of gender concerns into	- Invite women? notably identified women leaders and civil servants - to participate in workshops and strategy development sessions - Ensure consultations are organized for women, taking into consideration the cultural and social context - Coordination and communication among and between agencies are monitored for effectiveness - PA management best practices, and codes of conduct are developed and shared - Education and learning for community awareness, students and researchers	Quantitative: - Number of people participating, disaggregated (and monitored over time) Qualitative: - Monitor women?s experience through participants' survey to see if their needs were heard and answered, and monitor their commitment over time - Document any gender divide in discussions and/or decision making in order to raise concerns and explore ways forward

CATENATE

Training? at community level, governance, etc. - Certificate level course on governance and PA management - Training of Trainers - Governance, PAMS - Capacity development training for PA managers, Sh. AC, FIC, etc. - Rangers training - Sustainable financing and capacity needs training - PAMS training and technical support Training of Output 1.2.2 Output 1.2.3 Output 1.2.3 Output 1.2.4 Output 1.2.5 Output 3.1.2	- Women engaged as trainers and experts at implementation and management levels - Women?s representation and participation in trainings and ensured through role models - Increase in awareness and technical capacity of women - Awareness-raising on gender-related concerns at different events, on different sub-topics of PA management	- Recruit women trainers to instruct on courses and awareness sessions - Consider gender-specific workshops and/or gender-specific activities/session - Actively recruit female trainees, notably in local government, women?s committees, PA managers, etc Didactic training techniques utilized to raise awareness and capacity for understanding among men and women	Quantitative: - Identify the number of people trained, gender disaggregated - Number of women in informal or formal livelihood activities - Number of women and men benefiting from development training, due to program interventions, disaggregated - Number of women and men trained on governance mechanisms (e.g. NRM, leadership, entrepreneurial and management) - Measure behavioural changes (or perceived changes) in livelihood, income, food security, nutrition) after the project intervention, disaggregated Qualitative: - Monitor the participants? knowledge improvement - Monitor gender disaggregated participation - Gather impressions and recommendation from workshop participants
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Information sharing/awareness raising? information campaigns, lessons learned, project results. - Online forums for knowledge sharing - Access to PAMS modules - Networking of PA managers and communities in Boduthiladhunmathi Atoll - MEL Plan	Output 1.4.4 Output 3.1.1 Output 3.1.1 Output 3.2.1	- Bring women?s needs and concerns to the general public - Access to information increases through online networking and forums - Encourage dialogue and understanding of needs and perspectives of different groups (men, women, youth, students etc).	- Gender specific reporting - Design information/awareness raising campaigns considering different demographics - Determine gender quotas for learning exchange visits and/or gender specific learning exchange visits - Gender disaggregated participation data in guided site visits, tours, nature walks and other PA related activities	Quantitative - Number of campaigns targeting women and other vulnerable groups - Number of report including gender disaggregated data / gender analysis components - Number of women participating in exchange visits - Survey on how useful and applicable women's engagemental been Qualitative:
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Financial and technical support? travel costs, investments, monitoring - Shaviyani Atoll Conservation Fund - Procedure for fund dispersion for livelihood development - Visitor Centre and knowledge hub at Sh. Farukolhu	Output 2.1.4 Output 2.2.4 Output 3.2.4	proportionately for women led	- Ensure that all budgets have been designed taking into consideration the needs of both men and women - If needed, separate budgets and/or financial support by gender to reflect the differing needs Ensure the financial support for men and women is equal or proportionate to the male:female ratio of beneficiaries	Quantitative: - Number of women (individuals or associations) that received funds and resources - Number of women (individuals or associations) that received training on climate-smart livelihood opportunities - Number of women and men benefiting from financial investments for value chain development due to program interventions, disaggregated - Number/proportion of women with improved access to financial mechanisms (e.g. credit, affordable loans) for income earning activities, products and services - Number of budgets/technical planning including gender action plans
				- Determine affects and changes to livelihoods of women

Leadership and management? project management, grievance mediation - Governance models - Sh Farukolhu PA Management Plan - Online Data Collection and Management Protocol - Sh Farukolhu PA Sustainable Financing Plan - Framework for Shaviyani Atoll Conservation Fund - Sustainable financing plan - Protected Areas Management System (PAMS) and Knowledge Repository - Gender Action Plan - MEL Plan - Grievance and Complaints mechanism through PAMS - PMU and project oversight committee	Output 1.1.1 Output 1.1.3 Output 1.4.4 Output 2.1.3 Output 2.2.1 Output 3.1.1 Output 3.2.3 Output 3.3.1	- Women are represented and participate meaningfully, especially in decision-making - Women?s needs and opportunities are recognized and treated equally - Women participate in advisory and capacity building roles	- Ensure that women?s rights are represented through creation of equal opportunities based on competency with PMU - Provide appropriate and realistic gender quotas in project teams - Engage women role models in decision making and management positions - Monitoring and auditing framework - PA management best practices, codes of conduct success stories of women's success stories of women's involvement in PA management	Quantitative: - Number of women represented in PMU and project teams - Number of women on Fund Board - Number of stakeholders participating in project implementation, disaggregated by gender and types of activities Qualitative: - How have women leaders benefited/changed project outcomes
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Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment?

Yes

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

Improving women's participation and decision making Yes

Generating socio-economic benefits or services or women Yes

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

Yes

4. Private sector engagement

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

Private sector engagement, specifically the tourism sector and other productive sectors such as fisheries and agriculture, will be prominent in this project. Historically tourism developed has been in the central part of Maldives close to the capital island of Male? and the international airport. While tourism has spread to other atolls, the North of Maldives, particularly Boduthilandhumathi has been slow to attract investments. With the development of more domestic airports in Boduthilandhumathi atoll, there is potential for local island guest house tourism to grow.

The regulatory and policy related component will be implemented in close consultation with private sector participants representing the productive sectors aforementioned. The project promotes private sector participation through a unified set of guidelines for assessment and monitoring of privately managed sites. This project will integrate biodiversity conservation and enhancement of environmentally sustainable economic activities linked to protected areas making private sector participation is vital. Private sector consultation, and participation will be undertaken for environmentally and financially sustainable green enterprises implemented in communities near the selected protected areas under the project.

At the national level a private tertiary college which has a campus on Funadhoo is considered a potential institute to develop and implement the PA management course. At the local level private businesses have been identified as a significant stakeholder for 1) engaging during implementation for technical assistance, 2) potential partner for co-financing and 3) engaging in knowledge communication and dissemination.

5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

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

Risk Description	Level*	Mitigation measure(s)
Possible shifts in government priorities and/or policy changes, including the issues of decentralization	L	The project will strengthen the political commitment by raising the awareness of decision makers, institutions, and communities on the importance of natural capital to sustaining national development objectives. It will further strengthen and directly contribute to implementing the SAP.

Reluctance, distrust and limited institutional and community understanding and capacity to work on change with regards to managing PAs at a local level, impact reduction to reefs, and production practices	M	The awareness and knowledge management outputs of each component and community-based management approach are aimed at building trust, collaboration as well as local community and private sector contribution to the objectives. The baseline and stakeholder assessments during the PPG have developed a stakeholder engagement plan which is aimed at continued engagement with stakeholders to build trust and work collaboratively. The Project will also strengthen the capacity of decision-makers and institutions and facilitate empowerment of communities through social organization and targeted training.
Lack of institutional / individual capacities to link biodiversity concerns to other sectoral policies and provisions	M/H	The project will undertake awareness raising and capacity building on the reliance of the country on biodiversity and natural capital benefits for most if not all productive sectors, in part by using social marketing tools, sector round tables and training directed at a range of government and civil society and industry stakeholders.
Limited coordination / communication between sectoral agencies and/or ministries	M/H	The Project will partner with several key ministries? seeking shared interest through e.g., shared objectives and resources, to address negative perceptions among development-focused ministries/sectors, and the close involvement of relevant sectoral agencies is foreseen in project implementation as well as the development of inter-agency collaboration using shared national commitment to the SDGs. The exercise to develop the SAP has established a platform of sectoral agencies working together.
Covid-19 pandemic situation in Maldives could cause travel restrictions and hence, cause delay of project activities	Н	Increased community spread of Covid-19 has led to travel and social distancing restriction as well as full lock-downs in the Maldives. About 70% of the Maldives population have been fully vaccinated[1]. While the restrictions are not as severe currently, any increase in cases may hinder project activities, especially those which require travel to project site and travel by international experts. However, over the last 2 years organisations have adapted to mange work through a combination of virtual and physical, onsite approaches. The situation of Covid-19 at the time of project implementation will be reviewed during the inception stage and identify if there is a need to adjust the project implementation timeline. The situation will be reviewed during the quarterly and annual reporting. The development of the communication strategy will consider this risk factor and use a variety of approaches (including on-line) to mitigate the risk.

Climate change impacts may hinder project implementation	L	Maldives is a country highly vulnerable to climate change impacts and associated sea level rise. However, such impacts affecting project implementation is low. Issues that may arise include restrictions to travel due to extreme weather. Careful planning of site visits and activities while considering local climate patterns and forecasts will be carried out. The project does not put any hard infrastructure or introduce coastal modifications at the demonstrations site, hence the natural reef, coastal vegetation and wetlands will likely continue to protect the site from high sea level or flooding incidences. Predicted rise in atmospheric and sea surface temperatures may likely in the future impact the PA. The project activities include establishing monitoring of reef and terrestrial biodiversity health and relevant physical parameters. Long term monitoring is very important to understand changes and develop appropriate mitigation strategies.
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^[1] statistics updated at 15th February 2022: https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations?country=MDV

6. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination

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

Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology will be the Executing Agency for the CATENATE project. The project implementation by the Project Management Unit (PMU) will be guided by a Project Steering Committee (PSC) that comprise of policy level members from key stakeholder agencies. The PSC will be chaired by MECCT. In addition to the PSC, a Technical Committee (TC) comprising technical agencies relevant for project implementation will be established to provide technical guidance to the PMU. The main responsibilities will be to review proposed methodologies for project activities and to provide technical guidance. The TC will also provide assistance to resolve any issues that require inter-agency coordination.

