GEF-8 REQUEST FOR CEO ENDORSEMENT/APPROVAL

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General Project Information

Project Title Transforming Policy and Investment through Improving Ecosystem Management and Restoration of Degraded Drylands of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve in Georgia to Generate Multiple Environmental and Socio-Economic Benefits	
Region Georgia	GEF Project ID 11141
Country(ies) Georgia	Type of Project FSP
GEF Agency(ies): UNEP	GEF Agency Project ID
Project Executing Entity(s) The Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (REC Caucasus)	Project Executing Type CSO
GEF Focal Area (s) Multi Focal Area	Submission Date 6/20/2024
Type of Trust Fund GET	Project Duration (Months) 48
GEF Project Grant: (a) 3,552,970.00	GEF Project Non-Grant: (b) 0.00
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c) 337,530.00	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant (d) 0.00
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d) 3,890,500.00	Total Co-financing 24,875,000.00
PPG Amount: (e) 100,000.00	PPG Agency Fee(s): (f) 9,500.00
Total GEF Resources: (a+b+c+d+e+f) 4,000,000.00	
Project Tags CBIT: No NGI: No SGP: No Innovation: No	
Project Sector (CCM Only)	

Taxonomy

Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands, Focal Areas, Sustainable Agriculture, Land Degradation Neutrality, Land Cover and Land cover change, Mainstreaming, Tourism, Biodiversity, Agriculture and agrobiodiversity, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Biomes, Temperate Forests, Grasslands, Gender Equality, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Influencing models, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Stakeholders, Civil Society, Academia, Non-Governmental Organization, Local Communities, Communications, Awareness Raising, Education, Beneficiaries, Private Sector, SMEs, Type of Engagement, Consultation, Information Dissemination, Gender results areas, Participation and leadership, Capacity Development, Gender Mainstreaming, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Women groups, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Knowledge Generation

Rio Markers

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

Project Summary

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

The project aims to improve biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of ecosystems and restoration of degraded drylands in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve (BR), located in the south-eastern part of Georgia, in Kakheti Region. The project area is part of the Caucasus Biodiversity Hotspot and harbours many endemic, rare and threatened species of flora and fauna. The project area is also vulnerable to climate change and damaging human activities, such as deforestation, overgrazing and unsustainable land use and agricultural practices, which result in soil erosion, loss of soil nutrients, changes to the water cycle, and disruptions to the carbon and nitrogen cycles. The project will address these problems and barriers by enhancing national legislation, policies, and capacities for sustainable use of biodiversity in Georgia's biosphere reserves (Component 1); applying and demonstrating collaborative management of Dedoplistskaro BR (Component 2); and managing knowledge effectively (Component 3). The project will generate global environmental benefits by restoring 10,000 ha of land and ecosystems, improving practices on 20,000 ha of landscape (excluding protected areas), mitigating 1.7 million MtCO2 greenhouse gas emissions, benefiting about 5,000 people (of which 53% are women). The project will also be innovative and transformative by establishing the first biosphere reserves in Georgia and in the South Caucasus Region, which will demonstrate a new model of conservation and development that reconciles the protection of biodiversity with its sustainable use. The project will also leverage the support and resources from various sources and partners, such as national authorities, regional and local authorities, local communities, civil society organizations, private sector actors, research, and academic institutions, etc., who will be involved in the governance and management of Dedoplistskaro BR, as well as benefit from the project interventions and outcomes.

Project Description Overview

Project Objective

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activities, such as deforestation, overgrazing and unsustainable land use and agricultural practices, which result in soil erosion, loss of soil nutrients, changes to the water cycle, and disruptions to the carbon and nitrogen cycles. The project will address these problems and barriers by enhancing national legislation, policies, and capacities for sustainable use of biodiversity in Georgia's biosphere reserves (Component 1); applying and demonstrating collaborative management of Dedoplistskaro BR (Component 2); and managing knowledge effectively (Component 3). The project will generate global environmental benefits by restoring 10,000 ha of land and ecosystems, improving practices on 20,000 ha of landscape (excluding protected areas), mitigating 1.7 million MtCO2 greenhouse gas emissions, benefiting about 5,000 people (of which 53% are women). The project will also be innovative and transformative by establishing the first biosphere reserves in Georgia and in the South Caucasus Region, which will demonstrate a new model of conservation and development that reconciles the protection of biodiversity with its sustainable use. The project will also leverage the support and resources from various sources and partners, such as national authorities, regional and local authorities, local communities, civil society organizations, private sector actors, research, and academic institutions, etc., who will be involved in the governance and management of Dedoplistskaro BR, as well as benefit from the project interventions and outcomes.

Project Components

Enhanced national legislation, policies, and capacities for sustainable use of biodiversity in Georgia's Biosphere Reserves.

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
569,973.00	3,990,000.00

Outcome:

Outcome 1.1: Regulatory and institutional framework, key tools and capacity enabled to avoid and reduce anthropogenic pressures on ecosystems in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.

Output:

Output 1.1.1 Intersectoral and multilevel coordination and governance mechanisms available and operational.

Output 1.1.2

Revised legislation to support integrated and collaborative planning and management of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve contributing to sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation developed and submitted for formal approval.

Output 1.1.3

Technical guidelines, manuals, standards, and norms for sustainable management of the Biosphere Reserves developed and adopted.

Output 1.1.4

Set of national and local workshops and training programs for key stakeholders.

Output 1.1.5

An Integrated Management Plan for Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve developed and agreed with all key local and national stakeholders and provides a consensual framework for implementing subsequent forest, pasture and other related land use management actions and pilot for national upscaling.

Output 2.2.1

Sustainable Forest Management approaches and operational modalities developed and applied, which ensure the multipurpose use of forests.

Component 2: Practical application and demonstration of collaborative management of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
1,800,000.00	12,594,000.00

Outcome:

Outcome 2.1: Enhancing Ecotourism to generate environmental and socio-economic benefits.

Outcome 2.2 Restoration of degraded ecosystems improves connectivity and enhances biodiversity

Output:

Output 2.1.1

An Integrated Action Framework that enhances ecotourism opportunities.

Output 2.1.2

Ecotourism options (e.g. nature-based experiences, adaptive re-use, eco-lodge, eco-facilities) identified.

Output 2.1.3

Technical assessments conducted to identify which sites are suitable for which ecotourism option.

Output 2.1.4

Ecotourism options in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve linked with the national tourism industry value chain to ensure a sustained income for the communities.

Output 2.1.5

Local ecotourism institutional and networking capacities built.

Output 2.2.1

Sustainable Forest Management approaches and operational modalities developed and applied, which ensure the multipurpose use of forests.

Output 2.2.2

Promotion of sustainable use of agro-forestry practices in forest management

Output 2.2.3

Existing pasture management system adapted in collaboration with local pasture users.

Output 2.2.4

Accessing financial mechanisms and investments for ecosystem restoration (*e.g., preparation of feasibility study for the establishment of an environmental fund for the development of the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve*).

Output 2.2.5 Enhanced conservation of Goitered Gazelle as a flagship species and monitoring of selected biodiversity features.

Component 3: Knowledge Management

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
800,000.00	5,600,000.00

Outcome:

Outcome 3.1 Stakeholders apply their increased knowledge and take actions on integrated land use planning, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.

Output:

Output 3.1.1 Information/knowledge management system developed and made accessible to stakeholders.

Output 3.1.2

Gender-sensitive Communication and Awareness Strategy that will include various approaches for gender mainstreaming, developed and implemented to support sustainable management of the Biosphere Reserve.

Output 3.1.3

Awareness raising and technical materials, based on best-practices identified through Component 1 and 2, developed in local languages, disseminated, and used for training of landowners, communities, and private sector, taking into account gender balance.

Output 3.1.4

Bi-lateral and regional study-visits and training.

Output 3.1.5

Provide scholarships for education, research, and internships.

M&E

Component Type	Trust Fund
	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
213,808.00	426,000.00

Outcome:

Output:

Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
Enhanced national legislation, policies, and capacities for sustainable use of biodiversity in Georgia's Biosphere Reserves.	569,973.00	3,990,000.00
Component 2: Practical application and demonstration of collaborative management of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.	1,800,000.00	12,594,000.00

Component 3: Knowledge Management	800,000.00	5,600,000.00
M&E	213,808.00	426,000.00
Subtotal	**3,383,781.00**	**22,610,000.00**
Project Management Cost	169,189.00	2,265,000.00
Total Project Cost ($)	**3,552,970.00**	**24,875,000.00**

Please provide Justification

PROJECT OUTLINE

A. PROJECT RATIONALE

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

Country Context and Project Site

The project area is located in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve (DBR), which was granted its status by UNESCO[1][1] in June 2022, covering about **250,000 ha** of drylands consisting of semi-arid and arid ecosystems with grasslands, shrublands, crop lands and woodlands. The area is part of the Caucasus Biodiversity Hotspot[2][2], one of the 36 global biodiversity hotspots identified by Conservation International, and harbours many endemic, rare and threatened species of flora and fauna. The original vegetation formations of the project area represent a unique genetic treasure, as they contain the ancestors of many cultivated plants in eastern Georgia.

The DBR is located in the south-eastern part of Georgia, in Kakheti Region, within the boundaries of Dedoplistskaro Municipality - covering whole territory of this municipality. The biosphere reserve forms part of the Lori-Mingechaur priority conservation area defined in the Ecoregional Conservation Plan for the Caucasus and harbours many of the conservation area's focal species (*Panthera pardus*, *Ursus arctos*, *Gazella subgutturosa*, *Aegypius monachus*, *Aquila heliaca*, *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*, *Pelobates syriacus*) and species of special concern (*Rhinolophus mehelyi*, *Myotis emarginatus*, *Lutra lutra*, *Lynx lynx*). More than half of the entire richness of the ecosystem's flora comes from the previously mentioned families[3][3]. That is 391 species (58%). Apart from this 41 endemic species of 24 Caucasian and 17 Georgian endemics are distributed in the region. Among them are *Salvia garedji*, *Pinus eldarica*, *Torularia eldarica*, *Iris iberica*, *Pyrus georgica*, Berberis *iberica*, *Dianthus subulosus*, *Seseli grandivittatum*, *Symphytum caucasicum*, *Tulipa eichlerii* and others. Endemic to Georgia: *Onobrychis kachetica*, *O. iberica, Thymus tiflisieinsis*, *Campanula kachetica*, *Amygdalus georgica*, *Pyrus sachokiana*, *Paeonia mlokosewitschi*, *Euphorbia boissierriana*, *Galathela eldarica*, *Astragalus bungeanus*, *Artemisia eldarica*. More than sixty rare or critically endangered species can be found in the

Kakheti Region. Apart from the individual species some rare plant communities can now only be found in this region[4][4].

The territory of the DBR encompasses two protected areas: (1) Vashlovani Protected Areas (VPA), comprising Vashlovani Strict Nature Reserve, National Park, and three Natural Monuments – Eagle Canyon, Takhti-Tepa Mud Volcanoes, and Kaklisyure Alazani floodplain forest; and (2) Chachuna Managed Reserve, featuring arid and semi-arid landscapes along with remnants of floodplain forests. VPA is a site designated within the country's Emerald Network for the preservation of Europe's wild flora, fauna, and their natural habitats. Both Vashlovani Protected Areas and Chachuna Managed Reserve are part of the Emerald Network sites[5][5]. Vashlovani was the first area in Georgia to receive the European Diploma in 2015, acknowledging its conservation efforts related to biological, geological, and landscape diversity. Situated within Georgia's semi-arid zone, VPA lies within the Lori Region Important Bird Area (IBA GE011) and has been proposed as a Special Protected Area (SPA) under the Bird Directive. This IBA holds significance for breeding and wintering birds of prey, with 25 species recorded, as well as a diverse steppe bird assemblage. Chachuna Managed Reserve, housing a unique sparse riparian forest, sits within Georgia's arid and semi-arid zone near the Azerbaijani border. The reserve, particularly the area along the Lori River below the Dali Mountain water reservoir, protects a distinctive floodplain forest under threat due to altered water regimes resulting from reservoir construction in the 1980s[6][6]. Designated as a Managed Reserve in 1996, it falls under the IUCN's IV category. The proximity of VPA and CMR to the Azerbaijani border offers opportunities for transboundary cooperation, especially for the conservation of key species like Panthera pardus and Gazella.

The project area is vulnerable to climate change and damaging human activities such as deforestation, overgrazing and unsustainable land use and agricultural practices[7][7]. The consequences of these include soil erosion, the loss of soil nutrients, changes to the amount of salt in the soil, and disruptions to the carbon, nitrogen, and water cycles. According to the estimated climate change scenarios for Georgia[8][8], the average annual temperature will increase from 1.6°C to 3°C throughout the country in the period of 2041-2070 compared to 1971-2000 years period. The average annual precipitation in Eastern Georgia will be reduced by 9% on average. These changes will affect various sectors, such as agriculture, forestry, water resources and biodiversity. For example, it is expected that the stress caused by high temperatures and humidity will increase further in wheat and maize crops, resulting in 15-25% reduction in yields under unchanged agro technology. The semi-arid area of eastern Georgia is also threatened by desertification due to reduced rainfall and increased evaporation. Frequent intense heat waves pose a threat to human health. Increased temperature, altered rainfall structure, reduced access to water resources, increased wildfires, pests, and diseases have degraded forest growth capacity and productivity.

Socio-Economic Context

Total number of persons within the proposed biosphere reserve is 21,435[9][9]. The population of the Dedoplistskaro municipality is slowly declining due to emigration, aging, and low fertility[10][10]. Since 2004 (the year of the previous population census), over 11,000 people left the municipality mainly with the purpose to receive education or get a job (in/out of country). The migration rate is a very high, especially among the young population; the population aged between 20 and 39 make up only 17% of the total population of the region. About one-third of the population or almost 6,000 people, live in the Dedoplistskaro town and the rest is distributed among 13 communities[11][11]. Women make up 52% of the total population. The share of the population under the year 0-17 is 20.64%; year 18-64 – 58.29%; over 65 – 21.06%. According to the Human Development Report of 2021-22 by UNDP, the distribution of the population in the municipality is as follows – 10,183 (47%) men and 11,038 (53%) women. 72% of the population lives in rural areas and 28% in urban areas. In urban areas 46.2% of the population are men and 53.8% are women, while in rural areas, 48.7% are men and 51.3% are women.

Dedoplistskaro municipality, despite being less than 10% of the population of Kakheti, contributes significantly to the economic performance of the region, particularly in agricultural production[12][12]. In addition to agriculture, its local economy is represented by tourism, mining, and processing industry (limestone), various services, trade, and construction. About 57% of enterprises is extractive industry (limestone), and trade and production account for 21% (Trade-Services Sectors: Auto Services, Hotels, Catering & Other Household Services). The municipality's value-added products are also contributed by agriculture (14%), trade (10%), services (8%) and construction (5%). The remaining 6% comes on healthcare, education, etc. From an economic perspective, in 2020, 40.1% of Georgia’s agricultural lands were within Kakheti, where its largest areas are arable lands, pastures, and vineyards, making it the leading region in the production of cereals, livestock, and wine[13][13].

Regulatory and Institutional Context

The establishment and management of biosphere reserves in Georgia is regulated by the Law of Georgia on the System of Protected Areas[14][14]. The law defines the purpose of establishing a biosphere reserve, the criteria for selecting an area for establishing a biosphere reserve, the zoning of a biosphere reserve and the activities allowed in separate zones, identifying the permissible forms of land and natural resource ownership and their use within different zones of a biosphere reserve. The Law on the System of Protected Areas does not fully define the issues of the establishment and the management of a biosphere reserve. The competence of the Agency of Protected Areas is limited to the management of protected areas that fall within a biosphere reserve. The governance and management of the other remaining areas of a biosphere reserve is not defined by the existing legislation.

Presently, the draft Law on Biodiversity is undergoing consideration by pertinent ministries and state agencies. The management aspects pertinent to biosphere reserves will be addressed by a sub-law still under development titled 'The Rules of Creation and Management of Territories Included in International Networks Defined by Conventions.' Other

relevant laws for the objectives of the project include the Soil Protection Law and the Law on Pasture Management, which is currently being developed (scheduled passing is 2024), and for which regulations will also need to be developed once the parent law gets through parliament.

The Policy Paper on Biosphere Reserves Governance and Management in Georgia developed in 2018 and discussed by the broad range of the stakeholders had proposed two scenarios for the implementation of this governance model in Georgia: **Scenario 1**: Biosphere Reserve is managed by a non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entity to be established by relevant governmental institutions and local authorities, and NGOs; **Scenario 2**: Biosphere Reserve is managed by a legal entity of public law to be established by the Government of Georgia. However, none of the above-mentioned scenarios is deemed relevant or accepted by the State. Consequently, new structural and institutional arrangements are being discussed within the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Ministry of Regional Development, and Infrastructure of Georgia (MRDI), Dedoplistskaro, Akhmenta, and Telavi municipalities[15][15]. To facilitate the role of municipal authorities in a governance structure for the DBR amendments to the Organic Law of Georgia 'On Local Self-Government and Governance may be necessary.