IUCN is the Implementing Agency for the Project. IUCN will support the Executing Agency and PMU to ensure execution of administrative and financial matters and will provide higher level technical backstopping as needed. It will play a key role in convening of stakeholders and consolidating results, including in areas of landscape approaches to restoration and land management. Wherever possible, the

project will take advantage of the opportunities for synergy and complementarities with other projects or other GEF Agencies.

Project Management Structure

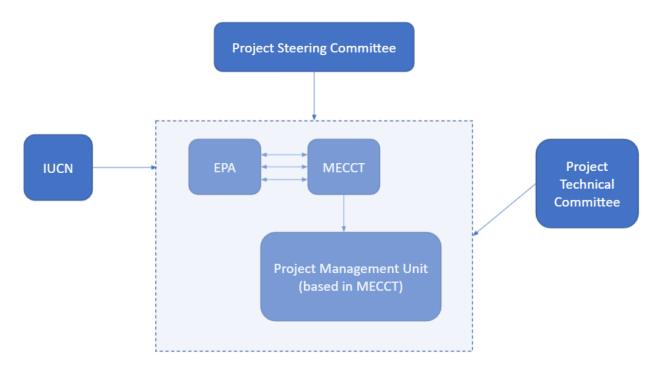


FIGURE 4. PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The Project Management Unit (PMU) will be established at MECCT, with the help of the Implementing Agency, to ensure overall efficient management, coordination, implementation and monitoring of the project through the effective implementation of the annual work plans and budgets. The PMU will manage the project in accordance with the rules and procedures of GEF/IUCN and ensure the project remains consistent with directions provided by the Steering Committee. The PMU will include a full-time Project Manager (PM) with expertise in biodiversity conservation and PA management. The PM will oversee daily implementation, management, administration, and technical supervision of the project. The PM will be supported by a full-time Administrative Assistant. The PM will also carry out technical activities within the project with support from various technical consultants engaged in the project (e.g., governance expert, financial expert, communication strategist, GL certification). A full-time staff for developing and implementing PAMS will also be supporting the PM. The PMU will be supported by the following technical experts.

- ? Natural Resource Governance Specialist (Output 1.1);
- ? Consultants for Activities 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.4.1, 1.4.2,
- ? Sustainable Financing Specialist (Output 2.1)
- ? Livelihood Specialist (Output 2.2)
- ? Community Engagement and Communication Specialist (Output 3.2)
- ? Safeguards & Gender Specialist (Output 3.2)
- ? M&E officer (Output 3.3)

7. Consistency with National Priorities

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

NAPAS, NAPS, ASGM NAPS, MIAS, NBSAPS, NCs, TNAS, NCSAS, NIPS, PRSPS, NPFE, BURS, INDCs, etc.

This project is consistent with National Strategic Action Plan 2019-2023 (SAP) launched on 2nd October 2019 by the President of the Maldives. The 2008 Constitution assigns protection of environment as a duty of the State as well as Local Councils highlighting the importance of conservation and sustainable use of biological resources for the benefit of present and future generations. The President of the Maldives has pledged to protect 10% of every atoll as PAs.

The NBSAP 2016-2025, which incorporates the Aichi Goals and Targets and the country?s Biodiversity Strategic Plan 2010-2020, is based on three interacting principles of which Principle 3 is directly supported by the Project?Biodiversity shall be mainstreamed into all sectors in a manner whereby monitoring of progress and accountability can occur?. It also includes strengthening of the governance on biodiversity conservation at local and national level. The NBSAP 2016-2025 sets a National Target of having at least 10% of coral reef area, 20% of wetlands and mangroves and at least 1 sand bank and 1 uninhabited island from each atoll under some form of protection and management by 2025.

The project also supports priorities underlined at The Maldives Climate Change Policy Framework, National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA), and the 3rd National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP III), for fostering community participation, ownership of local communities and support for biodiversity conservation.

The proposed project sets out an approach which takes the NBSAP actions forward. It further seeks to develop synergies with initiatives that are currently under way or planned that are in accordance with the national direction in biodiversity and the environment, and to assist in linking the practical process of

change to mainstreaming at the local level to processes of awareness raising and consolidation in governance at the national level and improving conservation efforts across the Maldives.

8. Knowledge Management

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

Knowledge management is an essential component of the project and will primarily be coordinated through its Outcome 3 ?Knowledge management and communication?. The project's approach to knowledge management is to ensure that data, information and knowledge products are gathered and communicated to target audiences beyond the life of the project. The approach is that of systemazing PA knowledge management with a view to better engagement of stakeholders, stronger involvement of communities and therefore better protection of PAs and associated ecosystems.

The inception of the project will also be used to communicate existing information on the biodiversity of the PA and seek to engage the stakeholders early. This will also be supplemented by the PA Management System (PAMS)that the project will seek to initiate during the second year. This platform will be further strengthened during the year and the project lifetime. The communication strategy and PAMS together, also support the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plan. In addition to these, an linking these, a physical knowledge hub and visitor centre for knowledge sharing and exchange for visitors to Farukolhu PA as well as the local community in the area will be established in the second year of the project.

Both online, on-site, face-to-face and other platforms will be utilized. Existing platforms like websites and social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) of Funadhoo Island Council and Shaviyani Atoll Council will be utilized for knowledge management and communication. Other avenues like Clubhouse forums are also locally popular for sharing of information and generate discussions. The generation of knowledge will give priority to use existing resources and build on these to amend or supplement gaps in resource materials. The National Library and the knowledge repository of the Maldives National University, ?SARUNA? are platforms that can be utilized for storing and sharing of digital data, information and resources.

The Outcome 3 on Knowledge Management and Communication (which also includes M&E costs as it is considered into Learnings) is budget as USD 140,691 from GEF and USD 511,000 as co-financing. This total of USD 651,691 will, through its three outputs (and subsequent Activities) will contribute to the overall project impact of better management of PAs and associated ecosystems, as this outcome will help foster stronger awareness on the importance of biodiversity (and its sustainable use) as well as put in place systems to gather data, monitor and share information on such ecosystems to all stakeholders.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Describe the budgeted M and E plan

The M & E plan is in accordance with the IUCN and GEF guidelines. The PMU will be responsible for the M&E activities throughout implementation. The table below presents an overview of the M&E activities and associated budget.

M&E activity	Frequency	Responsible	GEF Budget (USD)
Inception Workshop and Report	Within first quarter after signing project document	PMU & Project Manager	\$11,000
Quarterly Progress Reports	Quarterly	PMU & Project Manager	
Annual Project Progress Report (APRs)	Annually	PMU & Project Manager	- \$45,900
Mid-term Independent External Evaluation	In the 3rd quarter of the 2nd year of the project	PMU with the support of Implementing agency (IUCN)	
Final Independent External Evaluation	At least three months before operational closure	PMU with the support of Implementing agency (IUCN)	- \$79,800
Budget revisions	As required	PMU, PSC, IUCN	PMC

10. Benefits

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

The project will contribute to improved biodiversity of in PAs of Boduthiladhunmathi. As a country heavily dependent on our coral reef and coastal ecosystem for economic and livelihood benefits, this improved biodiversity provides several socioeconomic benefits at the national level and at the local level at

Boduthiladhunmathi and demonstration site of Farukolhu area. Nationally tourism and fisheries, our main economic drivers, will benefit from improved health of PAs. The tourism industry is also a driver for several other industries such as construction, food and beverage and related import markets. The project activites can be scaled up to be replicated in other areas of the Maldives and hence, has the potential to benefit other areas of the country.

Locally, the tourism in the Farukolhu PA region will improve with better managed PAs that offer more experience for visitors. This will create livelihood and job opportunities within the region. The activities of Output 2.2 specifically focus on providing alternate livelihood opportunities which minimise direct impacts on the ecosystem for those whose livelihood may be impacted by establishing PA management. The Farukolhu PA is popularly used by locals for recreational picnics. Improvements in management will provide a better experience for visitors as the PA with better management will probably improve in health and hence the experience of the visitors.

In Activity 2.2.3. livelihood plans will be developed for the community for an initial period of 5 years, and a support structure will be established via community-based networking, leadership, and monitoring. Technical support will be provided to community groups if formal registrations are needed and vulnerable families will be considered for livelihood opportunities. The livelihood plan will include development of a procedure for the community to receive funds for livelihood development. The mechanism will include criteria on sustainable livelihood activities and practices, and modes for funds access for example via established cooperatives, or small businesses. Training opportunities for sustainable livelihood development will also be included in the trainings in Output 1.2.

Various communities in the Maldives has identified the potential of protected and conserved areas for boosting the local tourism. here is a growing trend of local NGOs initiating mangrove conservation. Lessons learnt from the demonstration at Farukolhu will benefit work of NGOs in other parts of the country too.

11. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

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

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification*

CEO Endorsement/Approva

PIF I MTR TE

Medium/Moderate

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

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

The project aims to improve decentralized Protected Area (PA) governance and financing by developing equitable PA governance models (component 1) and effective PA financing systems (component 2) for the Boduthiladhunmathi Protected Area network in the Maldives. Farukolhu PA serves as pilot site to demonstrate best practices. Guidelines, standards, and field handbooks developed by the project (component 3) will support replication across the other 14 PAs in Boduthiladhunmathi Atoll as relevant.

To improve PA network governance the project will develop integrated and results-based management plans for Farukolhu PA as well as for at least another five PAs elsewhere in the Maldives (sites to be determined during the project). Those management plans may impose changes in access to and use of natural resources. Changes in access to and use of natural resources could have economic or cultural implications. The **risk for economic displacement** triggers the standard on **Standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions**. The **risk to restrict access to resources of cultural importance** triggers the **Standard on Cultural Heritage**. The Guidance Note on the Access Restriction Mitigation Process Framework that forms part of the Standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions requests that if access or use restrictions are likely but not known during the project preparatory phase (e.g. because the project activities that would implicate restrictions will only be defined during implementation), an Access Restriction Mitigation Process Framework should be developed. Given that this is the case for this project, an Access Restriction Mitigation Process Framework should form part of the ESMF to be developed for this project.

To improve PA financing the project will develop a trust fund that will also support start-ups with the goal to improve communities? livelihoods. In this context, **unjustified preferential treatment in the distribution of project benefits** is a further social safeguard risk, in particular because the projects socio-economic baseline information is weak which could hinder the establishment of transparent and fair eligibility criteria for the fund. Because the socio-economic and socio-cultural baseline data gathered during the project preparation phase were not sufficiently comprehensive (due to travel restrictions imposed by Covid 19 measures) some risks could not be assessed thoroughly. However, based on the available information, it seems likely that women and other vulnerable groups show a

higher dependence on natural resources and simultaneously a lower decision-making power. Women and other vulnerable groups could thus be disproportionally affected by potential access and use restrictions and may be discriminated in project benefit distribution. It is recognized that the project specifically aims to develop socially inclusive governance and financing models, and it does include specific activities to gather additional social data. However, in respect of the precautionary principle and to ensure that sufficient attention will be given to the socio-economic context the risk of potentially affecting or discriminating women and other vulnerable groups has been rated as moderate. The ESMF shall advise on the establishment of socio-economic baseline data, on strategies to reduce the risk for unjustified preferential treatment and discrimination against vulnerable people (including women) in accessing of project benefits.

The ESMS screening also revealed two environmental safeguard risks that trigger the **Standard on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources**. Both risks are linked to the project envisaging the promotion of ecotourism activities. Intensified ecotourism would increase travel to islands thus presenting a **pathway for spreading of invasive species**. On the other hand, the trust fund to be set under this project may want to finance **tourism infrastructure**. The project does foresee the development of a standard for ecotourism development to reduce potential negative impacts. The ESMF should however provide guidance to ensure that potential negative impacts will be carefully analysed in the context of the guidance development and that the guidance does address them adequately. In this context the ESMF should also advise on the need for a biosecurity protocol to reduce the risk for the spreading of invasive species.

There are no indigenous people present in the project area. The standard in Indigenous Peoples is thus not applicable.

Evaluation of the adherence to ESMS principles also **revealed insufficiencies with regards to stakeholder engagement**. The local level civil society stakeholder segment, particularly non-formally organised social groups are insufficiently defined. Due to Covid 19 the project could only engage stakeholders through online consultations which constrained the ability to reach non-formally organised social groups. The ESMF should provide guidance on detailed analysis of the local level civil society stakeholder segment, particularly non-formally organised stakeholders, and the development of an engagement plan in the inception phase that allows for their effective and meaningful engagement in the project.

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title	Module	Submitted
GEF ID 10542 ESMF IUCN GEF Maldives	CEO Endorsement ESS	
esms screening report_ CATENATE_Maldives_GEF 7 project	CEO Endorsement ESS	

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

Objective/Outcom e	Indicators	Baseline	Target(s)	Source of verification	Assumptions / Risks
Project Objective: To ecosystems through a Maldives Indicator: 30, 962 fer Outcome 1 Improved	n resilient network	of equitably and	effectively managorom improved part	ed protected and c	onserved areas in the
Output 1.1: Legal frameworks and governance models (e.g., private sector, CBOs, PPP and OECMs) formalized and adopted for decentralized management of the Protected Area network	Governance models developed and implemented are diverse and inclusive of public, private sectors and community- based organisations	No formal decentralised governance models, including for OECM, exist yet in Maldives for protected area network management.	System-level qualitative assessment against existing governance models in Maldives Appropriate governance models developed for improved site- and system- level decision- making, with 1 model adopted and implemented at the project site	? Precapacity assessment report ? Manageme nt Concept Plan ? Financing Plan document ? MoU signed between EPA and management entity(s)	Assumptions: ? No jurisdiction issues over Farukolhu will arise. ? Consultative processes will bring about an acceptable solution for main management stakeholders Risk: Limited coordination / communication between sectoral agencies and/or ministries

Output 1.2:	l - No. of	No formal	- 1 national	? Announce	Assumptions:
Capacity	resource	courses or	level	ment for	<u>F</u>
development of	materials	short courses	Certificate	enrolment of	? Trainers will
Councils and	(handbooks,	on PA	course adapted	certificate	continue to teach
managers on;	standards)	management	for Maldives	level course on	in the course
	developed	exist in	<mark>on PA</mark>	PA	? People from
	through the	Maldives.	<mark>management</mark>	management	the
	Project	MNU has a	<mark>and widely</mark>	? Training	Boduthiladhunmat
1) implementing		Bachelor of	delivered	modules and	hi area will show
good governance	_	Environmenta	- 4 resource	material for	and sustain interest
provisions and	- No. of	1 Management	materials	the course	to enrol in and
effective Protected	trainers trained	course where	(handbooks,	developed	complete the
Area management,		some modules	standards)	? Course	course
and use of science		are taught.	developed through the	completion lists	Global IUCN Green List
and standards in			Project	? Training	Standard is
sectoral planning,	- No. of		- 14 (7 male	reports	adapted at criteria
	councillors	Information	and 7 female)	? METT	level for Maldives
	and staff	and awareness	trainers trained	score at start	context
2) financial	trained	materials have		and end of	
planning for		been produced		project	?
sustained		under various	- 40 (20 male	? Independen	
conservation		projects.	and 20 female)	t Green List	
outcomes			councillors	evaluation of	Risk:
	- PAs under		and staff	site	
	improved		trained	performance	Those trained may
	management			and METT	not continue to
				result against	work in the PA
			- 442 ha of	the Standard	management office
			terrestrial PA	and its criteria	
			and 8867 Ha of MPA.		
			(measured by		
			at least 30%		
			increase on		
			baseline		
			METT score		
			done at PPG,		
			independently		
			verified		
			through		
			benchmarking		
			management		
			progress and		
			METT score		
			against IUCN Green List		
			Standard and		
			indicators)		
			maicators)		

Output 1.3: Conservation strategy including national and global standards and guidelines for representative Protected Areas selection, assessment and monitoring formulated	No. of conservation strategies, developed including standards and guidelines	Based on requests from individual Island Councils potential areas are assessed for biodiversity significance and if the areas are significant, it is declared a PA according to the PA Regulation. National level guidelines for selection, assessment and monitoring need to be formulated.	1	? Review report on PA selection, assessment and monitoring processes ? Sustainable tourism standards and guidelines gazetted	? A workable consultative process will be established within the government organisations Risk: ? Roles in PA policymaking and governance are not adequately executed by the MECCT and the EPA
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Output 1.4: Integrated and results-based management plans, and equitable governance established in selected Protected Areas using the IUCN Green List Standard and verification system and associated PAME tools No. of management plans developed for the Project site. No. of management plans implemented at the Project site. Management plans have been developed for 5 PAs elsewhere in Maldives.	? Resource use maps developed ? LAC developed ? Manageme nt plan document ? Procedures and protocols manual ? METT assessment results, benchmarked against the IUCN Green List Standard ? PA-BAT+ results and comparisons for start and end of project ? Technical assistance and trainings will be provided to local Councils by trainers ? Political will and support to delegate management authority to local Councils will continue to remain. ? IUCN Green List Standard is adapted to Maldives context Risk: ? Initial level of understanding of PA management is
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Outcome 2: The Protected Area network has an integrated and equitable sustainable financing system

Output 2.1: Financial framework setting out budgeting guidelines and innovative funding opportunities for the Protected Area network in the Atoll developed and implemented at the Project site	No. of financial framework developed and implemented at Shaviyani Farukolhu Protected Area	Currently there is no financial mechanism in place for the Protected Area in Farukolhu	1	? Review report on sustainable financial frameworks ? Financial plan ? Project reporting documents	Assumption: ? An institutional set up can be established for sustainable management of a fund Risk: ? Financial plans are not sufficiently developed or robust, and fail to incorporate key needs and priorities
Output 2.2: Sustainable financing demonstrated for the Protected Area management and associated communities, through investment for fair and equitable income generation Outcome 3 Effective	The Shaviyani Farukolhu Protected Area demonstrates a revenue trend towards sustainability	Currently no revenue is collected for conservation purposes in Shaviyani Atoll.	At least 50 percent of operational costs secured from direct receipts and 50 percent from other sources New supplemental income generating opportunities identified, and markets established to the emerging guesthouse tourism.	? Registration for the Revolving fund? Livelihood plan? Receipt of funds disbursed? Review and monitoring reports	Assumption: ? financial mechanisms, including innovations, can be mobilized for Shaviyani Risk: ? COVID19 situation has affected the tourism industry around the world. It is hoped that when the situation improves it will help to livelihood opportunities such as ecotourism and associated activities. ? Innovative financing concepts are not adaptable for Maldives context.