The institutions relevant for the operations and management of the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve include the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, Ministry of Regional Development, and Infrastructure, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Administration of the State Attorney in Kakheti Region, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Youth of Georgia and the Dedoplistskaro Municipality. Among these ministries there are sixteen (16) government departments which may be relevant for the project in some role or another.

Primary Environmental Problems Targeted by the Project and Roots Causes

Policy incoherence, population growth, expansion of the agriculture frontier to meet food security needs, and climate change have contributed to substantial degradation in the DBR. The uncontrolled felling of light floodplain forests reducing the role of forests in controlling flood flow and overgrazing[16][16], which can result in a reduction in the amount of moisture that can be absorbed and retained by soils. Fires desertification, soil erosion caused by wind and water, and droughts are some of the other primary threats to the environment and ecosystems in the Caucasus, Kakheti region, where the DBR is located[17][17]. Fires in dry grasslands cause undesirable changes in habitat structure and species composition ultimately negatively impacting biodiversity[18][18]. Fires of unnatural or anthropogenic origin, including the burning of windbreaks by farmers while preparing farming plots for the next crop of wheat is common in the DBR, despite previous efforts by a GIZ-funded project to curb this threat[19][19]. The risk of desertification is severe in the municipalities of Dedoplistskaro and Akhmeta[20][20]. As dry land ecosystems get drier and more inhospitable, fewer plants and animals can adapt and survive. Biodiversity loss has adverse effects beyond the loss of each individual species – since the ecosystem as a whole becomes more fragile. As stated above,

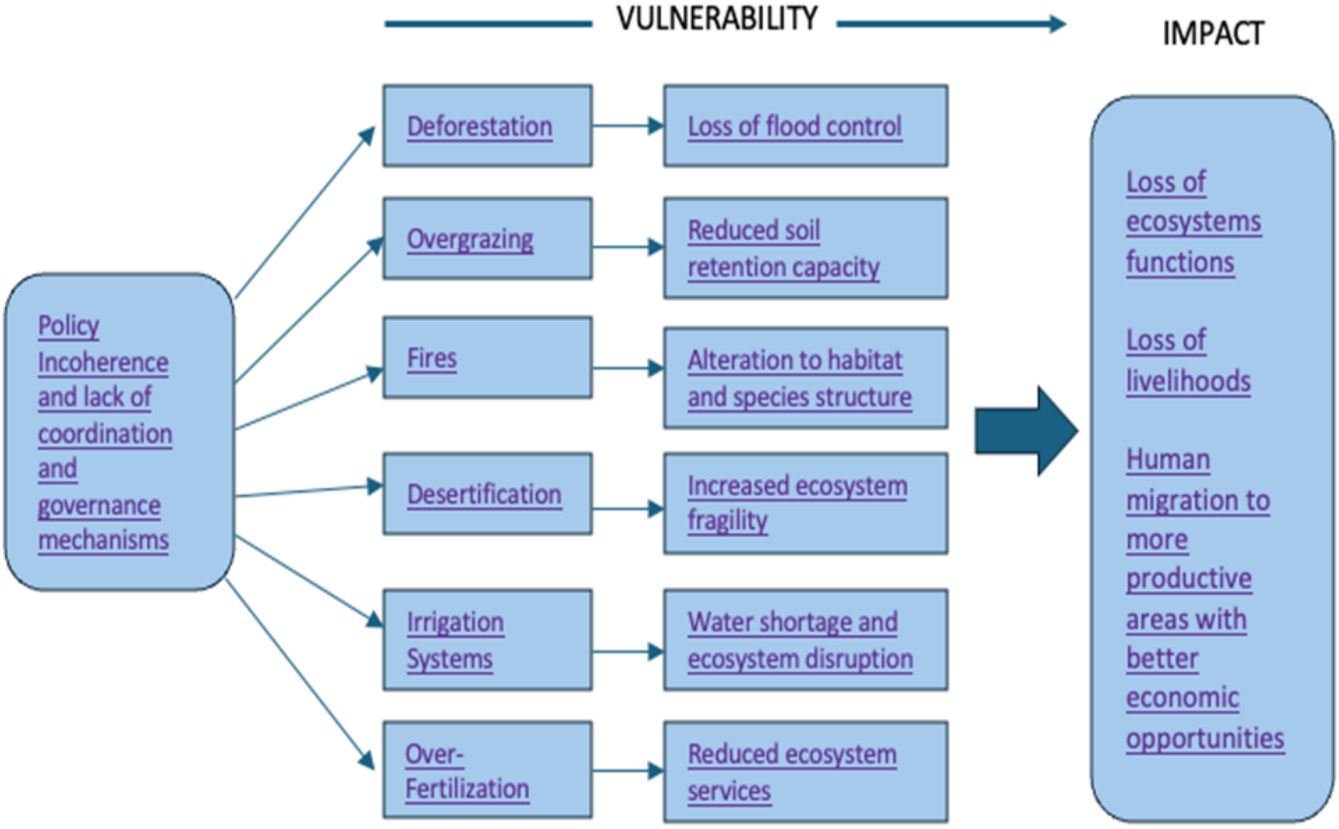
overgrazing is another serious threat to the environment on the project area, with over 300,000 sheep grazing in the DBR, in addition to cattle and horses[21][21]. The semi-arid zone (Lori Plateau and the adjacent areas) in Georgia have traditionally served as winter pasture. Sheep droves migrate between summer and winter pastures, with the droves staying at the summer pastures for an extended period (8-9 months) leading to over grazing of the pastures. As a result, the plant cover becomes degraded, exposing the soil and making it more vulnerable to erosion.

Inappropriate use of irrigation systems in the DBR can cause depletion of water sources and competition for water in an area that is already considered to be extremely dry, as well as causing water quality degradation, and ecosystem disruption including disrupting the natural flow of rivers and streams which lead to biodiversity loss. Furthermore, irrigation water runoff can carry sediment, nutrients, and agrochemicals into rivers and lakes, causing water pollution and ecological imbalances[22][22]. The overuse of fertilisers without prior soil testing is also a problem in the DBR, which causes general loss of biodiversity and loss of productivity in almost in all types of soils. Over-fertilization destabilizes dry grasslands such as those in the DBR and can reduce its ability to provide critical ecosystem services including supplying food for livestock, maintain nutrient cycling, store carbon and water, purify soil and water, regulate the weather and climate, protect against disasters such as landsides, and provide pollination services[23][23]. Mudflows are commonplace for approximately 3,000 erosive water courses in Georgia. An estimated 2 million hectares of the territory of Georgia is at risk of mudslides. The most intensive and frequent mudslides are observed in the Caucasus ridge areas of which are underlain by clay shale. Droughts are observed across almost all of Georgia. Drought conditions are frequent and pronounced in the Shida Kartli and Qvemo Kartli regions, in Kakheti, and Zemo Imereti. Frequent strong winds are observed in the Caucasus ridge zones which also cause surface soil erosion in this very arid area. The current trends of land degradation in Dedoplistskaro Municipality are presented in Table 1, as reported by RECC Caucasus, and as also presented in map in Annex E. Figure 1 provides a simple Impact Chain Diagram for the key threats identified.

Table 1. Extent of Degradation in Dedoplistskaro Municipality

Land Degradation	Area (ha)	Percentage of Municipality (%)
Degradation	131, 788.91	52.31
Stable	110, 231.99	43.75
Improvement	9, 102.84	3.61
Total area of municipality	251, 952.11	

Figure 1. Simple Impact Chain Diagram of Key Identified Threats



Barrier Analysis

The long-term solution sought by the project is to improve biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of ecosystems and restoration of degraded drylands of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve. However, the following barriers are preventing this solution.

Barrier 1. Lack of coordination and governance mechanisms among different sectors: The project area involves multiple stakeholders from different sectors, such as agriculture, forestry, tourism, environment, and water. These sectors have different interests, priorities and policies that may conflict or compete with each other, affecting the sustainable use and management of natural resources and biodiversity in the DBR. There is a need for effective coordination and governance mechanisms that can foster cross-sectoral collaboration, integration and alignment of policies and plans, stakeholder participation and consultation, conflict resolution and benefit-sharing among different actors. This barrier is addressed by component 1 of the project, which aims to enhance the regulatory and institutional framework, key tools, and capacity for sustainable management of the DBR.

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Barrier 2. Insufficient legal and technical support: The project area faces several legal and technical challenges that hinder the implementation of biodiversity conservation and sustainable management measures. For example, there is a lack of clear and consistent legal frameworks and regulations for the establishment and management of protected areas, other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), restoration activities and ecotourism initiatives. There is also a lack of technical guidelines, standards, and norms for applying best practices and innovative solutions for biodiversity conservation and sustainable management in the DBR. Moreover, there is a lack of adequate monitoring and evaluation systems and tools to assess the effectiveness and impact of these measures on biodiversity and

ecosystem services. This barrier is addressed by component 1 of the project, which aims to develop and adopt technical guidelines, manuals, standards, and norms for sustainable management of the DBR, as well as an integrated management plan that provides a consensual framework for implementing subsequent actions.

Barrier 3. Low economic and tourism potential: The project area has a low level of economic development and diversification, with a high dependence on agriculture and forestry as the main sources of income and livelihoods for local communities. These sectors are vulnerable to climate change, land degradation, desertification, and biodiversity loss, which threaten the food security, nutrition, health, and well-being of the population. There is a need for alternative and complementary sources of income and livelihoods that can enhance the economic resilience and well-being of local communities, while reducing the pressure on natural resources and biodiversity. Ecotourism is one such potential source that can generate income, create jobs, promote cultural heritage, and raise awareness about biodiversity conservation and sustainable management in the DBR. This barrier is addressed by component 2 of the project.

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Barrier 4. Limited capacity in sustainable agriculture forest management ecosystem restoration: Limited capacity in sustainable agriculture, forest management and ecosystem restoration. The project area has a low level of capacity and knowledge among local communities and stakeholders on sustainable agriculture, forest management and ecosystem restoration practices that can enhance biodiversity conservation and sustainable management in the DBR. There is a lack of awareness and understanding of the value and benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services, as well as the threats and risks posed by climate change, land degradation, desertification, and biodiversity loss. There is also a lack of access to information, training, education, research, and innovation opportunities that can improve the skills and competencies of local communities and stakeholders on these topics. This barrier is addressed by component 3 of the project, which aims to develop and implement a knowledge management system, a gender-sensitive communication and awareness strategy, awareness raising and technical materials, bi-lateral and regional study-visits and training, and scholarships for education, research, and internships.

Possible Future Narratives for the Project Area Without GEF Funding

Policy incoherence, population growth, expansion of the agriculture frontier to meet food security needs, and climate change have contributed to substantial degradation in the DBR. The uncontrolled felling of light floodplain forests, overgrazing, fires, desertification, soil erosion caused by wind and water, and droughts are some of the primary threats to the environment and drivers of ecosystem degradation in the DBR. Without the Project's interventions the following possible future narratives for the area may be observed. The stakeholders fail to secure adequate funding for conservation and restoration activities. The existing financial mechanisms are insufficient or ineffective to address the environmental challenges in Dedoplistskaro BR. The resource managers face difficulties in developing and implementing cross-sectoral policy instruments for ecosystem restoration and conservation, due to lack of coordination, cooperation, or political will among different stakeholders. The project also encounters technical or operational problems in developing or applying knowledge-based applications such as local information system for wildfires and forest fires, drone technologies for climate-smart irrigation for drylands, and monitoring and evaluation tools. Dedoplistskaro BR lacks the support and participation of local communities and stakeholders, who are either unaware of or resistant to the benefits of BR governance and management. As a result of these failures, the area suffers from further degradation of biodiversity and ecosystems, loss of ecosystem services and values, increased land degradation and desertification, reduced climate change mitigation and adaptation potential, worsened livelihoods and poverty, increased conflicts and insecurity, gender inequality and discrimination, and erosion of cultural heritage.

Project Stakeholders

The Project Preparation Team carried out an extensive consultation process in Georgia from November 20 to November 26, including a PPG Inception Work in Dedoplistskaro Municipality on the 24th of November 2023, and a National Validation Workshop of the project document in May 2024. The objective of the process was to conduct consultations with relevant stakeholders, particularly national and regional/local stakeholders, which involved an extensive list of in-person meetings and field visits to sites within the Vashlovani National Park and the wider DBR. Tbilisi and Dedoplistskaro Municipality were the main destinations for the consultations. A total of 35 stakeholders were interviewed, with 14 of them being women. Consultations with relevant stakeholders, particularly national and regional/local authorities were focused on the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), including the Biodiversity and Forestry Department and the Hydro-melioration and Land Resources Department, the Agency of Protected Areas (APA), the National Forestry Agency (NFA), Dedoplistskaro Municipal Administration / Mayor of Dedoplistskaro Municipality, Georgian National Tourism Administration (GNTA) under the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MESD). Consultations with NGOs and other partners included GIZ, Centre for Biodiversity Conservation & Research (NACRES), Caucasus Nature Fund (CNF) and Society for Nature Conservation (SABUKO).

Stakeholders targeted above include those that are directly involved in some aspect or another of land management within the DBR, in which land management responsibilities and jurisdiction are distributed according to land use, and there is no one agency responsible for all lands, highlighting the need for a functional coordination mechanism to address the conservation objectives of the DBR. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) has direct intervention on land currently under agriculture development, while the Ministry of Regional Development, and Infrastructure of Georgia (MRDI) has direct intervention in the identification of land for roads and other infrastructural development needs. The Protected Areas Agency (APA) is tasked exclusively with managing the lands that fall within officially declared 'protected areas' only, but not in reserves or other types of protected categories. In this regard, and within the project context, APA will be influential only in terms of the two protected areas within the DBR, but not on the rest of land making up the DBR. The National Forest Agency (NFA) is tasked with managing all forested lands in the country, but also with reforestation responsibilities. The municipalities relevant to the DBR are the Dedoplistskaro, Akhmenta, and Telavi municipalities. While these local authorities may not have direct control over national lands, they can influence management decisions of land use through their political access to the Parliament of Georgia and the Rural Development agency (RDA).

Consultations focused on presentation of the project concept, identification of community-specific challenges and community-driven proposed solutions for improved livelihoods, natural resources management, and environmental protection, presentation of proposed activities, identification of key stakeholders for project implementation, presentation and validation of proposed project outcomes, outputs, activities, and budget. Further details of the stakeholder analysis, consultation process, persons and institutions consulted, and outcomes of consultations are presented in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan in Annex I. The stakeholders essential to successful project implementation are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Stakeholders Essential to Project Implementation

Stakeholder Institution	Role/Relevance for Project Implementation

Parliament of Georgia	Standing Committee on Environment Protection and Natural Resources and Standing Committee on Agrarian Issues. Support for policy and regulatory reform advocated by the project. Member of the Project Steering Committee.
Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA) • Biodiversity and Forest [Policy] Department (BFPD) Hydro-melioration and Land Management Department (HLMD) • Environment and Climate Change Department (ECCD)	Support for policy and regulatory reform advocated by the project. Member of the Project Steering Committee. Biodiversity Convention Focal Point, Member of Technical Advisory Committee UNCCD Convention Focal Point, Member of Technical Advisory Committee GEF Operational Focal Point / UNFCCC Convention Focal Point, Member of Technical Advisory Committee
Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI)	Support for policy and regulatory reform advocated by the project. Member of the Project Steering Committee.
Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MESD)	Support for policy and regulatory reform advocated by the project. Member of the Project Steering Committee.
Ministry of Finance of Georgia (MoF) Secretariat of the Georgian National Commission for UNESCO - Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia (MoFA)	Support for policy and regulatory reform advocated by the project. Member of the Project Steering Committee.
Dedoplistksaro Municipality	Potential role in the management of the Dedoplistksaro BR.

	Support for policy and regulatory reform advocated by the project. Member of the Project Steering Committee.
Akhmeta Municipal Administration	Support for policy and regulatory reform advocated by the project. Member of the Project Steering Committee.
Administration of State Representative (Governor) in Kakheti Region	Support for policy and regulatory reform advocated by the project. Member of the Project Steering Committee.
Georgian National Academy of Science	Support for policy and regulatory reform advocated by the project. Member of the Project Steering Committee.
Protected Areas Agency (APA)	Consultations on all project interventions in the Vashlovani National Park, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
National Environmental Agency (NEA)	Consultations on all proposed project interventions, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
Local-self Government Development and Policy Department	Policy consultations and support for defining governance arrangement for the DBR, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
National Forest Agency (NFA)	Consultations on all Sustainable Forest Management approaches and agroforestry interventions, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
Rural Development Agency (RDA)	Consultations and rural community engagement within the DBR, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
Environmental Information and Education Centre (EIEC)	Possible partner for capacity building activities of the project, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
National Agency of Food (NAF)	Consultations of climate-smart agriculture and agroforestry, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
Georgian National Tourism Administration (GNTA)	Consultations on alignment of ecotourism with national tourism value chain, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
Ecotourism Association	Co-executing partner for activities related to the preparation of the Ecotourism Development Plan and its implementation.
National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation	Consultations on possible cultural heritage trail, Member of Technical Advisory Committee
National Center for Educational Research	Consultations on design of capacity building efforts by the project, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
Vashlovani PAs Friends Association (VPAFA)	Consultations on all proposed interventions for Vashlovani PA, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
Center for Biodiversity Conservation & Research (NACRES)	Co-executing partner for activities under Outcome 2.2, Member of Technical Advisory Committee

Society for Nature Conservation (SABUKO)	Consultations and technical assistance in restoration activities proposed by the project, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
Caucasus Nature Fund (CNF)	Consultations on biodiversity and species conservation interventions proposed by the project, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
Telavi State University (TeSAU)	Possible partner for capacity building activities of the project, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
Institute of Geography of the Tbilisi State University (TSU)	Possible partner for capacity building activities of the project, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
Telavi Agricultural and Technical Professional College	Possible partner for capacity building activities of the project, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
National Farmers' Association of Georgia (NFA)	Consultations and all proposed project interventions, Member of Technical Advisory Committee.
People residing in project areas	The main project affected parties (PAPs), who depend on the natural resources and ecosystem services of Dedoplistskaro BR for their livelihoods, culture, and well-being. They also have potential impacts on the environment through their land use and agricultural practices. They are expected to participate in the project activities, adopt sustainable practices, and benefit from improved livelihoods and environmental conditions.
Other project developers and their financiers	Have an interest in the project as potential partners or competitors for funding or resources. They may also influence the project through their investments or activities in Dedoplistskaro BR or its surroundings.

Alignment with Investment Landscape and Country Priorities

This project will build on and complement several investments in the DBR. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) initiated a project in 2008 aimed at rehabilitating approximately 70 kilometres of windbreaks. Unfortunately, the wildfires in 2015 inflicted severe damage on the remaining windbreaks, undermining the earlier restoration efforts undertaken by GIZ. Given the escalating instances of dry spells and heatwaves, which contribute to more frequent and larger fires, addressing the primary cause of these fires – namely, human-induced ignition of crop residues – becomes crucial. To change existing practices, comprehensive awareness-raising campaigns were conducted, and a Cost-Benefit Analysis of Agricultural Burning Practices in Dedoplistskaro Municipality was carried out by GIZ. Currently GIZ is implementing the project 'Enabling the implementation of Georgia's forest sector reform – ECO.Georgia' commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and co-funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Government of Georgia, and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), with an overall term spanning from 2021 to 2028. The objective of the project is to assist the Georgian Government in implementing a forestry reform to mitigate forest degradation. To achieve this goal, the project employs various

approaches and interventions. It disseminates resource-efficient forest management methods and energy-saving practices while enhancing the living conditions of rural households. Capacity development and collaboration between government entities, the private sector, and the population are integral aspects promoted by the project.

A comprehensive grassland monitoring program has been initiated by NACRES, focusing on various national parks in Georgia. This monitoring initiative, sponsored by CNF, is aimed at establishing a baseline understanding of grassland ecosystems, particularly the impact of livestock grazing, an age-old practice within the project area. The project involves data collection to ascertain the extent of grazing, herd sizes, ownership, and the condition of grazing lands. This data is vital for park authorities, researchers, local communities, and municipalities to better manage and conserve these vital landscapes. NACRES Prepared a management plan for pastures for Vashlovani PA and is also implementing activities to address forest fires with the protected area with the support of the US Forest Service. The Caucasus Nature Fund provides matching grants for operating costs including salary supplements, essential equipment, and maintenance of protected areas in Georgia. In addition, they support the development of management plans, biodiversity monitoring systems and sustainable economic development through ecotourism programs. Working in partnership with the national governments and communities, CNF provides continuing support – both to assure basic funding for the long-term and to build local capacities so that management effectiveness in the parks is permanently improved.

The Society for Nature Conservation (SABUKO), under the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP), executed a two-year initiative titled 'Development of Nature Conservation-Centered Visitor Services in Chachuna Managed Reserve.' The primary objective of this project was to safeguard ecosystems and protect endangered species within the area. As part of this initiative, a comprehensive business plan has been elaborated to enhance ecotourism at the Chachuna Managed Reserve. The project encompasses the establishment of various ecotourism amenities, including bungalows, campsites, a vulture restaurant, and a birdwatching tower. Informative boards and signage have been updated to ensure the safety and convenience of visitors to Chachuna. The vulture restaurant has been arranged which will become hub for conservation and education. In addition, SABUKO has been implementing the Landscape Restoration Project since January 1, 2019, with the support of the Cambridge Conservation Initiative, developing a rotational grazing scheme, which noticeably improved the grass cover condition on the ground. For the period 2023-2027 SABUKO aims to achieve Sustainable grazing management on 500 km2 of steppes for wildlife and livestock, conservation of 1000 km2 of core areas and corridors to ensure wildlife population connectivity, and secure ecologically sustainable rangeland management through knowledge transfer, financial sustainability, and increased awareness.

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B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section asks for a theory of change as part of a joined-up description of the project as a whole. The project description is expected to cover the key elements of good project design in an integrated way. It is also expected to meet the GEF's policy requirements on gender, stakeholders, private sector, and knowledge management and learning (see section D). This section

should be a narrative that reads like a joined-up story and not independent elements that answer the guiding questions contained in the guidance document. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

Project Intervention Logic and Theory of Change (TOC)

Policy incoherence, population growth, expansion of the agriculture frontier to meet food security needs, and climate change have contributed to substantial degradation in the DBR. The uncontrolled felling of light floodplain forests, overgrazing, fires, desertification, soil erosion caused by wind and water, and droughts are some of the primary threats to the environment and drivers of ecosystem degradation in the DBR. Fires of unnatural or anthropogenic origin, including the burning of windbreaks by farmers while preparing farming plots for the next crop of wheat are also commonplace. Overgrazing is another serious threat to the environment in the project area, with over 300,000 sheep grazing in the DBR, in addition to cattle and horses. Seasonal grazing by sheep is a cultural practice engrained in local shepherds and which is leading to over grazing of pastures resulting in plant cover becoming degraded, exposing the soil, and making it more vulnerable to erosion. Inappropriate use of irrigation systems and the overuse of fertilisers without prior soil testing is also a problem in the DBR, which causes general loss of biodiversity and loss of productivity in almost in all types of soils. Mudflows, drought, and frequent strong winds are also observed in the DBR which also cause surface soil erosion in this very arid area.

The project's intervention strategy to address drivers of ecosystem degradation in the DBR will ultimately seek to deliver the project's objective: to improve biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of ecosystems and restoration of degraded drylands of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve. For this to be achieved, project interventions will be designed to address the barriers identified above and strengthen the enabling environment to reduce environmental threats and their root causes while empowering local actors to be stewards of the environment. In this regard, the project will support effective coordination and governance mechanisms that can foster cross-sectoral collaboration, integration and alignment of policies and plans, stakeholder participation and consultation, conflict resolution and benefit-sharing among different actors. The project will support the development, adoption, and implementation of technical guidelines, standards, and norms for applying best practices and innovative solutions for biodiversity conservation and sustainable management in the DBR, in addition to support for the development and implementation of adequate monitoring and evaluation systems and tools to assess the effectiveness and impact of project interventions on biodiversity and ecosystem services. To obtain community support for the desired environmental changes, the project will support the creation of opportunities for alternative and complementary sources of income and livelihoods that can enhance the economic resilience and well-being of local communities, while reducing the pressure on natural resources and biodiversity. This will be accompanied by project support for strengthening the required awareness and understanding of the value and benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services and capacity building that can improve the skills and competencies of local communities and stakeholders of the DBR, this will consequently enhance learning and create strong baseline for replication and upscaling of project results.

In addition to the project intervention strategies *('drivers or enablers of positive change'*) described above, the intervention logic is also guided by 'assumptions', and 'causal pathways' needed to achieve the project's objective, and consequently deliver on anticipated global environmental benefits: restoration of 10,000 ha of land and ecosystems, improving practices on 20,000 ha of productive landscape mitigation of 1.7 million MtCO2 greenhouse gas emissions, while benefiting about 5,000 people (of which 53% women). The drivers of positive change described above are those activities and processes that the project can potentially and directly sponsor (inputs), in support of project outputs and outcomes, while the assumptions are the causal connections, events and conditions that need to be realized to achieve the desired project results but are outside the control of the project. The causal or impact pathways are the set of steps, consisting of activities, processes and assumptions that collectively will deliver the desired project objective and global

environmental benefits. The project's assumptions and causal pathways are summarized below, and the graphic of the TOC is presented in in Figure 2.

The project's key *assumptions* are:

- **Assumption 1**: The improvement of biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of ecosystems and restoration of degraded drylands in Dedoplistskaro BR requires a combination of policy, institutional, technical, financial, and social interventions that address the root causes and drivers of degradation, as well as the barriers and enablers for change.
- **Assumption 2**: The project's interventions will generate multiple environmental and socio-economic benefits for the ecosystems and communities in Dedoplistskaro BR, such as enhanced resilience, increased ecosystem services, improved livelihoods, and increased adaptive capacity.
- **Assumption 3**: The project's interventions will be supported by relevant stakeholders, especially local communities, and authorities, who will participate in the project activities, adopt sustainable practices, and benefit from the project outcomes.
- **Assumption 4**: The project's interventions will be informed by scientific data and knowledge, as well as by best practices and lessons learned from previous or similar projects in the country, region, or globally.
- **Assumption 5**: The project's interventions will be innovative and transformative, creating new opportunities and models for conservation and restoration that can be scaled up or replicated in other biosphere reserves or landscapes in Georgia or elsewhere.

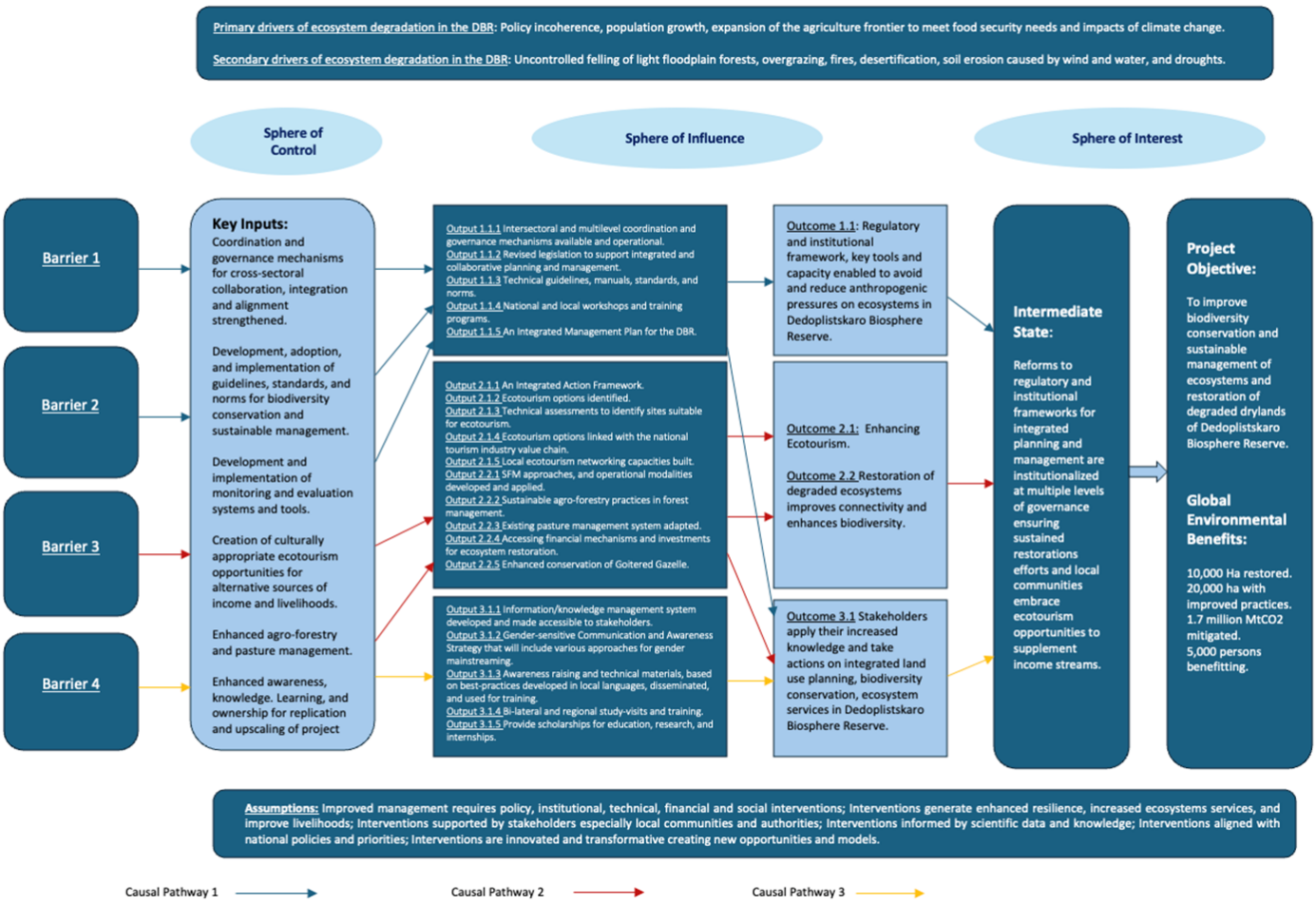
The project's *causal pathways* are:

Causal Pathway 1. If national legislation, policies, and capacities for sustainable use of biodiversity in Georgia's biosphere reserves (Component 1) are enhanced, **then** it will create an enabling environment for integrated and collaborative planning and management of Dedoplistskaro BR, contributing to sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation, **because** project interventions would have addressed the lack of coordination and governance mechanisms among the agriculture, forestry, tourism, environment, and water sectors in the DBR.

Causal Pathway 2. If integrated planning and collaborative management of Dedoplistskaro BR (Component 2) is applied and demonstrated and targeted technical support and capacity building is provided, **then** it will improve ecosystem management and restoration of degraded drylands, enhance ecotourism opportunities, and provide alternative livelihood options for local communities, **because** the project would have addressed the need for legal and technical support, strengthen capacity for sustainable agro-forestry and climate-smart agriculture, and demonstrated the economic benefits of ecotourism and cultural tourism as an alternative source of income.

Causal Pathway 3. If Knowledge Management is effectively implemented (Component 3), **then** it will increase awareness and understanding of the benefits of conservation and restoration efforts, build capacity of stakeholders, disseminate best practices and lessons learned, and support innovation and learning, **because** the project would have invested in establishing a robust knowledge baseline for replication and upscaling of project results.

Figure 2. Theory of Change (Input to Output to Impact Analysis)



Project Components, Outcomes, Outputs, and Activities

Component 1: Enhanced national legislation, policies, and capacities for sustainable use of biodiversity in Georgia's Biosphere Reserves.

This component aims to create an enabling environment for integrated and collaborative planning and management of Dedoplistskaro BR, contributing to sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation. It will seek to improve the regulatory and institutional framework for biosphere reserves in Georgia, improve alignment of the national legislation with the international frameworks and commitments related to biosphere reserves, and provide technical guidance and support for sustainable management of the biosphere reserves, based on scientific data and knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned from previous or similar projects.

Outcome 1.1: Regulatory and institutional framework, key tools and capacity enabled to avoid and reduce anthropogenic pressures on ecosystems in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.

This outcome supports the establishment of a gender-balanced inter-institutional governing and management body for the DBR, which will seek equitable representation by both men and women. Support for the operations and meetings of the inter-institutional governing and advisory bodies for the management of the DBR will ensure that it is fully functional and delivers on-the-ground results in the development of all matters relating to the management of the biosphere reserve. This outcome will also support revisions to legislation to promote integrated and collaborative planning and management of the DBR, contributing to sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation. The project will support the ongoing process for the development of the sub-law “The Rules of Creation and Management of Territories Included in International Networks Defined by Conventions' to ensure its completion and adoption. Once developed and adopted, this law will provide a comprehensive overarching national governance framework for territories, including biosphere reserves, and will enhance policy coherence between the national, state, and local levels. Regulations under the Law on Pasture Management will be developed for effective implementation of the law in all areas, including biosphere reserves.