Output 3.1 Protected Area management and knowledge dissemination platform established	- No. of knowledge platform established - No. of times site accessed on quarterly basis - No. of PA information updates to knowledge platform per month - No of global news and promotional articles per year on Maldives case study and progress	No existing mechanism for PA knowledge management	- Knowledge platform established: 1 webpage or website - 200 - Updates to knowledge platform fortnightly: 1	? Number of updates to website	Assumption: Dedicated staff will be assigned by Government at the start of the project and commits to manage platform beyond life of project Risk: Websites previously developed through projects have not sustained beyond the projects? lifetime
Output 3.2 Project communication strategy developed [and] implemented 1) develop and disseminate knowledge products 2)mainstream gender equality in project activities 3)promote uptake, replication and scaling up	- Develop PA Communicatio n Strategy - No. of knowledge products and publications developed and published Gender balance ratio achieved in project activities - No. of partnership and knowledge exchanges established between Protected Areas in the	Various knowledge products are developed in projects but there is no existing communicatio n strategy for beyond project life	- PA Communicatio n Strategy developed - 10 knowledge products or publications - 50 percent gender balance ratio achieved - 10 partnerships established between Councils, CBOs and/or Private Sector	? The PA Communicatio n Strategy is published ? No. of knowledge products published ? Assessment of gender involvement in PA management ? No. of partnerships created for networking ? Replication of lessons learnt and good practices	? The strategy addresses gaps in communicating project information to stakeholders? Gender balance achieved through equitable participation from all Risks: ? Portions of the Strategy may not be implemented due to capacity constraints? Knowledge management is only partly addressed during

Output 3.3	- No. of M&E reports	- 10 quarterly	Quarterly reports	Assumption:
M&E plan implemented for adaptive project management with key issues of gender addressed and balanced	produced during the project life cycle	reports against agreed indicators at PPG	published	Regular and rigorous reporting established for IUCN GL process
				PAMS allows the project to meet the GL reporting standards
				Risk:
				May not have the capacity to handle such rigorous reporting

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

GEF Sec review

Sections in CEO	GEF Sec Comments	Agency Response
Endorsement		

Part I ? Project Information Focal area elements

1. Does the project remain aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements as presented in PIF (as indicated in table A)?

11/11/2022

Yes

6/6/2022

No, as stated before, there is justification needed for the global biodiversity significance not for working in the Maldives but rather for the specific protected area that is receiving substantial support. There is some minimal text on this in the CER that is not in the ProDoc.

4/5/2022

No, it is correct that the focal area has not changed, the expectation would be for further justification of the global importance of the site receiving much targeted support.

1/12/2021

No, the GEF-7 BD strategy clearly focuses support for new PAs on KBAs and areas that could qualify as such. However, the new proposed PA and surrounding area that will receive much of the support from this project have

24/10/2022

Environmental context has been further expanded to capture specific biodiversity justification for both the Project Areas? Boduthiladhunmathi atoll and Project site? Farukolhu Protected Area. Additional information has been added to the Global Environmental Benefits section highlighting the importance of Farukolhu Protected Area, designated in 2018, that requires management intervention.

Note: CATENATE is designed to support the financial sustainability, effective and equitable management of 15 legally declared protected areas including Farukolhu (project site). The project will not be establishing new protected areas.

1/5/2022

Additional information included in the CEO Endorsement Request regarding Farukolhu Protected Area which is highlighted in yellow and shown in track changes in the document titled, '03GEF 7 CEO Endorsement_Approval_FSP_MSP MV Biodiversity CATENATE 10May2022'.

8/3/2022

BD-2-7 Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and Improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate

Focal area has not changed since PIF. In the PIF stage it was approved.

The Project will not be establishing new PAs.

Project description summary

2. Is the project structure/design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs as in Table B and described in the project document?

12/6/2022

Yes.

11/11/2022

No, while changes have been made in the project results framework they have not been brought over to the Portal entry for table B.

5/31/2022

No, the project proponents state that the project won't impact traditional use rights but the language of the target under component 2 is "? Alternative income generation activities identified, and markets established for 100% of households affected by restrictions in Shaviyani Farukolhu"

Therefore, it does appear that traditional use will be impacted. In addition, the ProDoc discusses various uses of the area. Thus, consultations will need to be undertaken with an understanding of the rights of communities and an FPIC-like process for development of the approach. There needs to be a commitment to these approaches in the documents submitted and some description of it.

4/5/2022

No, while acknowledging that this was not mentioned before output 2.2 does not sound like an output and really does not reflect the actual activities there. It would be good to rewrite it as it sounds like

21 Nov 2022 IUCN

The changes related to indicators and targets for Outputs 1.1 and 1.2 are now reflected in Table B of the CER

24/10/2022

Language has been changed to be clear that the project will support new supplemental income generation activities. No new restrictions will come in place as a result of this GEF project. The management directives for each Protected Area were published at the time of declaration of Protected Area status in the national gazette of the Government. These management directives provide the do?s and do not?s (management directive) for each specific protected area. Through a participatory and inclusive approach, the project will incorporate aspects of traditional use, identify, train and initiate supplemental income generation activities for the communities.

11/05/2022

Output 2.2 has been revisited and the text revised to capture the activities that will be undertaken which is highlighted in yellow in the online CER and shown in track changes mode in the document titled, '03GEF 7 CEO Endorsement_Approval_FSP_MSP MV Biodiversity CATENATE 10May2022'.

Traditional use rights will not be restricted. A consultative process is described in the ProDoc.

8/3/2022

Legal governance frameworks, financing, KM will be implemented at national level while demonstration will be at Boduthilandhunmathi Atoll level.

Background on Boduthilandhumathi Atoll (name of natural atoll formation) comprises of 4 administrative atolls in it will accomplish little if the project is evaluated by only reading the output. Please also clarify if traditional use rights will be restricted and the consultation process that will be undertaken to ensure community support before doing this (2nd indicator for 2.2).

1/12/2021

No, as written this project appears to focus basically solely on one atoll (with the exception of data systems) and spend significant resources on it. The language about impact talks about the full protected area system and biodiversity values of Maldives as a whole while the activities do not seem to match this. Please work to broaden the activities to have greater systemic impact. Overall there may be some confusion because at points it seems like the project documents refer to all of the Maldives as "the Atoll" and other times just the case study area as "the atoll".

Maldives. Akin to provinces or states in the rest of the world.

Actions taken to address this comment. Include the flowing changes in the ProDoc to better reflect the outputs/activities that will have national level benefits.

- Output 1.1: the governance models developed, is applicable to other national PAs. We have also highlighted that the Boduthiladhunmathi PA network is 15 PAs covering 4 administrative atolls. This is also mentioned under Activity 1.1.1 description ?Instead of one big network, 4 small atoll-based networks within Boduthiladhunmathi are proposed as a decentralized governance model (Figure 6).?
- Output 1.2: The Certificate level course on PA management will be a national level course which will continue beyond the project life. All teaching materials and resources developed for the course will be utilised nationally? this has been added as a target in the results framework.
- We have highlighted that the short trainings carried out for Councillors and Police can also be implemented in other atolls of the country and is mentioned as follows? Materials developed through the Project for training will be shared with the Local Government Authority (LGA) for integration into their regular training programmes targeting Councillors and Council secretariats. The materials will also be made accessible to the public via the online PA management platform to be developed under Output 3.1.
- Activity 1.2.6 will be implemented at national level. The training on initiating the Green List (GL) verification process is for the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology (MECCT) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in addition to Farukolhu PA. The training will provide the know-how and enable national agencies to implement

		this in other PAs in the country. This has been updated to reflect more clearly. Output 1.3 is a national level component to review and strengthen existing PA selection, assessment and monitoring standards. The word ?national? has been inserted for clarity. The proposed financing model (Figure 9) is will be applicable to the context of other atolls in the Maldives. The lessons learnt through implementation at project site will benefit other national PAs. A sentence has been added to reinforce this.
3. If this is a non-grant instrument, has a reflow calendar been presented in Annex D?	NA	
Co-financing 4. Are the confirmed expected amounts, sources and types of cofinancing adequately documented, with supporting evidence and a description on how the breakdown of cofinancing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized, and a description of any major changes from PIF, consistent with the requirements of the CoFinancing Policy and Guidelines?	Yes, we encourage the project to seek out and document additional co-financing through the life of the project but understand how the current economic situation make make this challenging.	We agree with this comment
GEF Resource Availability 5. Is the financing presented in Table D adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives	1/12/2021 Yes.	

Project Preparation Grant	1/12/2021	
6. Is the status and utilization of the PPG	Yes.	
reported in Annex C in the document?	1/12/2021	
	Yes.	

Core indicators	6/6/2022	11/5/2022
	Yes. 5/31/2022	Figures in CI 1 (terrestrial) and 2 (marine) are the totals of all legally protected areas in Bodhuthilandhumathi
7. Are there changes/adjustments made in the core indicator targets indicated in Table E? Do they remain realistic?	Yes. However, please note that all PA hectares must have an improved METT score to count for the GEF core indicator. Please complete the initial METT score during inception. 3/16/2022 No, please include assurances that the METT will be completed in the Portal section below the CI entries as well as the explanation provided below on how the numbers were calculated. 1/12/2021 No, please address the following: PA hectares - CI 1 and 2 should be able to be added together to get the total number of PA hectares supported. Therefore, the numbers should be different for terrestrial and marine. In some cases, we understand that it may be difficult to draw precise distinctions between realms, but please ensure the total number is correct. Indicator 5 - Please clarify that these are not hectares being counted elsewhere. Indicator 5.2 - Not relevant to this project - please remove. Please provide any explanations needed in the Portal about how the numbers were arrived at, such as the gender ratio.	

Part II ? Project Justification 1. Is there a sufficient elaboration on how the global environmental/adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers, are going to be addressed?	Ves. 4/5/2022 No, please identify where these changes were made. Please note that the expectation is that with PPG resources and additional time projects will improve and refine all aspects of their proposals. 1/12/2021 No, it would be good to have a integrated perspective on barriers than what is presented. The barriers seem to map too "perfectly" to the components rather than being an examination of the underlying challenges.	The issues described in the barriers section are persistent issues in the Maldives. They were therefore easy to identify even at the very early stages of the PIF. Further analysis during PPG did not reveal new barriers. 8/3/2022 The section has been improved by adding background and justification on the identification of barriers as well as supporting information. Note that the barriers are the same as those described in the PIF.
2. Is there an elaboration on how the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects were derived?	1/12/2021 Yes.	

3. Is the proposed alternative scenario as described in PIF/PFD sound and adequate? Is there sufficient clarity on the expected outcomes and components of the project and a description on the project is aiming to achieve them?

12/5/2022

Yes, we expect IUCN will play close attention to this issue as presents reputational risk for IUCN and GEF.