This outcome will also strengthen institutional and technical capacity for sustainable management of biosphere reserves. The project will support the development and implementation of an Integrated Management Plan for Dedoplistskaro BR which clearly caters for the differentiated needs of men and women active in the DBR, which will provide a consensual framework for implementing subsequent forest, pasture, and other related land use management actions and pilot for national upscaling. In this regard, the term 'integration' signifies the harmonization of policies and activities across agriculture, land use, forestry, biodiversity conservation, eco-tourism, and water management, aligning them to achieve the goals of DBR management. The plan will also define the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders for the governance and management of the biosphere reserve. Additionally, the plan will identify potential sources of funding and revenue for the biosphere reserve. Training to national, state, and local stakeholders in the development and implementation of biosphere reserves management plans will be conducted, as well as training to managing institutions from national, state, and local levels on Policy Coherence for Successful Biosphere Reserve Management. All training under this outcome will be designed in content and delivery to meet the training needs of both men and women.

Table 1. Summary of activities to deliver Outcome 1.1

Outputs	Activities
1.1.1 Intersectoral and multilevel coordination and governance mechanisms available and operational.	1.1.1.1 Support establishment of a gender-balanced inter-institutional governing and managing bodies for Dedoplistskaro governance and management, with equitable representation of men and women.

	1.1.1.2 Support meetings of the inter-institutional governing and managing bodies for Management of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.
1.1.2 Revised legislation to support integrated and collaborative planning and management of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve contributing to sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation developed and submitted for formal approval.	1.1.2.1 Support completion of sub-law "The Rules of Creation and Management of Territories Included in International Networks Defined by Conventions' to ensure its adoption. 1.1.2.2 Develop gender-responsive regulations under the Law on Pasture Management for effective implementation of the law, with the additional objective of seeking to reduce gender inequalities in pasture management practices through-out the DBR. 1.1.2.3 Amend the existing legislation to facilitate enhanced participation of municipalities in biosphere reserve management.
1.1.3 Technical guidelines, manuals, standards, and norms for sustainable management of the Biosphere Reserves developed and adopted.	1.1.3.1 Develop Operational Guidelines for Biosphere Reserves Co-governance (consistent with provisions of policy in Activity 1.1.1.1). 1.1.3.2 Develop a Rotational Grazing Best Practice Manual for the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve. 1.1.3.3 Develop research and monitoring programme related to local, regional, national, and global issues of conservation and sustainable development including monitoring of biodiversity, cultural, social-economic features of DBR.
1.1.4 Set of national and local workshops and training programs for key stakeholders.	1.1.4.1 Gender-responsive training to local and state level management institutions in resource mobilization from public, private, and philanthropic sources, including mobilization of resources to meet the needs of men and women. 1.1.4.2 Gender-responsive and gender-balanced training to national, state, and local stakeholders in the development and implementation of biosphere reserves management plan.

	1.1.4.3 Provide gender-responsive and gender-balanced training to governing and managing institutions from national, state, and local levels on policy coherence, co-governance, and cross-scale coordination for successful biosphere reserve management.
1.1.5 An Integrated Management Plan for Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve developed and agreed with all key local and national stakeholders and provides a consensual framework for implementing subsequent forest, pasture and other related land use management actions and pilot for national upscaling.	1.1.5.1 Develop Integrated Management Plan for Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve, fully integrating gender perspectives. 1.1.5.2 Provide Operational support for the Implementation of the Integrated Management Plan for Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve (Support for establishment operating infrastructure and technical base (office refurbishment, equipment, etc.). 1.1.5.3 Develop of a gender-responsive DBR Resource Mobilization Plan to support implementation of the Integrated Management Plan, reflecting identified financial mechanisms, investments for ecosystem restoration and fundraising strategy.

Component 2: Practical application and demonstration of collaborative management of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.

This component aims to improve ecosystem management and restoration of degraded drylands, enhance ecotourism opportunities, and provide alternative livelihood options for local communities. It seeks to develop an integrated approach to developing ecotourism, identify and implement, sustainable forest management ecotourism options in the DBR, mainstream ecotourism in the DBR as part of the national tourism network, local capacity building for tourism, agricultural biodiversity in forest management, implementation of a pasture management system.

Outcome 2.1: Enhancing Ecotourism to generate environmental and socio-economic benefits.

This outcome will develop and implement an Integrated Action Framework (IAF) that enhances ecotourism opportunities in Dedoplistskaro BR, based on a participatory assessment of the potential sites, products, services, and markets for ecotourism development, as well as the existing gaps and challenges. This integrated action framework will

build on the study on Tourism in Dedoplistskaro Municipality regarding opportunities for tourism-related sustainable development practices within the Biosphere Reserve conducted by the Ecotourism Association, and will further identify and validate ecotourism options in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve (e.g. nature-based experiences such as hiking, camping, and birding, adaptive re-use, eco-lodge, eco-facilities) and suitability of options in alignment with the national tourism industry value chain to ensure a sustained income for the communities. An awareness campaign will be launched to disseminate the Integrated Action Framework using gender-sensitive messaging and delivery methods, ensuring broad understanding and engagement.

In alignment with the strategic direction outlined in the Integrated Action Framework, and in collaboration with the Georgian National Tourism Administration and the Ecotourism Association, the project will facilitate the development and execution of a comprehensive Eco-tourism Development Plan (EDP). This plan will encompass eco-tourism product development, training initiatives, and sustainable practices. The process to prepare the EDP will include gap assessments, mapping of the value chain, and carrying out capacity assessments as essential inputs in determining the status and future requirements necessary for devising and implementing effective ecotourism strategies in the DBR. Gender-sensitive training sessions will be organized to educate aspiring local entrepreneurs and members of the tourism network on sustainable ecotourism practices. These sessions will aim to foster responsible tourism growth and will also extend support to local communities in producing, marketing, and branding various products such as sheep's wool, cheese, wine, wheat, sunflower oil, and others. This initiative is designed to create alternative livelihood opportunities and promote economic empowerment within the community.

Support will be extended for the development of chosen eco-tourism products as delineated in the Eco-tourism Development Plan, ensuring their alignment with strategic objectives. Additionally, a demonstration touristic product will be curated at the Dedoplistskaro Ethnographic Museum, highlighting the cultural heritage intertwined with nature and the Biosphere Reserve (BR). Furthermore, the Trail of Shepherd Boy 'Tite' touristic product will be expanded, and specific shepherd houses will undergo renovation to meet accommodation needs. This effort aims to promote the social and ecological dimensions of transhumance shepherd traditions within the community. The 'Alooba' wheat harvesting festival will be established to celebrate local agricultural traditions and promote community engagement in sustainable farming practices.

Local branding opportunities will be assessed, and a branding and labelling scheme will be established for selected local products, enhancing their marketability. Local producers will receive capacity building support, and the implementation of the branding and labelling scheme will be piloted for at least two selected products, empowering local entrepreneurship. Eco-tourism development based on the circular economy model will be promoted, including assistance to straw family hotels, fostering sustainable tourism infrastructure. Support will be provided for the development of eco-tourism infrastructure, including bird and Gazelle observation points, enhancing visitor experiences and environmental education. A geo-trail network will be developed with storytelling techniques and interpretational infrastructure, providing visitors with immersive experiences and insights into the region's natural and cultural heritage.

Table 2. Summary of activities to deliver Outcome 2.1

Outputs	Activities
Output 2.1.1 An Integrated Action Framework that enhances ecotourism opportunities.	2.1.1.1 Gender-responsive and gender-balanced stakeholder consultations to develop Integrated Action Framework. 2.1.1.2 Preparation and adoption of the Integrated Action Framework document.

	2.1.1.3 Integrated Action Framework Awareness Campaign using messaging that address the differentiated needs of men and women.
Output 2.1.2 Ecotourism options (e.g. nature-based experiences, adaptive re-use, eco-lodge, eco-facilities) identified. .	2.1.2.1 Assessment of ecotourism options that are compatible with the conservation and restoration objectives of the biosphere reserve inclusive of recommendations to reduce gender inequalities. 2.1.2.2 Feasibility assessment of identified ecotourism options as potential sources of income and employment for local communities, including market demand, quantity and quality of services required and available, and capacity needs to meet market requirements and differentiated needs of men and women.
Output 2.1.3 Technical assessments conducted to identify which sites are suitable for which ecotourism option.	2.1.3.1 Site Suitability Assessment for identified ecotourism options, including assessment of associated branding opportunity with the establishment of local branding for selected products. 2.1.3.2 Develop gender-responsive the Eco-tourism Development Plan (Programme) for the DBR.
Output 2.1.4 Ecotourism options in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve linked with the national tourism industry value chain to ensure a sustained income for the communities.	2.1.4.1 Support development of selected eco-tourism products based on the Eco-tourism Development Plan (Programme). 2.1.4.2 Promotion of social and ecological aspects of transhumance shepherds' traditions through extension of touristic product - Trail of Shepherd Boy and adjustment to the accommodation of selected shepherd house. 2.1.4.3 Development of a demonstration touristic product in the Dedoplistskaro Ethnographic Museum about Qizikians ethnographic traditions – Culture meets Nature. 2.1.4.4 Support development of eco-tourism infrastructure (bird and Gazelle observation points, etc.). 2.1.4.5 Development of a geo-trail network with storytelling technics and interpretational infrastructure.

	2.1.4.6 Establishment of wheat harvesting festival ``Alooba`` with equitable participation of men and women. 2.1.4.7 Promote the development of eco-tourism based on the circular economy model, through assistance to straw family hotels owned by both men and women. 2.1.4.8 Capacity building of local producers and piloting of implementation of branding and labelling scheme at least for 2 selected products with gender-balanced participation. 2.1.4.9 Assess local branding opportunity and establishment of branding and labelling scheme for selected local products.
Output 2.1.5 Local ecotourism institutional and networking capacities built.	2.1.5.1 Conduct gender-responsive and gender-sensitive training in sustainable ecotourism practices in the DBR to aspiring entrepreneurs in ecotourism and members of the local tourism network. 2.1.5.2 Gender-responsive capacity building of local producers and piloting of implementation of the branding and labelling scheme at least for 2 selected products.

Outcome 2.2 Restoration of degraded ecosystems improves connectivity and enhances biodiversity.

This outcome will complement the development and application of sustainable forest management approaches and operational modalities in Dedoplistskaro BR in coordination with the National Forest Agency and SABUKO, ensuring the multipurpose use of forests. The project will promote the sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity in forest management, such as agroforestry and silvopastoralism, which integrate trees with crops or livestock on the same land unit, providing multiple benefits for ecosystems and communities, including soil fertility improvement, erosion control, carbon sequestration, and diversification of income sources. Project will include restoring the unique forest ecosystem, with close collaboration with the NGO 'Society for Nature Conservation' (SABUKO), drawing from their experience in this regard in the Chachuna Managed Reserve.

An assessment of current agricultural practices will be conducted to determine alignment with the objectives of the Biosphere Reserve and identify necessary changes to achieve DBR goals. This assessment will also examine existing agricultural state subsidies to ensure project initiatives complement rather than contradict these subsidies. It will require collecting ground-level data, including information on pesticides and fertilizers used, conducting analyses to determine sustainable practices, and providing recommendations for their effective implementation.

This outcome will also support the piloting of a Pasture Management System within the DBR in collaboration with local pasture users, based on a participatory assessment of the current situation and future scenarios of pasture use and degradation of DBR dry land Rangelands. Pastures identification, zoning, categorization (definition of use regimes), and mapping within the BR will be essential for understanding and managing pasture resources effectively. This activity will help in identifying suitable areas for different types of land use and ensuring sustainable pasture management practices. The project will build on experiences in pasture management achieved in Vashlovani National Park and Chachuna Managed Reserve, collaborating closely with the NGO 'Centre for Biodiversity Conservation & Research' (NACRES) and SABUKO in this regard.

Additionally, species conservation plans will be supported, including the Goitered Gazelle (*Gazella subgutturosa*) as a flagship species, complementing ongoing efforts between the Government of Georgia and the Government of Azerbaijan with support from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

The restoration activities will be supported jointly by direct GEF financing (through implementation of 10 pilot projects) and co-financing sources (through implementation of co-financing activities). The area to be restored will cover a total of 10,000 hectares and captures the spatial extent of lands of high priority for restoration by the project within the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve. Area of landscapes to benfit from improved practices will cover 20,000 hectares and refers to the area outside of the Vashlovani National Park within the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve subject to grazing and other agricultural practices that will benefit from project interventions to improve management to support biodiversity.

Table 3. Summary of activities to deliver Outcome 2.2

Outputs	Activities
Output 2.2.1 Sustainable Forest Management approaches and operational modalities are applied, which ensure the multipurpose use of forests.	2.2.1.1 Gender-sensitive training to relevant personnel of management institutions in sustainable management of degraded forest ecosystems rehabilitation. 2.2.1.2 Develop climate change scenarios to inform agro-forestry and climate-smart agriculture.
Output 2.2.2 Promotion of sustainable agriculture practices including agro forestry in forest management. .	2.2.2.1 Assess current agricultural practices and subsidies to determine alignment with the objectives of the DBR. 2.2.2.2 Development of demo plans for agro-forestry and climate-smart agriculture practices.

	2.2.2.3 Support implementation of at least 10 demo plans on restoration of degraded drylands ecosystem via nature based agro-forestry, agro-biodiversity, and climate-smart land-use practices in total on 500 ha of agricultural lands.
Output 2.2.3 Existing pasture management system adapted in collaboration with local pasture users.	2.2.3.1 Assessment of the current situation and future scenarios of pasture use and degradation of DBR dry land Rangelands. 2.2.3.2 Pastures inventory (*identification, zoning, categorisation, definition of use regimes and mapping*) within the DBR. 2.2.3.3 Develop sustainable pasture management programme at DBR level. 2.2.3.4 Implement and evaluate demo pilots of sustainable grazing on DBR dry land Rangelands (*that may include improvement of existing livestock migration corridors and resting areas*) within the DBR which considers herd size, species, size of land, land tenure on at least 500 ha.
Output 2.2.4 Accessing to financial mechanisms and investments for ecosystem restoration (e.g., preparation of feasibility study for the establishment of an environmental fund for the development of the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve).	2.2.4.1 Preparation of feasibility study for the establishment of an environmental fund for the development of the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve. 2.2.4.2 Develop and disseminate awareness materials among DBR stakeholders on the importance and need for a DBR Environmental Fund.
Output 2.2.5 Enhanced conservation of Goitered Gazelle as a flagship species and monitoring of selected biodiversity features.	2.2.5.1 Conduct study on gazelle-livestock interactions (possible competition, livestock herders' attitudes, assessment of risks of disease transfer from livestock to the Gazelles, etc.) and develop the conservation plan for the Goitered Gazelle, including species/habitat restoration activities. 2.2.5.2 Support the implementation of selected relevant response measures to minimize any adverse impacts on the Gazelle population.

	2.2.5.3 Increase the capacity of Gazelle conservation related relevant staff on Gazelle population conservation management tools and instruments. 2.2.5.4 Enhance human and technical capacities for biodiversity monitoring in DBR. 2.2.5.5 Conduct monitoring of selected biodiversity features to develop and implement adaptive conservation measures including territories of protected areas.

Component 3. Knowledge Management

This component will promote public awareness, knowledge and learning and continuous improvement, generate documents for upscaling of lessons learned and will aid with strong collaboration among all project actors. The lessons learned will be communicated to the direct and indirect beneficiaries in various ways, mainly: training activities, technical publications, educational material, awareness campaigns, and hands-on management in restoration, and sustainable forest management practices. The project will help to develop the tools needed to systematize, extract, and organize the acquired knowledge, and disseminate the results, lessons, and good practices. Information will be tailored to different groups so that it is accessible, through online toolkits, webinars and seminars, workshops and trainings, and other awareness and communication strategies.

Outcome 3.1 Stakeholders apply their increased knowledge and take actions on integrated land use planning, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystems services in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.

This outcome will support increased awareness, understanding, knowledge and learning of the benefits of conservation and restoration efforts among different target groups, build capacity of stakeholders, disseminate best practices and lessons learned, and support innovation and learning. The project will be developing an information/knowledge management hub for Dedoplistskaro BR, which will collect, store, analyse, and share relevant data and information on the biosphere reserve. A gender-responsive communication and awareness strategy for Dedoplistskaro BR will be developed, which will define the objectives, messages, target groups, channels, and indicators for communication and awareness raising activities related to the biosphere reserve, considering gender balance and diversity. Awareness raising and learning materials for Dedoplistskaro BR will be developed and disseminated, based on best practices identified through Component 1 and 2, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, videos, etc. the media tours within the Biosphere Reserve will be organized to promote biodiversity conservation, sustainable ecosystem/land management, and ecosystems restoration activities.

The project will support the successful presentation of the DBR as a successful case within UNESCO's MAB program. To promote early learning, a mobile and interactive exhibition will be developed to inspire children for the biosphere reserve and provide regularly eco-lessons at least once during the year in each school and professional college in Dedoplistskaro. Outdoor days for school children will be organized, offering them a variety of programs for school trips including Vashlovani National Park, Chachuna managed reserve, Nature monuments, and Cultural heritage sites. Existing eco-clubs in DBR will be strengthened. Visibility and advertising materials on Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve will be produced. This outcome will also support technical exchanges and training for key stakeholders, such as policy makers, practitioners, researchers to exchange experiences and knowledge with similar initiatives in the country, region, or globally, and to learn from their best practices and lessons learned. Scholarships for education, research and internships for students and young professionals from Dedoplistskaro BR or other biosphere reserves in Georgia or elsewhere, to enhance their skills and knowledge for conservation and restoration activities, as well as to foster innovation and learning. Encouragement will be given to young professionals for participation in the UNESCO MAB Young Researchers Program. The project will support training on 'sustainable rural development in the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve (DBR)' to be conducted in collaboration with Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency. School and university students will participate in the training to enhance their understanding of sustainable rural development. Following the training, participants will have the opportunity to present innovative and technological ideas aimed at addressing challenges within the sector. Two study visits (Germany, France and Turkey) on integrated land use planning, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem services in Biosphere Reserve will also be supported, strengthening Georgia's position and role in the Caucasus Region as a positive role model and pioneer in championing sustainable environmental management and opening the door to foster South-South Cooperation with neighbouring countries and with others further afield.

Table 4. Summary of activities to deliver Outcome 3.1

Outputs	Activities
3.1.1 Information/Knowledge Management System developed and made accessible to stakeholders.	3.1.1.1 Develop and launch the DBR Knowledge Management hub as tool to attract students and academic institutions to closely collaborate and promote BR concept. 3.1.1.2 Formalize institutional arrangements for the permanent hosting, upkeep, and management of the DBR Knowledge Management System beyond the life of the project.
3.1.2 Gender-sensitive Communication and Awareness Strategy developed and implemented to support sustainable management of the Biosphere Reserve.	3.1.2.1 Develop and implement a gender-sensitive Communication and Awareness Strategy for the DBR. 3.1.2.2 Prepare a suite of KM products on ecosystem management and restoration within the DBR to facilitate technical exchanges, trainings, and study visits. 3.1.2.3 Organizing media tours within the Biosphere Reserve to promote biodiversity conservation, sustainable

	ecosystem/land management, and ecosystems restoration activities. 3.1.2.4 Supporting the successful presentation of the DBR as a successful case within UNESCO's MAB program.
3.1.3 Awareness raising and technical materials, based on best-practices identified through Component 1 and 2, developed in local languages, disseminated, and used for training of landowners, communities, and private sector, taking into account gender balance.	3.1.3.1 Conduct at least 2 gender-sensitive trainings to practitioners on ecosystems management and restoration within the DBR. 3.1.3.2 Capacity strengthening events for the local users of pasturelands (*A series of working meetings with all villages of the DBR (16 villages + town Dedoplistskaro to introduce and familiarize them with the main requirements of the new legislation on pasturelands management, especially pasturelands users' rights and responsibilities, procedures for establishment of Pastures Users Unions and template statute of the PUUs to facilitate further official establishment of the PUUs*). 3.1.3.3 Develop educational and public awareness materials on key biodiversity, social and cultural features of the DBR, Biosphere Reserve concept, management, and monitoring for wide public. 3.1.3.4 Develop mobile and interactive exhibition to inspire the children for the biosphere reserve and provide regularly eco-lessons at least once during the year in each school and professional collage in Dedoplistskaro. 3.1.3.5 Organize outdoor days for school children and offer them variety of programs for school trips including Vashlovani National Park, Chachuna managed reserve, Nature monuments and Cultural heritage sites. 3.1.3.6 Strengthening of existing school based eco-clubs in DBR. 3.1.3.7 Produce visibility and advertising materials on Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.

	3.1.3.8 Raise awareness of Gazelles as a flagship species in DBR.
Output 3.1.4 Bi-lateral and regional study-visits and training.	3.1.4.1 Organize and participate in short bilateral and regional study visits to improve knowledge in biosphere reserves management and branding. 3.1.4.2 Identify opportunities and pursue short courses and training in biosphere reserves management and the implementation of species reintroduction programmes. 3.1.4.3 Two study visits (Germany, France and Turkey) on integrated land use planning, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem services in Biosphere Reserve.
Output 3.1.5 Provide scholarships for education, research, and internships.	3.1.5.1 Provide at least 2 scholarships for young professionals to enhance their skills and knowledge for conservation and restoration. 3.1.5.2 Create and implement opportunities for young professionals to participate in the UNESCO MAB Young Researchers Program. 3.1.5.3 Training on Sustainable Rural Development in the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve (DBR).

Role of the Private Sector

The private sector is poised to play a pivotal role in the multifaceted project, particularly within the realms of agriculture and ecotourism sectors. As the project unfolds, private sector actors, spanning from tourism operators to investors, will engage in various ecotourism development activities. These activities will encompass offering ecotourism products and services, investing in eco-facilities and infrastructure, and ensuring compliance with the rigorous environmental and social standards set forth within the biosphere reserve. In return, these actors stand to reap significant benefits from the project, including access to new markets and opportunities within the ecotourism sector, bolstering their reputation and competitiveness on both regional and national scales.

The project's approach towards ecotourism development hinges on the implementation of an Integrated Action Framework (IAF). This framework, shaped by a participatory assessment, will meticulously identify potential sites, products, services, and markets for ecotourism development while addressing existing gaps and challenges within the biosphere reserve. Leveraging insights gleaned from prior studies and collaborations, such as the one conducted by the

Ecotourism Association, the IAF will navigate the landscape of ecotourism options, ranging from nature-based experiences like hiking and birding to adaptive re-use initiatives and the establishment of eco-lodges. Crucially, these efforts will be strategically aligned with the national tourism industry value chain to ensure sustained income streams for local communities while fostering environmental stewardship.

Furthermore, the private sector's involvement extends to the formulation and execution of a comprehensive Eco-tourism Development Plan (EDP). Collaborating closely with key stakeholders like the Georgian National Tourism Administration and the Ecotourism Association, the project will spearhead initiatives encompassing eco-tourism product development, training endeavours, and the adoption of sustainable practices. Gender-sensitive training sessions will empower local entrepreneurs and tourism networks alike, nurturing responsible tourism practices while championing economic empowerment within the community.
In tandem with ecotourism endeavours, the private sector will also contribute to the restoration of degraded ecosystems, a critical aspect of the project's objectives. Through sustainable forest management approaches and operational modalities, private sector actors will promote the multipurpose use of forests, integrating agroforestry and silvopastoralism to bolster biodiversity and enhance community livelihoods. Collaborative efforts with organizations like the NGO 'Society for Nature Conservation' (SABUKO) will inform restoration activities, drawing upon successful models established in similar reserves.

In the agricultural sphere, the private sector's engagement will be instrumental in assessing current practices, aligning them with the Biosphere Reserve's objectives, and piloting innovative Pasture Management Systems. By leveraging ground-level data and participatory assessments, private sector entities will help identify suitable areas for sustainable land use, ensuring the preservation of vital pasture resources.

Ultimately, the private sector's proactive involvement across agriculture and ecotourism sectors will not only drive economic growth but also foster a symbiotic relationship between sustainable development and environmental conservation within the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve. Through collaborative efforts and strategic investments, these actors will be instrumental in shaping a future where thriving ecosystems and vibrant communities coexist harmoniously.

Transformative and Innovative

The project is specifically intended to be transformative and innovative, as it will establish the first biosphere reserves in Georgia and in the South Caucasus Region, which will demonstrate a new model of conservation and development that reconciles the protection of biodiversity with its sustainable use. It will also promote integrated planning and management across productive sectors and institutions and will develop ecotourism in the DBR as a new sustainable form of livelihoods for local communities, while providing innovative ways to create incentives for biodiversity conservation.

Sustainability

The project will make substantial investments in strengthening the policy, legal, and institutional frameworks at the national, state, and municipal levels, ensuring the institutionalization of the required governance arrangement for the management of biosphere reserves at all levels. The development and implementation of an Integrated Management Plan for the DBR that promotes Sustainable Forest Management, sustainable pasture management, agroforestry, and

climate-smart agriculture will guarantee the intended long-term results of the project. Coupled to this are the project's investments in the development of ecotourism livelihood opportunities within the DBR, to provide economic alternatives to local communities and discourage the unsustainable use of natural resources, while support to build resource mobilization capacity will assist in securing long-term financing for management interventions in the DBR. Finally, the project will ensure sustainability through broad project ownership by engaging a wide range of stakeholders including local community groups, local organizations, government institutions, technical partners, agriculture, tourism, and forestry sectors partners, academia, and Civil Society Organizations.

Uptake and Replicability

Scaling up could be achieved by replicating the biosphere reserve model in other regions of Georgia or neighbouring countries, where there are similar ecological, social, and economic contexts and challenges, as well as potential for conservation and restoration of dryland ecosystems and biodiversity, sustainable use of natural resources and ecosystem services, and alternative livelihood options and ecotourism development.

Communications Strategy

Dissemination of the best practices and lessons learned from the project interventions will reach a wide range of stakeholders, such as policy makers, practitioners, researchers, media, general public, tourists, jobseekers, etc., who may be interested or involved in similar or related initiatives in other biosphere reserves or landscapes in Georgia or elsewhere through the participation in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme. The project will achieve this through the development and implementation of an Information/Knowledge Management System, a Gender-sensitive Communication and Awareness Strategy to support sustainable management of the Biosphere Reserve, and technical exchanges, training, and educational opportunities to young professionals.

Cost-Effectiveness

The Project will be cost-effective by leveraging the support and resources from various sources and partners, such as national authorities, regional and local authorities, local communities, civil society organizations, private sector actors, research, and academic institutions, etc., who will be involved in the governance and management of Dedoplistskaro BR, as well as benefit from the project interventions and outcomes. This will enhance the ownership and empowerment of stakeholders for the conservation and restoration of ecosystems and biodiversity in Dedoplistskaro BR, as well as for the sustainable use of natural resources and ecosystem services. The project is also expected to be cost-effective by complementing existing baseline investments, while contributing to the GEF Biodiversity Focal Area BD 1 and LD-1. The project will ensure cost-effectiveness by bringing together various partners including regulatory, productive (private sector) and Civil Society entities which will produce tangible outcomes in favour of sustainable practices and extended socio-economic benefits to the communities in the project intervention area. Project intervention measures were chosen based on a qualitative analysis of their alignment with national policies and priorities, their technical feasibility, estimated individual costs, probable execution times, availability of favourable enabling frameworks, and the estimated time for their design and implementation. This approach allowed for an effective identification of those interventions that can be implemented in the project cycle, have the highest probability of co-financing, and those that are most likely to consolidate alliances, not just nationally, but which also provide opportunities for regional and other possible South-South exchanges.

Institutional Arrangement and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

Please describe the Institutional Arrangements for the execution of this project, including financial management and procurement. If possible, please summarize the flow of funds (diagram), accountabilities for project management and financial reporting (organogram), including audit, and staffing plans. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the GEF's Implementing Agency for this project. A UNEP Task Manager will be assigned direct oversight for the project. UNEP is tasked with the overall responsibility of ensuring that GEF policies and criteria are adhered to and that the project meets its objectives and delivers on expected outcomes. Other specific Implementing Agency responsibilities include ensuring compliance with GEF policies and standards for results-based M&E, fiduciary oversight, safeguards compliance, project budget approvals, technical guidance and oversight of project outputs, approval of Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), participation in the project's superior governance structure, conducting the project's mid-term review, and preparation of the project's Terminal Evaluation. The UNEP Task Manager is also a member of the Project Steering Committee.

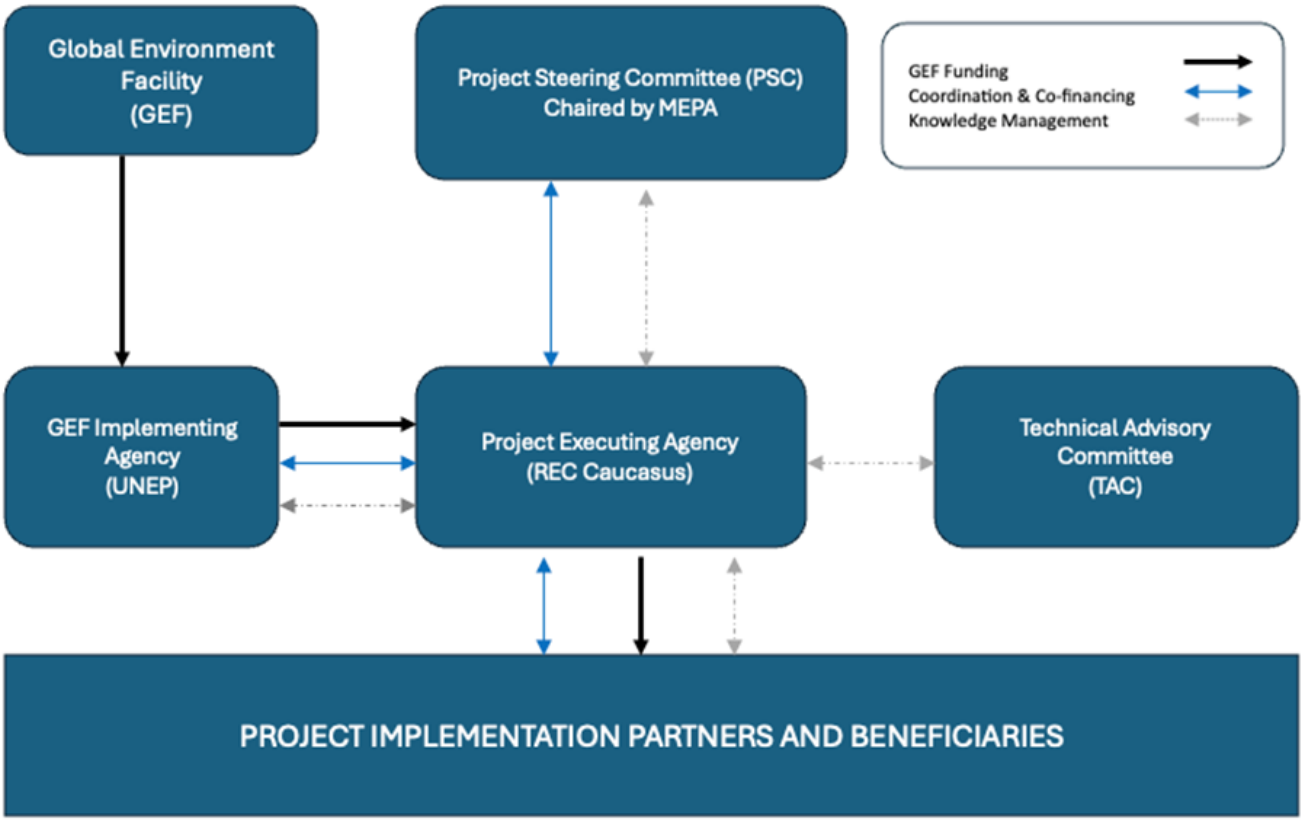
The Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (REC Caucasus) has been designated by the Recipient Government (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia - MEPA) as the Project Executing Agency. The Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (REC Caucasus) is an independent, non-for-profit organisation, established to assist in solving environmental problems as well as development of the

civic society in the countries of the South Caucasus. REC Caucasus has been established within the framework of the "Environment for Europe Process" based on the decision made at the Sofia Ministerial Conference in 1995. The founding document of REC Caucasus – its Charter – was signed in September 1999 by the governments of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and the European Union. In March 2000 REC Caucasus was officially registered as an independent, not-for-profit, non-advocacy foundation in Tbilisi, Georgia. REC Caucasus has extensive experience in project implementation and oversight, having successfully executed GEF-funded and UNEP implemented projects before, as well as other projects funded by the European Union and by numerous bilateral sources. The institution also has technical expertise in the implementation of projects in land degradation, waste management, climate change, disaster risk reduction, green economy, forest and biodiversity, and water management.