11/11/2022

No, the response does not acknowledge that the implementation of the protected area will be done by this project. The characterization that it is difficult to access does not match the narrative about use provided in the ProDoc. The issue of the loss of rights and livelihoods access as the result of conservation is a very important issue and needs to be given adequate care and consideration in project development as acknowledged in the ProDoc, which should also be reflected in the responses in the review sheet. Not giving this issue sufficient attention and care in project implementation opens IUCN and the GEF up to grievance cases. While the reality of the issue here may be fairly minor, it still needs to be recognized from the outset.

5/31/2022

No, issues still remain for insuring consultation and consent for the establishment of the PA and recognition of rights. 2.2 appears to be doing to different activities implementing the PA financing plan and sustainable livelihoods. The ESMF review points to a number of issues with potential use restrictions and recognizing customary rights even if they are

12 December 2022 IUCN

Thank you very much for clearing the comment, as advised we will pay close attention to this aspect

21 November 2022 IUCN

Through Output 1.4 as described in the Prodoc. Studies on current and potential resource use and limits of acceptable change (LAC) at Farukolhu will be undertaken to facilitate development of detailed management plans (Activity 1.4.1 & 1.4.2). Maps of current and potential resource uses at Farukolhu will be produced. The map will be based on the resource use assessments and will identify resource users as well as vulnerable groups and their dependency on the natural resources. The resource use maps, and LAC will be utilised in preparing the detailed management plan. The management plan is intricately linked to Outcomes 2 and 3 and these linkages need to be well coordinated for successful implementation.

In addition, the following paragraph has been edited to summarize the activities in Outcome 2 under 4.7 Project alignment with IUCN Programme.

The Farukolhu Protected area was established in 2018 and includes management directives that outline the permitted and prohibited activities in the PA. These management directives were developed and adopted by the Government through stakeholder engagement including communities in islands near the Farukolhu PA. Based on the existing published management directives for Farukolhu PA an assessment will be conducted in Outcome 2 to identify any groups whose livelihoods may have been marginalised through the establishment of the PA in 2018 and through the implementation of management plan developed by the Project. New income generating

not currently legally recognized, noting that it is often women and the poor who in particular depend on natural resources. The response is payments from a fund that, while it has many interesting ideas for fundraising, does not have secured funding at the moment.

Committing to FPIC for these activities could address the concerns about the process.

4/5/2022

No, issues still remain:

- 1.1 The description in the ProDoc still seems like this has very limited regional focus rather than working on national regulations/frameworks/applicable guidelines with a pilot
- 2.1 It may help to clarify that this is a fund for the PA rather than a trust fund, which would typically be associated with investment in stocks or similar and complicated financial management (all of which incur significant costs and specialized expertise). This is why a national fund, even with subaccounts, would make sense to reduce administrative burden. However, this sounds like a simpler venture. Please clarify.
- 2.2 Please revise 2.2 to reflect the activities described and ensure consultation and consent related to resource use.

1/12/2021

No, it would be good for the project to think about and undertake some activities that would support broader good management of natural resources in the Maldives and an improved PA system overall. At the same time, we do not want to push the project to stretch too thinly.

opportunities will be identified and implemented to support groups whose supplemental income has been affected through better monitoring and management of resource use to ensure a more equitable distribution of benefits from the PA.

Activity 2.2.3 and 2.2.4 provides details on how the livelihood plans would be developed and implemented to support communities near Farukolhu PA.

The revisions are reflected on page 73 of the ProDoc

12/06/2022

Farukolhu island was declared a Protected Area on 8 October 2018 categorized as ?Protected Area with Sustainable Use? under the Environmental Protection and Preservation Act (4/93).

Farukolhu is a separate island, it is only accessible by speedboat or motorized vessel which is expensive. Many people cannot afford a trip by themselves unless as a group activity for recreational purposes, and hence not used by communities for sustainable use purposes. In terms of consultations, the project will apply FPIC which will ensure that the consent of the communities is obtained.

1/5/2022

- 1.1 1.1 Description on coverpage updated and changes made in ProDoc table 4.8.2
- 2.1 In the Maldives context, given the infancy of the financial system, trust funds operate primarily as revolving funds. For the sake of clarity we have reworded the document to indicate this
- 2.2 ? The output 2.2 has been revised which is now highlighted in yellow in the online CER and shown in track changes mode in the document titled, '03GEF 7 CEO

Please address the following:

- 1.1 The language here and in this component is confusing and in the results table. It appears that the results will just be a recommendation for a governance system for this atoll's PA. Will the review produce guidance documents or recommendations for regulations?
- 1 It would be generally be helpful to revise this component with careful consideration as it is confusing what is working where. As of now, it appears that there will be a limited impact of the project outside of the targeted PA and, therefore, unlikely that there will be the targeted 30% increase in METT score at the various PAs.
- 2.1 General trust fund good practice would not encourage the creation of many different, small trust funds and their many administrative burdens and transaction costs. The documents mention a national trust fund. Could the project support the establishment of the national fund? The impact of a single PA or atoll fund seems quite limited and difficult to justify for the GEF.
- 3.1 All too often systems like this fall out of repair and updating. Who will manage the portal after project end? How will the project encourage sustainability of these systems? What programs, websites, or systems that are more broadly used and maintained can be harnessed for this project? For example, citizen science and data collection efforts can use iNaturalist which is a wellmaintained and updated platform that connects to various other initiatives. Ongoing maintenance, updating (especially to keep up with new smart phone operating

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8/3/2022

The following changes have been made to address the comments.

- 1.1 Has been re-worded in the ProDoc and CEO endorsement form. The project will develop Governance models and the details of the implementing process to develop these models. Revision will be made Protected Area regulation to incorporate the models proposed.
- 1. Outcome 1 has been revised as per response to previous comment to highlight the benefit beyond the demonstration site, for example, capacity building and trainings target all 4 atolls in Boduthiladhunmathi.
- 2.1 An insertion has been made in the CEO Endorsement form and ProDoc to elaborate that National Trust funds are not effective for local conservation activities, as often national priorities override local needs. The project will develop a national PA financing framework that will have trust funds as per the jurisdictions defined by the 8th Amendment to the Decentralization Act.
- 3.1 The ProDoc and CEO Endorsement form has been changed to reflect existing platforms that can be utilized rather than creation of new systems.

	systems), and accessibility of data are important to consider.	
	Minor:	
	Please remove note on page 64.	
4. Is there further elaboration on how the project is aligned with focal area/impact program strategies?	1/12/2021 Yes.	
5. Is the incremental reasoning, contribution from the baseline, and cofinancing clearly elaborated?	1/12/2021 Yes.	

6. Is there further and better elaboration on the project?s expected contribution to global environmental benefits or adaptation benefits?

11/11/2022

Yes.

6/6/2022

No, the information is too general. Please see earlier feedback on this issue.

4/5/2022

No, please provide stronger justification for the global biodiversity significance of Farukolhu PA.

1/12/2021

No, the documents do not discuss the global value of the specific area that will be protected. Much of the project's activities are focused on one area.

24/10/2022

The section on global environmental benefits has been elaborated and includes specific benefits from the improved management of Farukolhu Protected Area.

21/8/2022

Additional information added with reference to A rapid assessment of natural environments in the Maldives report.

11/5/2022

Additional information on Farukolhu inserted and highlighted in yellow in the online CEO endorsement form and also reflected in track changes mode in the document titled, '03GEF 7 CEO Endorsement_Approval_FSP_MSP MV Biodiversity CATENATE 10May2022'. Also additional information of significance of the region strengthened in ProDoc which is shown in track changes mode and highlighted in yellow.

8/3/2022

No new PAs will be established through project.

7. Is there further and better elaboration to show that the project is innovative and sustainable including the potential for scaling up?	Yes. It will be important to pay close attention to these issues during inception and focus energy on how to ensure knowledge sharing and additional training. 1/12/2021 No, please discuss how the project will be designed for and ensure sustainability and scaling-up. There is a significant focus on training and working with local officials who are likely to change over time.	Amended with insertion into the ProDoc. The capacity building and training components included are significant for sustainability as the baseline assessments showed that technical and management know-how is one area that needs improvement at local level. Though elected council members, present during the implementation will be trained, the activity also includes the training of permanent secretariat civil service staff at Island/Atoll Councils. Civil service staff is now been mentioned in the ProDoc. Though elected members may leave the Council, the knowledge they have will be retained within area. The project activities include planning for next 5 years which includes developing a management programme and a financial plan. Doing this exercise within the project timeframe will provide the PA management agencies with the know-how to continue planning for successive programmatic years. Hence this will add to sustainability of the project activities. This note has also been added into both the ProDoc and CEO endorsement form. The proposed governance models, trust fund model knowledge management system - can be scaled up and replicated. This has also been highlighted and changed while addressing previous comments.
Project Map and Coordinates Is there an accurate and confirmed geo-referenced information where the project intervention will take place?	1/12/2021 Yes.	

Child Project	NA	1
If this is a child project, is there an adequate reflection of how it contributes to the overall program impact?		
Stakeholders	1/12/2021	
Does the project include detailed report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase? Is there an adequate stakeholder engagement plan or equivalent documentation for the implementation phase, with information on Stakeholders who will be engaged, the means of engagement, and dissemination of information?	Yes.	
Gender Equality and Women?s Empowerment	1/12/2021 Yes.	
Has the gender analysis been completed? Did the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities? If so, does the project/program include gender-responsive activities, gender-	1/12/2021 Yes.	
sensitive indicators and expected results?		

Private Sector Engagement	5/31/2022	11/5/2022
If there is a private sector engagement, is there an elaboration of its role as a financier and/or as a stakeholder?	Yes. 4/5/2022 No, little change has been made to this section in the Portal. In addition, many of the references to the private sector reference "potential" consultation rather than actual consultation that would have helped design the project to work well for the private sector as well. 1/12/2021 No, this section is rather weak and it is unclear what policies and regulations the PS will be consulted on in the content of this project.	Included a paragraph to describe the status of private investment in Boduthilandhumathi Atoll area and highlighted in yellow in the online CER form. 8/3/2022 The section has been added and strengthened including referring to the following. The project promotes private sector participation through a unified set of guidelines for assessment and monitoring of privately managed sites. This project will integrate biodiversity conservation and enhancement of environmentally sustainable economic activities linked to protected areas making private sector participation is vital.
Risks to Achieving Project Objectives Has the project elaborated on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from	5/31/2022 Yes, though during inception it will be important to consider how changing weather patterns and other challenges posed by climate change will be incorporated in planning project activities. 4/5/2022	11/5/2022 Additional text added to climate change risks mitigation and highlighted in yellow in the online CER form. 8/3/2022 Addressed. Climate change risk and Covid-19 pandemic risks included in ProDoc and CEO endorsement.
being achieved? Were there proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation?	No, please expand the climate change risks to consider how climate change may endanger project results and how project activities will work to mitigate this. 1/12/2021 No, please include the risks posed by climate change.	

Coordination	1/12/2021	
Is the institutional arrangement for project implementation fully described? Is there an elaboration on possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area?	Yes.	
Consistency with National Priorities	1/12/2021	
Has the project described the alignment of the project with identified national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under the relevant conventions?	Yes.	
Knowledge Management	4/5/2022	
Is the proposed ?Knowledge Management Approach? for the project adequately elaborated with a timeline and a set of deliverables?	Yes. 1/12/2021 No, it would be especially helpful to focus on how this approach will build on existing materials and resources and create new ones that are well prepared for distribution.	
Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)	5/31/2022	11/05/2022
Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately documented at this stage and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?	Yes. However, should pages 8 and 9 be completed at this point? 4/5/2022 No, this information is still not included and should be included with first submission of CEO Endorsement. 1/12/2021 No and the ProDoc appears to be still in draft in this section.	The ESMS screening is now provided

Monitoring and Evaluation Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?	1/12/2021 Yes.	
Benefits Are the socioeconomic benefits at the national and local levels sufficiently described resulting from the project? Is there an elaboration on how these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of GEBs or adaptation benefits?	Yes. 1/12/2021 No, this section could be improved by focusing on specific socioeconomic benefits including the livelihoods support planned what the expected results of that will be.	8/3/2022 Addressed with additions in both ProDoc and CEO Endorsement Form.
Annexes Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?	1/12/2021 No.	12 December 2022 IUCN The correct version of the STAP comments response is now included in Annex B of the CER 11/05/2022 The Annex B related to STAP comments is now provided in the CEO endorsement template. All other relevant annexes of the ProDoc have been uploaded as part of the initial submission 08/03/2022 Please clarify on what annexes are missing
Project Results Framework GEF Secretariat comments		

Council comments

12/6/2022

Ves

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11/11/2022

No, these are still not included in the Portal entry and need more than a single sentence response. There is no response to the comment from Canada. Please also attribute the comments.

6/6/2022

No, please include the responses as requested in the Portal. These are things that are reviewed by Council members to see how their comments are incorporated.

4/5/2022

No, please include responses to Council comments offered at PIF approval. 21 November 2022 IUCN

The response to Council comments are now included in Annex B of the CER

11/05/2022

<u>Suggestions for improvements to be</u> <u>made during the drafting of the final</u> <u>project proposal:</u>

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The first project component will enable policy and legal framework and capacity building for good governance and, to ensure sustainable management of the Protected Area network, develop tools. standards. manuals and handbooks. collection Theand integration of traditional knowledge in management strategies and developed materials would be an important and valuable addition.

A consultative participatory approach is described in the development of models to ensure that traditional practices are incorporated.

In the second project component in the context of innovative funding incentives for opportunities, the development of Sustainable Blue Economy business models should be given/included as well as other innovative income generating activities not only for groups that could be affected negatively in socio-economic terms (as mentioned) but for economic diversification and improved livelihoods.

At the start of the PPG, supplementary funding and to implement ideas such blue economy models were explored unsuccessfully.

Blue economy models at the moment are difficult to incorporate as part of small projects but are feasible as standalone projects or parts of larger programmes. Futhermore, since such

models are still budding in the Maldives it is very difficult to convince locals of models that haven?t been demonstrated successful in the local context. Therefore, including a prescriptive model would bring in strong risks that may be quite difficult to mitigate within the project.

? In the first and the second project components a strong participatory approach through active involvement and empowerment of local communities, the private sector and other stakeholders would be desirable - especially against the background of an integrated and equitable sustainable system.

A consultative participatory approach is emphasized through the activities in both outcomes

STAP comments	12/6/2022	12 December 2022 IUCN
	No, still says Sri Lanka. 11/11/2022 No, please include the responses to the Maldives project and not Sri Lanka.	We apologise for the continuing error. We have now correctly inserted/included the detailed response to GEF STAP comments on the CATENATE Maldives project in Annex B of the CER
		21 November 2022 IUCN
	A/5/2022 No, please include responses to the STAP review comments in the table along with GEF Secretariat comments. 4/5/2022 No, please include responses to the STAP review comments in the table along with GEF Secretariat comments. 1/12/2021 No, please include these.	We apologise for the error, the correct version of the responses to STAP comments is included in the CER Annex B 11/5/2022 The detailed response is provided in Annex B of the online version CEO Endorsement Request 8/3/2022 Addressed: A theory of change has been included. Scaling up and sustainability addressed as above.
Convention Secretariat		
Other Agencies		
comments		
CSOs comments		
Status of PPG utilization		
Project maps and coordinates		

Does the termsheet in Annex F provide finalized financial terms and conditions? Does the termsheet and financial structure address concerns raised at PIF stage and that were pending to be resolved ahead of CEO endorsement? (For NGI Only)	
Do the Reflow Table Annex G and the Trustee	
Excel Sheet for reflows	
provide accurate reflow	
expectations of the	
project submitted?	
Assumptions for Reflows	
can be submitted to	
explain expected reflows.	
(For NGI Only)	
Did the agency Annex H	
provided with	
information to assess the	
Agency Capacity to	
generate and manage	
reflows? (For NGI Only)	

GEFSEC DECISION RECOMMENDATION Is CEO endorsement recommended? (applies only to projects and child projects)	No, please carefully review the submission to ensure that all of the issues are fully addressed.	
	6/6/2022	
	No, most of the same issues that were raised before remain. Please fully address these before resubmitting.	
	4/5/2022	
	No, please fully address the comments above and resubmit.	
	1/12/2021	
	Not at this time, please revise and resubmit.	

RESPONSES TO STAP COMMENTS

Part I: Project Information	Response
GEF ID	10542
Project Title	Conservation of Atoll Ecosystems through an effectively managed national protected area estate (CATENATE)
Date of Screening	May 18, 2020
STAP member screener	Rosie Cooney

STAP secretariat	Virginia Gorsevski	
screener		

STAP welcomes this project from IUCN entitled ?Conservation of Atoll Ecosystems through an effectively managed national protected area Estate (CATENATE)? which seeks to ??safeguard nationally and globallysignificant coral reef biodiversity and associated ecosystems through a resilient network of equitably and effectively managed protected and conserved areas in the Maldives.?		
Overall STAP finds this project to be a well-written and timely project given the problem of ?paper parks? and new opportunities for decentralization. The use of the IUCN Green List is a welcome innovation.		
The project would benefit from a theory of change that includes assumptions and potential alternative pathways if the assumptions provefalse to allow for adaptive management. See STAP?s guidance on developing a ToC for GEF projects.		
Also, while this project builds on past and ongoing climate adaptationprojects, more information should be provided regarding climate projections for target areas from		
2020 to 2050 given the country?s high level of vulnerability. See STAP		
	from IUCN entitled ?Conservation of Atoll Ecosystems through an effectively managed national protected area Estate (CATENATE)? which seeks to ??safeguard nationally and globallysignificant coral reef biodiversity and associated ecosystems through a resilient network of equitably and effectively managed protected and conserved areas in the Maldives.? Overall STAP finds this project to be a well-written and timely project given the problem of ?paper parks? and new opportunities for decentralization. The use of the IUCN Green List is a welcome innovation. The project would benefit from a theory of change that includes assumptions and potential alternative pathways if the assumptions provefalse to allow for adaptive management. See STAP?s guidance on developing a ToC for GEF projects. Also, while this project builds on past and ongoing climate adaptationprojects, more information should be provided regarding climate projections for target areas from 2020 to 2050 given the country?s high	from IUCN entitled ?Conservation of Atoll Ecosystems through an effectively managed national protected area Estate (CATENATE)? which seeks to ??safeguard nationally and globallysignificant coral reef biodiversity and associated ecosystems through a resilient network of equitably and effectively managed protected and conserved areas in the Maldives.? Overall STAP finds this project to be a well-written and timely project given the problem of ?paper parks? and new opportunities for decentralization. The use of the IUCN Green List is a welcome innovation. The project would benefit from a theory of change that includes assumptions and potential alternative pathways if the assumptions provefalse to allow for adaptive management. See STAP?s guidance on developing a ToC for GEF projects. Also, while this project builds on past and ongoing climate adaptationprojects, more information should be provided regarding climate projections for target areas from 2020 to 2050 given the country?s high

Part I: Project Information B. Indicative Project Description Summary	What STAP looks for	Response	IUCN Response
Project Objective	Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?	The objective of this project is ?to safeguard nationally and globally significant coral reef biodiversity and associated ecosystems through aresilient network of equitably and effectively managed protected and conserved areas in the Maldives.?	
		This responds to the main problem identified, which is that the majority of legally protected areas in the Maldives are ?paper parks? due to lack of technical capacity and resources. Other problems include unregulated tourism and poor solid waste management and while these sectorsand issues are not reflected in the objective, they	
		are included as project stakeholders.	
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project?s objectives?	Yes	