REC Caucasus is responsible for the fiduciary oversight and reporting of the project, including financial management and procurement consolidation according to the project's workplan and procurement plan. It is also responsible for monitoring and evaluation (M&E), provides and coordinates technical advice, and coordinates and assists overall orientation concerning project conception, strategies, criteria, and methodologies. REC Caucasus will appoint a Project Director/Supervisor, a Financial Officer, and an Administration/Procurement Officer as the core project team. Technical delivery of project outputs will be complemented by backstopping, other relevant national and community level agencies, and specialist consultants on an as needed basis.

A Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be established by the MEPA and chaired by the representative of the MEPA. REC Caucasus will perform tasks of secretariat for the PSC. Along with the representatives of the MEPA, the PSC will be comprised of the representatives from the Parliament of Georgia, Ministry of Regional Development, and Infrastructure, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Finance of Georgia, Dedoplistksaro Municipality, Akhmeta Municipal Administration, Administration of State Representative (Governor) in Kakheti Region, and the Georgian National Academy of Science. The PSC is responsible for ensuring that the project meets goals announced in the Project Results Framework by helping to balance conflicting priorities and resources. Conclusions and recommendations produced by the PSC will be used by REC Caucasus to modify implementation strategies, annual work plans and resources allocation budget and, when necessary, to adjust the project's Result Framework in consultation with UNEP and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia. This committee will meet at least every six months, either physically or virtually. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will be appointed to provide technical supervision, guidance, and support during project implementation. The TAC is also responsible for reviewing and providing recommendations on the project's methodological processes (technical quality) and activities to REC Caucasus for their consideration. Figure 3. Presents the institutional arrangements for the project.

Figure 3: Institutional Arrangements for the Project


Global Environment Facility (GEF)
Project Steering Committee (PSC) Chaired by MEPA
GEF Funding
Coordination & Co-financing
Knowledge Management
GEF Implementing Agency (UNEP)
Project Executing Agency (REC Caucasus)
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS AND BENEFICIARIES

Will the GEF Agency play an execution role on this project?

If so, please describe that role here and the justification.

Also, please add a short explanation to describe cooperation with ongoing initiatives and projects, including potential for co-location and/or sharing of expertise/staffing (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

This project will coordinate with the GIZ implemented project 'Enabling the implementation of Georgia's forest sector reform – ECO.Georgia' which seeks to assist the Georgian Government in implementing a forestry reform to mitigate forest degradation. To achieve this goal, the project employs various approaches and interventions. It disseminates resource-efficient forest management methods and energy-saving practices while enhancing the living conditions of rural households. Capacity development and collaboration between government entities, the private sector, and the population are integral aspects promoted by the project. This project will seek lessons learned and successful strategies used thus far in Georgia to achieve success in forest reform to mitigation forest degradation. This will be used to inform reforestation and restoration efforts to be pursued by this project. The project will also align with efforts by NACRES and SABUKO in understanding grassland ecosystems and its relation to grazing in the DBR, including data collection to ascertain the extent of grazing, herd sizes, ownership, and the condition of grazing lands. Understanding successful experiences with managing grazing will be crucial to this project's success, as grazing has been identified as one of the primary threats and causes of habitat degradation in the DBR.

The project will coordinate with ongoing efforts started under the project 'Development of Nature Conservation-Centered Visitor Services in Chachuna Managed Reserve' funded by the GEF-SGP and executed by SABUKO, to safeguard ecosystems and protect endangered species within the area. Coordination will also be sought with SABUKO in its implementation of the Cambridge Conservation Initiative (CCI) funded Programme for Endangered Landscapes Programme (ELP) / Project: "Kakheti Steppes: Balancing Between a Living Landscape or a Future Desert" in developing a rotational grazing scheme, which noticeably improved the grass cover condition on the ground. This project will be supporting understanding the socio-economic impacts of rotational grazing and will be seeking all data which exist in this regard from SABUKO before embarking on future investments in this regard, to optimize resource use and maximize the probability of obtaining successful results. The project will also coordinate with the GEF funded regional project for the South Caucasus countries "Upscaling of Global Forest Watch in Caucasus Region" implemented by the UN Environment and executed by the World Resources Institute aims at empowering decision-makers in government, the private sector, and civil society with technology and information necessary to reduce deforestation and land degradation and conserve biodiversity in Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. How results in obtained in that project has been used to influence national forest policies will be instrumental in guiding policy reform objectives being advocated for by this project.

This project will also seek coordination with the project "Promoting Green Deal Readiness in the Eastern 'Partnership Countries (ProGRess)" funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV), which aims to support farmers and business associations by facilitating technical meetings to identify relevant issues and needs within agro-value chains. Additionally, it seeks to position these stakeholders effectively through workshops and round table

discussions, ultimately aiding in the development of EU/Green Deal standards. Furthermore, the project endeavours to foster public-private dialogues for discussing and refining draft policies and frameworks, thereby promoting a collaborative approach to sustainable economic development. Through these efforts, it aims to empower stakeholders and contribute to the adoption of climate-oriented, resilient, and green economic measures within the target communities. Lessons learned by this project can be used to inform and guide efforts to engage the private sector in the DBR and in processes to define viable and sustainable economic alternatives to be considered for the DBR.

Core Indicators

Indicate expected results in each relevant indicator using methodologies indicated in the GEF-8 Results Measurement Framework Guidelines. There is no need to complete this table for climate adaptation projects financed solely through LDCF and SCCF.

Project Core Indicators		Expected at CEO Endorsement
1	**Terrestrial protected areas** created or under improved management (hectare)	44,250
2	**Marine protected areas** created or under improved management (hectare)	
3	Area of **land and ecosystems under restoration** (hectare)	10,000
4	Area of **landscapes under improved practices** (hectare)	20,000
5	Area of **marine habitat under improved practices** (hectare)	
6	**Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated** (metric ton of CO_2e)	1.7 million tCO2
7	**Shared water ecosystems** under new or improved cooperative management (count)	
8	Globally over-exploited **marine fisheries** moved to more sustainable levels (metric ton)	
9	Chemicals of global concern and their waste reduced (metric ton of toxic chemicals reduced)	
10	Persistent organic pollutants to air reduced (gram of toxic equivalent gTEQ)	
11	People benefiting from GEF-financed investments **disaggregated by sex** (count)	Females: 2,650 Males: 2,350

Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators *(max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)*

Core Indicator 1.2: Terrestrial protected areas newly created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (442,590 hectares). This indicator captures changes in management effectiveness of the Vashlovani National Park as measured by Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) value at CEO Endorsement, Mid-Term, and End of Project.

Core Indicator 3.1: Area of land restored (10,000 hectares). This indicator captures the spatial extent of lands of high priority for restoration by the project within the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.

Core Indicator 4.1: Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (20,000 hectares). This indicator captures the area outside of the Vashlovani National Park within the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve subject to grazing and other agricultural practices that will benefit from project interventions to improve management to support biodiversity.

Core Indicator 6.5: Carbon sequestered, or emissions avoided in the sector of Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use (direct) (1.7 million tonnes of CO2e). This indicator captures CO2e mitigation from terrestrial landscape to be restored. Estimations were done using FAO EX-Ante Carbon-balance Tool (EX-ACT); start year for the calculations: 2025; period: 4 years of implementation and 16 years of capitalization period – in total 20 years of period analyses; area: both 10,000 hectares to be restored and 20,000 hectares under improved practices (in total 30,000 ha).

Core Indicator 11: People benefiting from GEF-financed investments (Females 2,650: Males 2,350). This indicator captures the total number of direct Beneficiaries within the project intervention area including the proportion of women beneficiaries, i.e., those who receive targeted support from a given GEF project activity and/or who use the specific resources that the project maintains or enhances.

Risks to Project Implementation

Summarize risks that might affect the project implementation phase and what are the mitigation strategies the **project will undertake to address these** (e.g. what alternatives may be considered during project implementation-such as in terms of delivery mechanisms, locations in country, flexible design elements, etc.). Identify any of the risks listed below that would call in question the viability of the project during its implementation. Please describe any possible mitigation measures needed. (The risks associated with project design and Theory of Change should be described in the "Project description" section above).

The risk rating should reflect the overall risk to project outcomes considering the country setting and ambition of the project. The rating scale is: *High, Substantial, Moderate, Low*.

Core Indicators

Indicate expected results in each relevant indicator using methodologies indicated in the GEF-8 Results Measurement Framework Guidelines. There is no need to complete this table for climate adaptation projects financed solely through LDCF and SCCF.

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)
0	44250	0	0

Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
0	44250	0	0

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
				44,250.00		

Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial Protected Areas Under improved Management effectiveness

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

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3 Area of land and ecosystems under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
10000	10000	0	0

Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
Rangeland and pasture	5,000.00	5,000.00		
Cropland	5,000.00	5,000.00		

Indicator 3.2 Area of forest and forest land under restoration

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

Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and woodland under restoration

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

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

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

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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
20000	20000	0	0

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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
20,000.00	20,000.00		

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

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

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

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

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

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

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

Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

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

Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)	1700000	1700000	0	0
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)	0	0	0	0

Indicator 6.1 Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)	1,700,000	1,700,000		
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting	2026	2026		
Duration of accounting	20	20		

Indicator 6.2 Emissions Avoided Outside AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) Sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)				
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting				
Duration of accounting				

Indicator 6.3 Energy Saved (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Total Target Benefit	Energy (MJ) (At PIF)	Energy (MJ) (At CEO Endorsement)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at MTR)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at TE)
Target Energy Saved (MJ)				

Indicator 6.4 Increase in Installed Renewable Energy Capacity per Technology (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Technology	Capacity (MW) (Expected at PIF)	Capacity (MW) (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at MTR)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved 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	2,650	2,650		
Male	2,350	2,350		
Total	**5,000**	**5,000**	0	**0**

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

Key Risks

	Rating	Explanation of risk and mitigation measures
CONTEXT		
Climate	Moderate	The wide spectre of negative consequences of climate change are already identified in the country. With regards to the project area: due to the reduced rainfall and increased evaporation, the semi-arid area of eastern Georgia is threatened by desertification; frequent intense heat waves pose a threat to human health; increased temperature altered rainfall structure, reduced access to water resources, increased wildfires, parasites, and diseases have degraded forest growth capacity and productivity. Estimated number of vulnerable people within the targeted project area: about 10,000 people (of which 53% women and 47% men). The project will carry out a more in-depth climate assessment during PPG phase and will work with mitigation (incl. drought resistant) solutions in response to the risks.
Environmental and Social	Moderate	Despite overall lack of opportunities in rural communities in the project area to enjoy alternative livelihoods based on sustainable management of natural resources, the project area is not characterized by excessive socio-environmental conflicts such as conflicts between biodiversity conservation and human activities, and the scope of the intervention is prone to soften the existing ones in view of the win-win feature of the drylands consisting mainly of semi-arid and arid woodlands (natural forests), grasslands/pastures and crop lands, which depends on healthy ecosystems to thrive, and on the opportunity to preserve and restore the degraded natural assets through the multiple use management within the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve. Nonetheless, the project will carry out a socioeconomic assessment as well as stakeholder and gender action plans to minimize social and environmental issues with due regard to local communities, women, youth, and other vulnerable groups. The ESIA and ESMF will be developed within the first 3 months of project implementation with a total budget of $20,000.
Political and Governance	Low	The project is backed by strong support (policy and institutional) from Georgia's government. Demonstrated political will of Georgia's key government actors is backed by the Development Strategy for Georgia – Vision 2030 which is the main strategic document of the country aimed at the inclusive growth, large-scale involvement of the citizens in the economic processes and the sustainable development. Under the development Task 14 of the Strategy, it is envisaged to improve forest management on 1.8 million ha and restoration of forests on 13,500 ha by 2030.
INNOVATION		
Institutional and Policy	Moderate	Collaborative management of biodiversity in large landscapes such as Biosphere Reserves is a new and innovative concept for Georgia, especially since this approach demands an integrated approach and sharing of responsibilities and mandates among national, state, and municipal authorities. Possible risks associated with this approach in the project intervention area is turf protection among institutions and perceived loss of control and political capital by giving up some level of authority or be required to make joint and/or

		consensus decisions. However, the genuine desire to collaborate displayed by institutions at all levels during the many consultations held during the PPG is a manifestation that project principals are willing to come to the table in the best interest of local communities. The project, through a consultative process, will work decisively to support the establishment of a governance mechanism for the DBR that has the full support of the authorities at all levels.
Technological	Low	There is very low risk to the main governmental partner (Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia - MEPA) to push project objectives toward modified objective and goals that are not fully compatible with the project design. UNEP Environment Programme will be part of the project's Project Steering Committee in order to ensure that the GEF conditions of the project are met. Annual work plans and budgets will be approved by the steering committee.
Financial and Business Model	Low	The Project plans to conduct feasibility studies to access financial sources for restoration. Therefore, the potential risks on accessing financial sources and how to mitigate them will be identified during these feasibility studies.
EXECUTION		
Capacity	Low	REC Caucasus has well respected and has an excellent working relationship with project principals at all levels, especially with the Dedoplistskaro Municipality, and is best suited to implement this project. Besides, REC Caucasus has extensive experience in project implementation and oversight, having successfully executed GEF-funded and UNEP implemented projects before, as well as other projects funded by the European Union and by numerous bilateral sources. The institution also has technical expertise in the implementation of projects in land degradation, waste management, climate change, disaster risk reduction, green economy, forest and biodiversity, and water management.
Fiduciary	Low	The proposed executing partner – REC Caucasus has a strong capacity of financial and procurement record. UNEP environment Programme will oversight and supervise on these matters from the early stages of the project inception phase.
Stakeholder	Low	Main stakeholder groups, such as local authorities, farmers and communities are less likely to want not to explore new marketing and business opportunities for conservation of biodiversity, restoration of degraded ecosystems and sustainable natural resource use in newly created Biosphere Reserve. An increased emphasis on tourism will mean that there is a very low risk that there will be a lack of local interest in the project. Potential risk will be mitigated through public awareness campaigns to be implemented from the early stage of project implementation. In addition to this the project will work closely with the conservation, land degradation, agriculture and tourism related central governmental agencies and international organizations to jointly coordinate planning and implementation of project activities.

Other	Low	Risks related to Coronavid-19 post-pandemic restrictions: In medium- and long-term perspectives these risks will be mitigated through taking into account existing regulations and respond equally to the specific needs of women, children, disabled and other vulnerable groups. In addition, national and international public health safety standards and necessary measures regarding pandemic and post-pandemic prevention and avoidance of novel Coronavid-19 and other communicable diseases will be considered as well. UNEP Environment Programme has designed and adopted a number of post-Covid-19 coping strategies to make certain projects are able to move forward. Likewise, the impacts will be less prevalent in the short-term and will diminish over-time. Moreover, the project Gender Action Plan will ensure that environmental dimensions will be adequately captured in the management of the COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath.

Overall Risk Rating	Moderate	in accordance with UNEP's Project Review Committee safeguards reviewer. The safeguards assessments will be validated through a comprehensive field-based Environmental and social Impact Assessment to inform the preparation of an Environmental and Social Management Plan for the Project. The ESIA and ESMF will be developed within the first 3 months of project implementation by the Project Executing Agency.

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

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

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

Confirm if any country policies that might contradict with intended outcomes of the project have been identified, and how the project will address this. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

Alignment with GEF 8 Programming

The proposed project is aligned with the GEF-8 Biodiversity and Land Degradation Focal areas as follows:

Biodiversity Focal Area (BDFA): The project will follow a landscape approach to improve conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of degraded drylands in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve of Georgia (BDFA Objective 1). Specifically, the project will support biodiversity mainstreaming into forestry and agriculture sectors (BD1-3) by development of management and other land use plans for Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve that will further serve as basis for development of spatial land use planning activities in Dedoplistskaro Municipality to optimize production without undermining biodiversity and will support agricultural (pasture use) systems that are biodiversity positive and development of a stronger policy and regulatory framework that supports conservation and restoration of semiarid and arid (dryland) ecosystems.

Land Degradation Focal Area (LDFA): The project seeks to avoid, reduce, and reverse land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought in drylands of Georgia by applying restoration and sustainable land management principles (LDFA Objective 1). Specially, the project will support investments in restoration of degraded pasture lands, *inter alia*, to support environmentally friendly agriculture to maximize output and support livelihoods and strengthen community based natural resources management. SLM activities will help improve ecosystem connectivity and safeguard agro biodiversity, improve soil health, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by improving vegetative cover and accumulating soil organic matter.

-

Alignment with National Priorities

The project is aligned with commitments of the country under the MEAs, particularly to the UNCBD (NBSAPs), UNCCD (voluntary LDN targets) and UNFCCC (NDCs, NAPs):

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan[1][24], *inter alia*, with emphases on protection and rehabilitation of unique eco-systems.

Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting National Programme (LDN-TSP) LDN targets: 1,500 ha of degraded forests to be afforested and about 7,500 ha to be reforested and 60% of forests to be managed sustainably by 2030.