Outcomes	Do the planned outcomes encompass important adaptation benefits?	While this project is not explicitly a CCA project, it will build on and complement other adaptation activities such as EGENERATE. Also building a resilient network of PAs will have adaptation benefits.	
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Yes	
Outputs	A description of the products and services which are expected to resultfrom the project. Is the sum of the outputs likely to contribute to the outcomes?	Yes	
Part II: Project justification	A simple narrative explaining the project?s logic, i.e. a theory of change.		
1. Project description.Briefly describe: 1) the global environmentaland/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)	Is the problem statement well-defined?	Yes	

	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data andreferences?	Three main barriers are insufficient institutionaland financial capacity for PA management and biodiversity conservation, inadequate policy and regulatory framework to support systematic governance of natural resources, and weak KM and gender mainstreaming. Reference is made to the Decentralization Act.	
	For multiple focal area projects: does the problem statement and analysisidentify the drivers of environmental degradation which need to be addressed through multiple focal areas; and is the objective well-defined, and can it only be supported by integrating two, or more focal areas objectives or programs?	N/A	
2) the baseline scenario orany associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Baseline information given with regards to the METT score and a table is provided that shows scenario without and with the GEF project.	
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project?s benefits?	Yes, re the METT score and existing and target area (ha) of PA and MPA	
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Yes	
	For multiple focal area projects:	N/A	

	are the multiple baseline analyses presented (supported by data and references), and the multiple benefits specified, including the proposed indicators; are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and how did these lessons inform the design of this project?		
3) the proposed alternativescenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project		Unfortunately, a theory of change is not presented in this project. However, the logic is clear. The project will support the decentralization of PA management through legal frameworks, capacity building and financial planning.	Since the PIF stage, the project design has been further refined. The project goal, outcomes and Theory of Change are included in the ProDoc. Under heading 4.2 Project goal and expected impact under this heading
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	See above	The project goal, outcomes and activities have been defined and explained to clearly indicate the sequence of interventions (activities) the project will undertake.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project?s objectives?	See above	Outcomes, outputs and activities have been included in the ProDoc

p is	plausible, and is there a well- nformed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Not clear without a formal ToC to make explicit the underlying assumptions and the various causal pathways. See STAP?s guidance on developing a ToC for GEF projects.	Assumptions and risks have been identified. Assumptions are detailed out in the results framework.
a P to	adaptations may be required during projectimplementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	guarantee success as there may be additional issues/complexities that could prevent positive change, which are not addressed by this project. See ?Review of the decentralization framework in the Maldives? ? note that main challenges are financial and capacity which are covered by this project.	At the PIF stage the 8th Amendment of the Decentralization Act was just ratified. However, since then Protected Area management decentralization work has been ongoing. The Government has in 2022 devolved area-based management in one atoll in the South. Implementation of this is slow due to financial and technical capacity. Furthermore, as an adaptive measure the Project under Outcome 1 will develop a protected area management framework for the country. This framework will be development in alignment with existing laws and adapted to the situation as needed and strengthen area-based management at island level in Maldives.

incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEF trust fund, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing	GEF trust fund: will the proposed incremental activities lead to the delivery of global environmental benefits?	Yes	
	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptationwhich reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	N/A	
6) global environmental benefits (GEF trust fund) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)	Are the benefits truly global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits, and are they measurable?	Yes ? high levels of coral reef biodiversity despitesmall overall area.	
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relationto the proposed investment?	Yes, with 4.42 km2 of terrestrial PA under improved management, 88.67 km2 of new MPA, and 35.22 km2 of MPA under improved management. These areas are small but high biodiversity and reasonable funding level.	

		The ProDoc has expanded on the GEBs contributions as a country, from the project area and from the project site. Please see section - 4.1 Project rationale and expected global environmental benefits
Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured andmonitored during project implementation?	Yes	
	1 2	

7) innovative, sustainabilityand potential for scaling- up	Is the project innovative, for example, in its design, method of financing,technology, business model, policy, monitoring and evaluation, or learning?	Yes for Maldives in that it will be the first PA which will ultimately not rely of ODA and government funds for management and will benefit from new legislation devolving decision making to local councils. Also the use of the IUCN Green List standard is innovative for a GEF project.	
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Somewhat. If successful it will be scaled up across atolls in the Maldives and possibly beyond.	
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transforma tional change to achieve long term sustainability?	Transformational change will be required to support a bottom up approach to PA management.	
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please providegeo-referenced informationand map where the project interventions will take place.		good map where the PAs are clearly depicted; however, no bounding information for geo-referencing. See Page A1-1 inEarth Observation and the GEF for guidance.	The baseline report submitted along with the ProDoc and annexes will provide the full geo-referenced boundaries for all 15 PAs in the Project Area including the Project focus site Shaviyani Farukolhu.

2. Stakeholders. Select the stakeholders thathave participated in consultations during the project identification phase: Indigenous people and localcommunities; Civil society organizations; Private sector entities. If none of the above, pleaseexplain why. In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement.		The project might consider using the Governance Assessment of Protected Areas (GAPA) developedby the International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED) which ?? uses a multi- stakeholder approach to ensure that the key rightsholders and stakeholders are fully engaged in the design of the assessment, the collection of information, interpretation of the results, and the development of recommendations.? Under Component 1.	
	What are the stakeholders? roles, and how will their combined roles contribute to robust project design, to achieving global environmental outcomes, and to lessons learned and knowledge?	articulated	

3. Gender Equality and Women?s Empowerment. Please briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address genderin project design (e.g. gender analysis). Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gendergaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment? Yes/no/tbd.	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	Yes	
If possible, indicate in whichresults area(s) the project isexpected to contribute to gender equality: access to and control over resources; participation and decision- making; and/or economic benefits or services.			
Will the project?s results framework or logical framework include gender- sensitive indicators? yes/no			
/tbd			
	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an importantstakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?	Yes. Gender analysis and action plans	

5. Risks. Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the projectobjectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design	Are the identified risks valid and comprehensive? Are the risks specifically for things outside the project?s control? Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project?For climate risk, and climate resilience measures: ? How will the project?s objectives or outputs be affected by climaterisks over the period 2020 to 2050, and have the impact of these risks been addressed adequately? ? Has the sensitivity to climate change, and its impacts, beenassessed? ? Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these bedealt with? ? What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will beneeded to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures?	Risks are comprehensive, with a major one identified as continued uncontrolled exploitation of marine ecosystems by island communities. This will be addressed through multi-stakeholder engagement, with the underlying assumption thatbringing people together will solve the problem. This may be part of the solution but without clear alternatives or incentives for communities it doesn?t seem like a plausible mitigation measure. Maldives is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and this information is presented in general in the introduction; however, no scientific data is presented regarding specific projected impacts from 2020 to 2050 and it is notlisted as a risk to the project itself. Robust climate risk screening is strongly recommended.	Climate change has been listed as risk and mitigation measures included. Alternative sustainable income generation is an activity that has been included in the project in order to mitigate the exploitation of marine ecosystems. The project will also build capacity and awareness under Outcome 3 which will further support mitigation of exploitation of coral reefs and associated ecosystems.
Outline the coordination with other relevant	into relevant knowledge and learninggenerated by other projects, including GEF projects?	r es	

recognition of previous projects and the learningderived from them?	There is adequate recognition of previous projects; however, the project notes lack of reliable practical examples on how sustainableresource uses can deliver economic outcomes.	In the PIF stage the past projects were mentioned very briefly. In the ProDoc this has been further elaborated and specific lessons learnt from them elaborated. Please refer to section 3.5.1 Past and planned national actions and projects
	This project will build on lessons learned from two projects (GEF project AEC and WB project CCAP) and has good understanding of key components; however, does not list specific lessons learned.	See above
How have these lessons informed the project?s formulation?	See above	One of the key observations that informed the project design was that national level funds for financing protected areas have not worked well in the past. Whereas we see community based funds managed at island or atoll level performing well for other functions and needs of society. Hence the project has taken a bottom up approach in financing for sustainability.

	feed the lessons learned from earlier projects into this project, and to share lessons learned from it into	Yes through the KM component of the project and clear coordination with other past and ongoingprojects (p. 51)	
Outline the	managementindicators and metrics will be used?	Component 3 includes knowledge managementwhich centers on a knowledge repository that includes information from Components 1 and 2. Will use existing portals and websites.	
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?		

Notes

STAP	Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed
advisory	
response	
	STAP acknowledges that on scientific or technical grounds the concept has merit. The proponent is invited to approachSTAP for advice at any time during the development of the project brief prior to submission for CEO endorsement.
	* In cases where the STAP acknowledges the project has merit on scientific and technical grounds, the STAP will recognize this in the screen by stating that ?STAP is satisfied with the scientific and technical quality of the proposal and encourages the proponent to develop it with same rigor. At any time during the development of the project, the proponent is invited to approach STAP to consult on the design.?

2. Minor issues to be considered during project design	STAP has identified specific scientific /technical suggestions or opportunities that should be discussed with the projectproponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. The proponent may wish to:
	(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised;
	(ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development, and possibly agreeing to terms of reference for anindependent expert to be appointed to conduct this review.
	The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brieffor CEO endorsement.

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

RESPONSES TO COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member	Comments and/or	Agency (IUCN) response					
	Queries						
Comment by Elizabeth	? The United	This is a comment for GEF Secretariat and not					
Nichols, U.S. Department	States requests that	the Agency					
of State Bureau of	this project is						
Oceans, International	circulated to the						
Environmental and	Council for a four-						
Scientific Affairs (OES),	week review period						
Office of Environmental	prior to CEO						
Equality and	endorsement.						
Transboundary Issues							
(EQT), Council, United							
States made on 7/2/2020							

Comment by Kordula Mehlhart, GEF Council Member, Head of Division on Climate Finance, BMZ, Council, Germany made on 6/18/2020 Germany approves the following PIFs in the work program but asks that the following comments are taken into account:

Germany welcomes the initiative to safeguard nationally and globally significant coral reef biodiversity and associated ecosystems through a resilient network of equitably and effectively managed protected and conserved areas in the Maldives. The strong communication and dissemination strategy are to be positively emphasized, as well as the approach for longterm sustainability through e.g. the training of trainers to ensure continuation of good management and governance beyond project duration.