Georgia's National Action Program to Combat Desertification (NAPCD) priorities to ensure land restoration, food security and alleviation of poverty by providing sustainable livelihood options in arid and semi-arid regions.

Georgia's 2030 Climate Change Strategy and Climate Action Plan (CSAP) and **Georgia's Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)**. The NDC aims to reduce GHG emissions to 35% below the emission levels in 1990 by 2030. The CASP envisages to increase carbon capture capacity of forests by 10% by 2030 compared to 2015 through restoration of 4,000 ha degraded forest and support of sustainable forest management on 450,000 ha by 2030.

Forth National Environmental Action Programme of Georgia (NEAP) representing Georgia's agenda for environmental actions for 2022-2026 including reduction of land degradation/desertification and restoration of degraded lands and sustainable management and restoration of pasturelands.

Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy (2021-2027) & **Action Plan:** Goal on sustainable use of natural resources, retaining the eco-system, adaptation to climate change with objectives to disseminate climate-smart and

environmentally adapted agricultural practices; to support the development of ecotourism; sustainable usage of forest resources; and to maintain agro-biodiversity.

National Document for Sustainable Development Goals (2020-2030) Aiming to protect 40% of the territory by 2030 aimed to protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

Alignment with Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

Georgia joined the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework** (adopted by CBD COP 15 in 2022[2][25]), aimed at catalysing, enabling, and galvanizing urgent and transformative action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss through to achieving the outcomes it sets out in its Vision, Mission, Goals and Targets.

Namely, the project will focus (but will not be limited to) on the following global targets at national level:

Target 1 (areas are under participatory integrated biodiversity inclusive effective management processes addressing land use change, to bring the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity while respecting the rights of).

Target 2 (Ensure that areas of degraded terrestrial ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity).

Target 4 (Ensure urgent management actions to halt human induced extinction of known threatened species and for the recovery and conservation of species, in particular threatened species, to significantly reduce extinction risk and effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to minimize human-wildlife conflict for coexistence).

Target 8 (Minimize the impact of climate change on biodiversity and increase its resilience including through nature-based solution and/or ecosystem-based approaches, while minimizing negative and fostering positive impacts of climate action on biodiversity).

Target 10 (Areas under agriculture and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the sustainable use of biodiversity, including through a substantial increase of the application of biodiversity friendly practices, such as sustainable intensification, agroecological and other innovative approaches contributing to the resilience and long-term efficiency and productivity of these production systems and to food security, conserving and restoring biodiversity and maintaining nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services).

Target 11 (Restore, maintain, and enhance nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services).

Target 13

(Ensure the full integration of biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations, planning and development processes etc.)

However, specific national action plan and indicators for national level are not elaborated yet. In addition, within the regional initiative under Bonn Challenge on restoration of degraded and deforested landscapes using the forest landscape restoration (FLR) approach, Georgia along with six countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus pledged to restore millions of hectares through the Astana Resolution[3][26]. In order to restore forest cover, Georgia made an unconditional commitment to plant additional 1,500 ha of forests and assist the natural regeneration of forests on 7,500 ha by 2030.

Relevance to the UNEP Programme of Work

The project aligns with the following UNEP Programme of Work (PoW) outcomes, indicators, and unit of measure.

PoW Outcome (2B): Sustainable management of nature is adopted and implemented in development frameworks.

Indicator I: Number of national or subnational entities that, with UNEP support, adopt integrated approaches to address environmental and social issues and/or tools for valuing, monitoring and sustainably managing biodiversity; **Unit of measure**: a. Number of national or subnational entities that adopt or adapt economic, regulatory, or decision-support tools for valuing, monitoring and sustainably managing biodiversity.

PoW Outcome (2C): Nature conservation and restoration are enhanced.

Indicator iv. Increase in territory of land and seascapes that is under improved ecosystem conservation and restoration; **Unit of measure**: Number of hectares of terrestrial and marine area reported as being under improved management.

Comparative advantage of UNEP

UNEP's comparative advantage for the project is its extensive experience in the Southwestern Asian region including in Georgia, with engagement in the environment sector at the highest political levels and an established track record of successfully implementing GEF-funded projects globally. UNEP brings to the project a range of relevant experiences, proof of concept, testing of ideas, and the best available science and knowledge to inform project design and implementation. UNEP's strategic position as the Secretariat to three of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements offers a unique opportunity for knowledge exchange and learning at a global level, and thus a valuable resource to inform future strategic direction in global environmental and ecosystems management.

Socio-economic Benefits

The project's intervention in land restoration, protected areas management, ecotourism, and support to species reintroduction and management will provide a host of benefits at the local, national, and global scale. Restoring land can have numerous benefits, such as improving soil fertility, increasing water retention, and preventing land degradation. It also helps in conserving biodiversity by providing habitat for plants, animals, and microorganisms, thus supporting overall ecosystem health. Nature restoration can help boost the local economy through employment and tourism opportunities, strengthening the social fabric of the DBR and providing locals with a healthier environment to live in. Long term benefits of the project interventions may include improved food production, increase in the economic value of outdoor recreation and ecosystem services such as flood control, clean water, and carbon sequestration. Benefits associated with CO2 mitigation to be achieved by the project includes support to economic recovery goals, including immediate economic benefits from job creation and productivity, to increased household income – as well as lasting ancillary benefits from improved public health, reduced poverty and inequality, and lessened climate change impacts. Ecotourism to be supported by the project will provide jobs, business opportunities, improved family income, patronage of local products and improved transport system. The project will lead to an overall improvement in the socio-economic situation of local communities.

[1] Currently under complete redesign for upcoming planning period of 2023-2029.

[2] CBD/COP/15/L25.

https://www.cbd.int/conferences/2021-2022/cop-15/documents

[3] Ministerial Roundtable on Forest Landscape Restoration in the Caucasus and Central Asia 21 - 22 June 2018, Astana, Kazakhstan, Summary Report.

https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/timber/meetings/2018/20180621/Astana_Roundtable_Summary_Report_ENG.pdf

D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

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

Yes

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

Yes

If the project expects to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment, please indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality:

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

Improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or

Yes

Generating socio-economic benefits or services for women.

Yes

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

Yes

Stakeholder Engagement

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

Yes

Select what role civil society will play in the Project

Consulted only;

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor; Yes

Co-financier; Yes

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

Executor or co-executor; Yes

Other (Please explain)

Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

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

Yes

Environmental and Social Safeguards

We confirm that we have provided information regarding Environmental and Social risks associated with the proposed project or program, including risk screenings/ assessments and, if applicable, management plans or other measures to address identified risks and impacts (this information should be presented in Annex E).

Yes

Please provide overall Project/Program Risk Classification

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Medium/Moderate	Medium/Moderate		

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge management

We confirm that an approach to Knowledge Management and Learning has been clearly described during Project Preparation in the Project Description and that these activities have been budgeted and an anticipated timeline for delivery of relevant outputs has been provided.

Yes

Socio-economic Benefits

We confirm that the project design has considered socio-economic benefits to be delivered by the project and these have been clearly described in the Project Description and will be monitored and reported on during project implementation (at MTR and TER).

Yes

ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

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

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	GEF Project Grant($)	Agency Fee($)	Total GEF Financing ($)

UNEP	GET	Georgia	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	Grant	2,664,727.00	253,149.00	2,917,876.00
UNEP	GET	Georgia	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-1	Grant	588,243.00	55,881.00	644,124.00
UNEP	GET	Georgia	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-2	Grant	300,000.00	28,500.00	328,500.00
Total GEF Resources ($)						**3,552,970.00**	**337,530.00**	**3,890,500.00**

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Was a Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount ($)

100000

PPG Agency Fee ($)

9500

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	PPG($)	Agency Fee($)	Total PPG Funding($)
UNEP	GET	Georgia	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	75,000.00	7,125.00	82,125.00
UNEP	GET	Georgia	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-1	25,000.00	2,375.00	27,375.00
Total PPG Amount ($)					**100,000.00**	**9,500.00**	**109,500.00**

Please provide Justification

Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Sources of Funds	Total($)
UNEP	GET	Georgia	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	2,917,875.00
UNEP	GET	Georgia	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	972,625.00
Total GEF Resources					**3,890,500.00**

Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Co-financing($)
BD-1-1	GET	2,664,727.00	12869000
LD-1	GET	588,243.00	6000000
LD-2	GET	300,000.00	6006000
Total Project Cost		**3,552,970.00**	**24,875,000.00**

Confirmed Co-financing for the project, by name and type

Please include evidence for each co-financing source for this project in the tab of the portal

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount($)
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1000000
Recipient Country Government	Protected Areas Agency (APA)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1950000
Recipient Country Government	National Forestry Agency (NFA)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500000
Recipient Country Government	Municipality of Dedoplistskaro	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	3000000
Civil Society Organization	REC Caucasus	In-kind	Investment mobilized	4883402
Civil Society Organization	REC Caucasus	Grant	Investment mobilized	6766098
Civil Society Organization	CNF	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	425500
Civil Society Organization	NACRES	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	400000
Civil Society Organization	Georgian Ecotourism Association	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500000
Donor Agency	GIZ	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1000000

Civil Society Organization	SABUKO	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	4450000
Total Co-financing				**24,875,000.00**

Please describe the investment mobilized portion of the co-financing

Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) will support project activities with a total of US$ 1,000,000 in-kind co-financing. Recurrent expenditures from MEPA will be covered by the state budget allocations during the project life cycle through annual state budget lines for operational and programming costs related to biodiversity protection, viticulture development and agricultural research and extension.

Protected Areas Agency (APA) will allocate US$ 1,950,000 of recurrent expenditures (in-kind) during the project life cycle through annual agency budget allocations for support of biodiversity conservation.

National Forestry Agency will allocate US$ 500,000 of recurrent expenditures (in-kind) during the project life cycle through annual agency budget allocations for support of Sustainable Forest Management.

Dedoplistskaro Municipality will allocate US$ 3,000,000 of recurrent expenditures (in-kind) during the project life cycle through annual municipal state budget allocations for support of local agricultural development.

GIZ (South Caucasus Office) will provide US$ 1,000,000 of recurrent expenditures (in-kind) through the GIZ Project "Supporting climate-friendly forest management in Georgia (ECO Georgia) financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and other German public sector clients operating in Georgia in the following priority areas: support of legal framework for ecosystem-based sustainable forest resources management; support of legal framework for the sustainable use of non-timber forest products (NTFP); development of guidelines for sustainable wild collection of selected NTFP; consolidation of databases, especially on forests and biodiversity; development of methods for collecting data on ecosystem-based forest resource management; development of vulnerability studies and adaptation strategies for climate-resilient sustainable forest resource management; analysis of education and training needs for rural communities etc.

Caucasus Nature Fund (CNF) will provide US$ 425,500 of recurrent expenditures (in-kind) for supporting Vashlovani PA through 2024-2029.

Centre for Biodiversity Conservation & Research (NACRES) will provide US$ 400,000 of recurrent expenditures (in-kind) for biodiversity monitoring and conservation.

Georgian Ecotourism Association will provide US$ 500 000 of recurrent expenditures (in-kind) for supporting Eco-tourism Development in DBR.

In addition, the executing agency, REC Caucasus, will support project activities with a total of US$ 16,099,500 USD co-financing. Out of total amount of co-financing, in-kind contribution in amount of 9,333,402 USD (Recurrent Expenditures) will be provided during the project implementation period in a form of voluntary labour, donation of meeting and office premises of the organisation, free use of vehicles and equipment. Grants (Investment Expenditures) with total amount of 6,7660,098 USD will be provided throughout the following ongoing and planned projects:

(a) German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) funded project “Promoting Green Deal Readiness in the Eastern 'Partnership Countries (ProGRess)”. This project will be implemented under the BMZ’s International Climate Initiative via GIZ, the execution of the project activities in Georgia will be provided by REC Caucasus. The 3-year project supports the countries of the Eastern Partnership in their transition to climate-oriented, resilient, and green economic development. It aims to improve the conditions for the transformation of selected agricultural and related industrial food value chains. The project will establish close cooperation and make synergies with GEF project with the following work: advance evidence-based national policies and frameworks for climate-oriented, resilient, and green economic development, support selected agro-value chains measures for climate-oriented, resilient, and green economic development in agriculture, enhance green finance, promote knowledge and good practices. In the frame of this project REC Caucasus will be using the co-financing of 1,722,900 USD.

(b) Cambridge Conservation Initiative (CCI) funded Programme for Endangered Landscapes Programme (ELP) / Project: “Kakheti Steppes: Balancing Between a Living Landscape or a Future Desert”. The five years (2023-2027) project is expected to preserve the steppe and semi-arid landscapes between the Lori and Alazani rivers in southern Georgia, and restore wildlife, ecosystems, and cultural values unique in Georgia. REC Caucasus will be involved in implementation of this project through collaboration partnership with ELP partner organization SABUKO (Society for Nature Conservation and Birdlife Partner in Georgia) and ensure the synergies with GEF project with the following work: Implementation of measures to stop the degradation of grasslands, connectivity of eco-corridors and reduced poaching and other pressures on wildlife with the aim to achieve positive outcomes for the Lori-Vashlovani plateau – that, in turn, covers area of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve. In the frame of this project REC Caucasus will be using the co-financing of 4,450.000.00 USD.

(c) German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) funded project Biosphere Reserves as model regions for sustainable development – capacity development for coordinated and effective management of the Three Alazani Rivers Biosphere Reserve in Georgia”. This is three years project with the objective to promote Three Alazani Rivers Biosphere Reserve on local as well as national level. The project will establish close cooperation and make synergies with GEF project with the following work: to raise awareness on the BR concept and strengthen the capacities of BR management body and other key stakeholders to ensure effective and coordinated management of the Biosphere Reserve, as well as fulfilment of its functions and goals contributing to the sustainable development of the region. In the frame of this project REC Caucasus will be using the co-financing of 166,898 USD.

d) Within the framework of International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) funded “Diary Improvement, Modernization, Market Access” (DiMMA) Programme, an Operational Partners Agreement (OPA) was signed in May, 2020 between the Regional Environmental Centre of for the Caucasus and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for implementation of the Grant Project (the Project) “Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality Targets of Georgia through Restoration and Sustainable Management of Degraded Pasturelands”. In the frame of this project REC Caucasus will be using the co-financing of 426,300 USD.

Dedoplistskaro Municipality will allocate US$ 3,000,000 for recurrent expenditures (in-kind) throughout the project lifecycle via annual municipal budget allocations and targeted transfers from the central budget to support municipal development programs and local agricultural development.

In-kind co-financing will include various contributions from Dedoplistskaro’s structural units and subordinated entities, such as the Dedoplistskaro Cultural, Sports, and Youth Municipal Centre, Dedoplistskaro Local Action Group (LAG), Dedoplistskaro Destination Management Organization (DMO), Dedoplistskaro Municipal Communal Centre, and the Municipal Gender Council.

The specific breakdown of the in-kind co-financing over the four years of project implementation will be as follows:

- USD 250,000 for Human Resources Costs: Dedoplistskaro municipal administration personnel/staff time directly contributing to project activities.

- USD 350,000 for Local Travel Costs: Travel expenses (transportation and per diems) for Dedoplistskaro municipal personnel/staff participating in project meetings, conferences, workshops, and field visits.
- USD 650,000 for Office Space and Equipment Costs: Use of Dedoplistskaro municipal office space and equipment (conference hall, meeting rooms, and office equipment) for project purposes.
- USD 1,750,000 for Infrastructure Costs: Use of Dedoplistskaro-owned municipal infrastructure directly related to project activities, including eco-tourism infrastructure (such as the "Viewing Platform and Interpretation Trail" in Arkhiloskalo and a "Viewing Platform" at the entrance of Dedoplistskaro Municipality), infrastructure linked to the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve (such as the "Biosphere Reserve Tourism Information Centre" at the municipal building), and biodiversity monitoring infrastructure (such as the "Birdwatching Tower").

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

GEF Agency(ies) Certification

GEF Agency Type	Date	Project Contact Person	Phone	Email
GEF Agency Coordinator	6/13/2024	Victoria Luque		victoria.luque@un.org
Project Coordinator	6/13/2024	Ersin Esen		ersin.esen@un.org

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

Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) with this template.

Name of GEF OFP	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

ANNEX C: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Please indicate the page number in the Project Document where the project results and M&E frameworks can be found. Please also paste below the Project Results Framework from the Agency document.