Suggestions for improvements to be made during the drafting of the final project proposal:

? The first project component will enable policy and legal framework and capacity building for good governance and, to ensure sustainable management of the Protected Area network, develop A consultative participatory approach is described in the development of models to ensure that traditional practices are incorporated.

At the start of the PPG, supplementary funding and to implement ideas such blue economy models were explored unsuccessfully.

Blue economy models at the moment are difficult to incorporate as part of small projects but are feasible as standalone projects or parts of larger programmes. Furthermore, since such models are still budding in the Maldives it is very difficult to convince locals of models that haven?t been demonstrated successful in the local context. Therefore, including a prescriptive model would bring in strong risks that may be quite difficult to mitigate within the project.

A consultative participatory approach is emphasized through the activities in both outcomes

tools, standards, manuals and handbooks. The collection and integration of traditional knowledge in management strategies and the developed materials would be an important and valuable addition.

- In the second project component in the context of innovative funding opportunities, incentives for the development of Sustainable Blue Economy business models should be given/included as well as other innovative income generating activities - not only for groups that could be affected negatively in socio-economic terms (as mentioned) but for economic diversification and improved livelihoods.
- In the first and the second project components a strong participatory approach through active involvement and empowerment of local communities, the private sector and other stakeholders would be desirable especially against the background of an integrated and equitable sustainable system.

There is mention in the project description of ?piloting and codifying for formal recognition diverse classifications of protected areas; we recommend confirming this action, as the measurement of progress for Aichi Target 11 utilizes tallying protected areas that are categorized using the IUCN guidelines on protected areas.

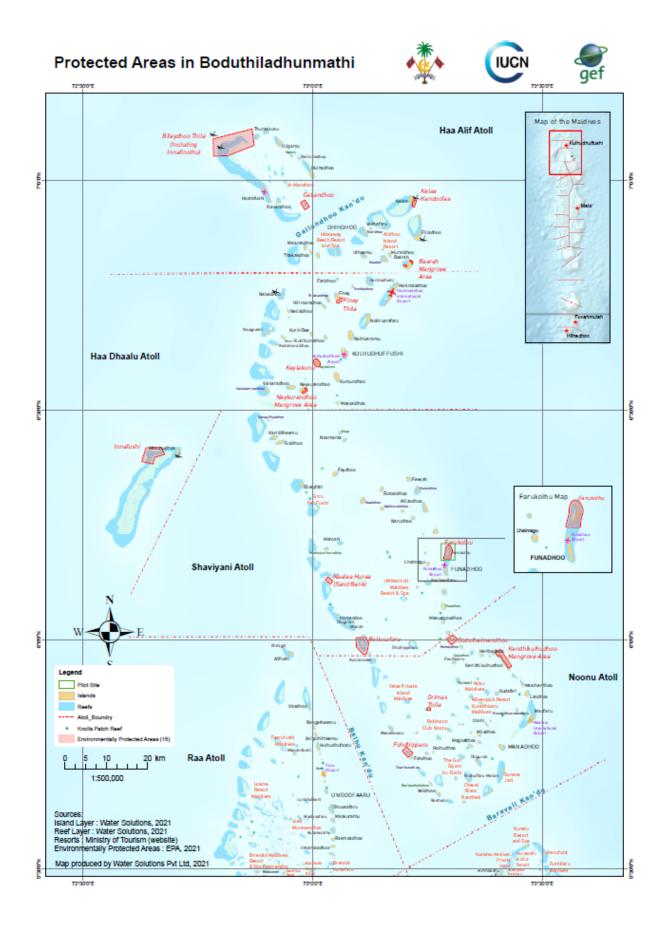
There is no mention of piloting and codifying in both the approved PIF and the CEO endorsement requirement. Furthermore, in 2018 the Government of Maldives has adapted the IUCN Protected Area categories to national context as part of the Protected Areas Regulation 2018/R-78.

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

PPG Grant Approved at PIF: 100, 000						
	GEF/LDCF/SCCF Amount (\$)					
Project Preparation Grants Implemented	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent Todate	Amount Committed			
Consultants ProDoc and Stakeholder Consultations Total	100,000 100,000	49, 431 49, 431	44, 761 44, 761			

ANNEX D: Project Map(s) and Coordinates

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



ANNEX E: Project Budget Table

Please attach a project budget table.

		USD							
Expenditure		Component 1	Component 2	Component 3					Responsible
Category	Detailed Description	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Sub-total	M&E	РМС		Entity/Executing Agency
Works									
	Visitor Information Center and Exhibition								
	Space	-	500,000	-	500,000			500,000	Ministry of Environment
	Kiosk	-	-	11,035	11,035			11,035	Ministry of Environment
Goods									
	Training equipment (biodiversity								
	assessment)	10,000	-	-	10,000			10,000	Ministry of Environment
	Drone	3,618	-	-	3,618			3,618	Ministry of Environment
	Office Equipment	19,737	-	-	19,737			19,737	Ministry of Environment
	Camera - Go Pro	3,947	-	-	3,947			3,947	Ministry of Environment
	Communications and field equipment	-	-	12,000	12,000			12,000	Ministry of Environment
Vehicles									
	Vehicles/Vessels	3,000	-	-	3,000			3,000	Ministry of Environment
	Monitoring Boat	38,364	-	-	38,364			38,364	Ministry of Environment

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Contractual Services- Individual									
	Community Engagement								
	and Communication								
	Specialist - National	2,829	-	28,289	31,118			31,118	Ministry of Environment
	Financial Specialist -								
	National	-	109,375	-	109,375		12,500	121,875	Ministry of Environment
	Safeguards & Gender								
	Specialist	-	-	22,000	22,000			22,000	Ministry of Environment
Contractual Services- Company									
	Consultancy firm -								
	national	26,400	-	-	26,400			26,400	Ministry of Environment
International Consultants									
	Project Advisor	84,000	-	-	84,000			84,000	Ministry of Environment
	PA management								
	consultant	33,000	-	-	33,000			33,000	Ministry of Environment
	Ecotourism consultant	33,000	-	-	33,000			33,000	Ministry of Environment
	International consultant-								
	develop limit of change	16,500	-	-	16,500			16,500	Ministry of Environment
Local Consultants									
	Natural Resource								
	Governance Specialist	8,800	-	-	8,800			8,800	Ministry of Environment
	Training Consultant-PA	4,000	-	-	4,000			4,000	Ministry of Environment
	National consultant-								
	develop national guidelines	8,800			8,800			0 000	Ministry of Environment
	National consultant - PA	0,000	_	_	0,000			0,000	Willistry of Environment
	management plan	8,800	-	-	8,800			8,800	Ministry of Environment
	National consultant - PA								
	benefit assessment	2,800	-	-	2,800			2,800	Ministry of Environment
	Evaluators external - international	-	-	15,000	15,000	15,000		15,000	Ministry of Environment
	Evaluators external - local	-	-	4,000	4,000	4,000		4,000	Ministry of Environment
Salary and Benefit/Staff Costs									
	Project Manager	7,500	-	10,000	17,500	10,000	87,500	105,000	Ministry of Environment
	Rangers	71,053	-	-	71,053			71,053	Ministry of Environment
	Conservation Officer	35,526	-	-	35,526			35,526	Ministry of Environment
	Communication Officer	35,526	-	-	35,526			35,526	Ministry of Environment
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Trainings Workshops/Meetings									
	Training material								
	preparation-ranger	2.000			2.000			2.000	Mininto of Fourier and
	training	2,000	-	-	2,000			2,000	Ministry of Environment
	PA management course fee and stipend	15,053	-		15,053			15,053	Ministry of Environment
	Green listing - certification fees	3,750	-	-	3,750			3,750	Ministry of Environment
	Training for trust fund management	-	29,605	-	29,605			29,605	Ministry of Environment
	Training programs on eco- friendly livelihoods	-	50,000	-	50,000			50,000	Ministry of Environment
	Communication/Iranslation/Publication/Visibilit								
	y - Package	-	-	5,000	5,000			5,000	Ministry of Environment
	Videography training	-	-	5,000	5,000			5,000	Ministry of Environment
Travel									
	International Flight	8,000	-	-	8,000			8,000	Ministry of Environment
	Local Consultants-Per Diem	8,773	-	-	8,773			8,773	Ministry of Environment
	International Consultants-Per Diem	8,400	-	-	8,400			8,400	Ministry of Environment
	Financial Specialist (local)-Per Diem	-	1,820	-	1,820			1,820	Ministry of Environment
	Livelihood Specialist (local) - Per Diem	-	650	-	650			650	Ministry of Environment
	Per-diem M&E	•	-	1,170	1,170	1,170		1,170	Ministry of Environment
Other Operating Costs									
	Investments - Trust Fund	-	65,789	-	65,789			65,789	Ministry of Environment
	Trust Fund Establishment	-	34,539	-	34,539			34,539	Ministry of Environment
	Support to livelihood diversification startup, via trust fund initiatives	-	200,000	-	200,000			200,000	Ministry of Environment
	Eco friendly access to Farukolhu PA, to support livelihood startups	_	357,908		357,908			357 908	Ministry of Environment
	Operational Costs	_	16,000	28,000	44,000				Ministry of Environment
Totals	Speciational costs	E02 476				20 170	100.000		-
Totals		503,176	1,365,687	141,494	2,010,357	30,170	100,000	2,110,358	

ANNEX F: (For NGI only) Termsheet

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

ANNEX G: (For NGI only) Reflows

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

with the GEF Trustee. Agencies are welcomed to provide assumptions that explain expected financial reflow schedules.

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

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