Project Objective: To improve biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of ecosystems and restoration of degraded drylands of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.					
Objective Level Indicators					
Indicator and Metric	**Definition**	**Method/Source**	**Responsible**	**Targets**	**Assumptions/Notes**
Objective Indicator 1: GEF Core Indicator 1.2: Terrestrial protected areas newly created or under	This indicator captures changes in management of	Systematic monitoring of protected area management parameters consistent with the METT and	Project Coordinating Unit Protected Areas Agency	Baseline: 66 Mid-Term: Baseline + 5%	Protected Area management agency can secure and sustain the capacity and skills required to conduct monitoring required to implement the METT.

improved management for conservation and sustainable use. **(METT value)**	the Vashlovani Protected Area as measured by METT value.	the corresponding baseline scores as reported at CEO Request for Endorsement.		End of Project: Baseline + 15%	
Objective Indicator 2: GEF Core Indicator 3.1: Area of land restored. **(Hectares)**	This indicator captures the spatial extent of lands of high priority for restoration by the project.	Restoration approaches defined and applied, field observations during implementation, monitoring during site visits, and as reported in the project's M&E system, and corresponding Project Progress Reports and Project Implementation Reports (PIR) to the GEF.	Project Coordinating Unit National Forestry Agency SABUKO	Baseline: 0 Mid-Term: 3,000 End of Project: 10,000	Farmers embrace and support for restoration activities as part of sustainable landscape management. Authorities show political and institutional support for restoration applications in agriculture as part of a sustainable land management approach.
Objective Indicator 3: GEF Core Indicator 4.1: Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas **(Hectares)**	This indicator captures the area outside of the Vashlovani Protected Area within the DBR that will benefit from project interventions to improve management to support biodiversity.	Sustainable land management practices defined and applied, field observations during implementation, monitoring during site visits, and as reported in the project's M&E system, and corresponding Project Progress Reports and Project Implementation Reports (PIR) to the GEF.	Project Coordinating Unit National Forestry Agency SABUKO	Baseline: 0 Mid-Term: 7,9000 End of Project: 20,000	Private sector embraces project intervention approach to improve sustainable land management practices in relevant sectors within the DBR. Authorities show political and institutional resilience and promote compliance with project sustainable land management approach.
Objective Indicator 4: GEF Core Indicator 6.5: Carbon sequestered or emissions avoided in the sector of Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use (direct).	This indicator captures CO2e mitigation from terrestrial landscape to be restored.	Calculation determined using FAO ExAnte Carbon Balance Calculator, with start year of accounting being 2025 for a 20-year accounting period.	Project Coordinating Unit	Baseline: 0 Mid-Term: 0 Projected in 2045: 1.7 million	Technical skills to conduct CO2 calculations is secured.

(metric tons of CO2e)		Records of *tCO2e* calculated at mid-term and end of project.			
Objective Indicator 5: GEF Core Indicator 11: People benefiting from GEF-financed investments. **(Number of females and number of males)**	This indicator captures the total number of direct Beneficiaries including the proportion of women beneficiaries, i.e., those who receive targeted support from a given GEF project activity and/or who use the specific resources that the project maintains or enhances.	The project's M&E system and corresponding Project Progress Reports and Project Implementation Reports (PIR) to the GEF. Monitoring of Gender Action Plan and Stakeholder Engagement Plan	Project Coordinating Unit	Baseline: Females – 0 Males - 0 Mid-Term: Females – 795 Males – 705 End of Project: Females – 2,650 Males – 2,350	The project can successfully achieve effective governance of the DBR, improvements in sustainable land management, and development of ecotourism ventures within the DBR, thus providing benefits to strategic ecosystems of the targeted geography and the communities that depend on the services they provide.

UN Environment Programme Logical Framework				
Outcome Level Indicators		**Relevant Programme of Work Outcomes:** *Insert the Outcome(s) and indicator(s) from the Programme of Work to which this project directly contributes*		
1. Project Outcome	**Indicators & Targets**	**Relevant PoW Outcome(s) and indicator(s)**	**Relevant SDG target(s) and indicators**	**Outcome risks**
1.1 Regulatory and institutional framework, key tools and capacity enabled to avoid and reduce anthropogenic pressures on ecosystems in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.	***Indicator 1.1:*** *# of legal and institutional strengthening tools introduced or strengthened to reduce anthropogenic stresses to the DBR.* ***Baseline:*** *0* ***Mid-Term:*** *At least 1.* ***End of Project:*** *At least 3.*	**PoW Outcome (2B):** Sustainable management of nature is adopted and implemented in development frameworks. **Indicator I:** Number of national or subnational entities that, with UNEP support, adopt integrated approaches to address environmental and social issues and/or tools for valuing, monitoring and sustainably managing biodiversity; **Unit of measure**: a. Number of national or subnational entities that adopt or adapt economic, regulatory, or decision-support tools for valuing, monitoring and sustainably managing biodiversity.	**SDG target:** By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.	The political directorate does not show the level of support required to achieve reforms at the national, state, and local levels. The project will ensure relative authorities are fully consulted and participate actively on the project's governing bodies.

	Definition: *This indicator captures a variety of tools including reforms to policy, regulations, manuals, and guidelines.* ***Frequency of Data Collection****: Half-Yearly and Yearly.* ***Data Source:*** *Half-Yearly Progress Reports (HYPR) and Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs).* ***Methodology:*** *Review of official adoptions and publications in parliamentary press.* ***Responsibility****: Project Coordinating (PCU).*		**Indicator 15.2.1:** Progress towards sustainable forest management. **SDG target**: By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation- neutral world. **Indicator 15.3.1:** Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area. **SDG Target**: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels. **Indicator 5.c.1:** Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public	

			allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.	
Interim targets ***(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)***			**Interim Target attainment date**	
Milestone 1 – Outcome 1.1, Indicator 1.1, first six-month period. Gender-balanced inter-institutional governing, managing and advisory bodies for Dedoplistskaro governance and management established.			Month/Year: June 2025	
Milestone 2 – Outcome 1.1, Indicator 1.1, second six-month period. Meetings of the inter-institutional governing and advisory bodies for Management of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve initiated.			Month/Year: December 2025	
Milestone 3 – Outcome 1.1, Indicator 1.1, third six-month period. Gender-sensitive regulations established under the Law on Pasture Management for effective implementation of the law.			Month/Year: June 2026	
2.1 Enhancing Ecotourism to generate environmental and socio-economic benefits.	***Indicator 2.1****: # of gender-responsive ecotourism policy instruments developed, adopted and under implementation.* ***Baseline****: 0* ***Mid-Term****: At least 1.* ***End of Project****: At least 2.* ***Definition****: This indicator measures steps toward establishing the policy enabling framework for ecotourism development within the DBR.* ***Frequency of Data Collection****:*	**PoW Outcome (2B):** Sustainable management of nature is adopted and implemented in development frameworks. **Indicator I:** Number of national or subnational entities that, with UNEP support, adopt integrated approaches to address environmental and social issues and/or tools for valuing, monitoring and sustainably managing biodiversity; **Unit of measure**: a. Number of national or subnational entities that adopt or adapt economic, regulatory, or decision-support tools for valuing, monitoring and sustainably managing biodiversity. **PoW Outcome (2C):** Nature conservation and restoration are enhanced. **Indicator iv**. Increase in territory of land and seascapes that is under improved ecosystem conservation and restoration; **Unit of measure**: Number of hectares of terrestrial and marine area reported as being under improved management.	**SDG Target**: By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products. **Indicator**: Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate. **SDG Target**: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.	Tourism stakeholders do not show optimism and interest in the process to develop Integrated Action Framework and the Ecotourism development Plan. The project will assertively advocate for the benefits of ecotourism and will execute a cooperation agreement with the Ecotourism Association to engage tourism stakeholders and authorities at all levels to ensure ownership.

	Half-Yearly and Yearly. ***Data Source**: Half-Yearly Progress Reports (HYPR) and Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs).* ***Methodology**: Review of official government publications on adopted policies.* ***Responsibility**: Project Coordinating Unit, Ecotourism Association, Georgia National Tourism Association.*		**Indicator 5.c.1:** Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.	
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*			**Interim Target attainment date**[1]27	
Milestone 1 – Outcome 2.1, Indicator 2.1, first six-month period. Integrated Action Framework developed and adopted.			Month/Year: June 2026	
Milestone 2 – Outcome 2.1, Indicator 2.1, second six-month period. Eco-tourism Development Plan (Programme) for the DBR developed and adopted.			Month/Year: December 2026	
Milestone 3 – Outcome 2.1, Indicator 2.1, third six-month period. Support development of eco-tourism infrastructure initiated.			Month/Year: June 2027	
2.2 Restoration of degraded ecosystems improves connectivity and enhances biodiversity.	***Indicator 2.2: # of sustainable forest management and sustainable agriculture practices implemented or demonstrated.***	**PoW Outcome (2B):** Sustainable management of nature is adopted and implemented in development frameworks. **Indicator I:** Number of national or subnational entities that, with UNEP support, adopt integrated approaches to address environmental and social issues and/or tools for valuing, monitoring and sustainably managing biodiversity; **Unit of**	**SDG target:** By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and	Sustainable Forest Management approaches are developed too late to allow for them to be operationalized and serve as successful demonstration models; farmers are not convinced that adapting the sustainable pasture management system will be economically viable; predators, competition, and conflict with livestock herders render the project's efforts ineffective in reducing negative impacts on the

	Baseline: *0.* ***Mid-Term:*** *At least 2.* ***End of Project:*** *At least 4.* ***Definition:*** ***Frequency of Data Collection:*** *Yearly.* ***Data Source****: Half-Yearly Progress Reports (HYPR) and Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs).* ***Methodology****: Direct field observations in targeted landscapes within the DBR.* ***Responsibility****: Project Coordinating Unit, National Forestry Agency, Rural Development Agency.*	**measure**: a. Number of national or subnational entities that adopt or adapt economic, regulatory, or decision-support tools for valuing, monitoring and sustainably managing biodiversity.	substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally. **Indicator 15.2.1:** Progress towards sustainable forest management. **SDG target**: By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation- neutral world. **Indicator 15.3.1:** Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area. **SDG Target:** Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning. **Indicator 13.2.2:** Total greenhouse gas	Goitered Gazelle population in the DBR. The project will prioritize operationalization of SFM modalities and will engage farmers on the benefits of agro-forestry, agro-biodiversity, and climate-smart agriculture, and will assess feasibility and economic viability as part of the demos on sustainable grazing, so farmers are well informed. To better understand the survival context of the Goitered Gazelle, the project will develop a conservation plan for the Goitered Gazelle, including species/habitat restoration activities.

			emissions per year. **SDG Target**: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels. **Indicator 5.c.1:** Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.	
Interim targets ***(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)***			**Interim Target attainment date**[2]28	
Milestone 1 – Outcome 2.2, Indicator 2.2, first six-month period. Climate change scenarios to inform agro-forestry and climate-smart agriculture conducted.			Month/Year: December 2026	
Milestone 2 – Outcome 2.2, Indicator 2.2, second six-month period. Demo plans for agro-forestry and climate-smart agriculture practices developed.			Month/Year: June 2026	
Milestone 3 – Outcome 2.2, Indicator 2.2, third six-month period. Sustainable pasture management programme developed for the DBR.			Month/Year: June 2026	
3.1 Stakeholders apply their increased knowledge and take actions on integrated land use planning, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystems services in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.	***Indicator 3.1: # of collaboration agreements and gender-responsive capacity building events to support integrated planning and biodiversity***	**PoW Outcome (2B):** Sustainable management of nature is adopted and implemented in development frameworks. **Indicator I:** Number of national or subnational entities that, with UNEP support, adopt integrated approaches to address environmental and social issues and/or tools for valuing, monitoring and	**SDG target:** By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded	Bureaucratic red tape may delay the formalization of collaboration agreements with academic institutions; stakeholders and the public show little or no interest in communications and awareness efforts of the project; technical exchanges and training in conservation and biosphere reserves not attractive to young people.

	conservation in the DBR. ***Baseline**: 0* ***Mid-Term:** At least 3.* ***End of Project**: At least 10.* ***Definition:** This indicator measures the extent to which stakeholders have embraced the BR concepts and the need for integrated planning and biodiversity conservation.* ***Frequency of Data Collection:** Half-Yearly and Yearly.* ***Data Source:** Half-Yearly Progress Reports (HYPR) and Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs).* ***Methodology**: Review of inter-institutional agreements signed and reports of capacity building events.* ***Responsibility:** Project Coordinating Unit (PCU).*	sustainably managing biodiversity; **Unit of measure**: a. Number of national or subnational entities that adopt or adapt economic, regulatory, or decision-support tools for valuing, monitoring and sustainably managing biodiversity.	forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally. **Indicator 15.2.1:** Progress towards sustainable forest management. **SDG Target**: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels. **Indicator 5.c.1:** Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.	The project will work at both the level of the authorities for education and with the academic institutions themselves to minimize any chances of delay in formalizing collaboration agreements and will carefully assess the characteristics of the audience and develop and disseminate audience-specific and gender-sensitive messaging with differentiated delivery methods based on particular needs of the audience. The project will develop mobile and interactive exhibition to inspire the children and young people for the biosphere reserve and provide regularly eco-lessons in each school and professional collage in Dedoplistskaro.

Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		Interim Target attainment date[3]29
Milestone 1 – Outcome 3.1, Indicator 3.1, first six-month period. The DBR Knowledge Management hub developed and launched.		Month/Year: December 2025
Milestone 2 – Outcome 3.1, Indicator 3.1, second six-month period. KM products on ecosystem management and restoration within the DBR developed and being disseminated.		Month/Year: June 2026
Milestone 3 – Outcome 3.1, Indicator 3.1, third six-month period. Gender-sensitive trainings to practitioners on ecosystems management and restoration within the DBR initiated.		Month/Year: December 2026
2. Project Outputs	**Indicators & Targets**	**Output risks**
1.1.1 Intersectoral and multilevel coordination and governance mechanisms available and operational.	***Indicator 1.1.1.1:*** *# of gender-responsive and gender balanced inter-institutional committees established to oversee governance of the DBR.* ***Baseline****: 0* ***Mid-Term****: At least 1.* ***End of Project****: At least 3.*	Lack of political will and local ownership. The project will ensure a bottom-up approach to secure local buy-in early in the process to pursue reforms.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**[4]30
Milestone 1 – Output 1.1.1, Indicator 1.1.1.1, first six-month period. Terms of Reference for first inter-institutional committee developed and agreed.		Month/Year: June 2025
Milestone 2 – Output 1.1.1, Indicator 1.1.1.1, second six-month period. First inter-institutional governance committee for the DBR established and operational.		Month/Year: December 2025
1.1.2 Revised legislation to support integrated and collaborative planning and management of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve contributing to sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation developed and submitted for formal approval.	***Indicator 1.1.2.1:*** *# of gender-responsive and gender sensitive legislation revised or newly developed and adopted for the DBR.* ***Baseline****: 0* ***Mid-Term****: At least 1.* ***End of Project:*** *At least 2.*	Lack of political because of lack of support from the economic sectors active in the DBR and the local municipalities. The project will ensure a bottom-up approach to secure local buy-in early in the process to pursue reforms with a visible role of the local municipality.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 1.1.2, Indicator 1.1.2.1, first six-month period. First legislation for collaborative planning and management of the DBR developed and presented for adoption.		Month/Year: June 2026

Milestone 2 – Output 1.1.2, Indicator 1.1.2.1, second six-month period. First legislation for collaborative planning and management of the DBR adopted and second legislation developed and presented for adoption.		Month/Year: December 2026
1.1.3 Technical guidelines, manuals, standards, and norms for sustainable management of the Biosphere Reserves developed and adopted.	***Indicator 1.1.3.1****: # of gender responsive institutional and technical tools and gender balanced training for management of the DBR.* ***Baseline****: 0* ***Mid-Term****: At least 2.* ***End of Project****: At least 4.*	The project is unable to obtain agreement and sign-off from technical team and directors of authority institutions relevant for management of the DBR. The project will fully engage authority institutions to take leadership in the development of institutional and technical tools.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 1.1.3, Indicator 1.1.3.1, first six-month period. Integrated Management Plan for Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve developed and adopted.		Month/Year: June 2026
Milestone 2 – Output 1.1.3, Indicator 1.1.3.1, second six-month period. At least two tools developed, and two trainings delivered to strengthen management capacity of the DBR.		Month/Year: December 2026
1.1. 4 Set of national and local workshops and training programs for key stakeholders.	***Indicator 1.1.4.1:*** *# of gender responsive and gender-balanced trainings or workshops* ***Baseline*****:** 0 ***Mid-Term*****:** *1 training or workshop.* ***End of Project:*** *At least 2 trainings or workshops.*	Stakeholders show very little interest in trainings and workshop. The project will target and engage stakeholders early to identify capacity needs among stakeholders and thus those to be targeted for trainings and workshops.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 1.1.4, Indicator 1.1.4.1, first six-month period. Gender-balanced training conducted to national, state, and local stakeholders in the development and implementation of biosphere reserves management plan.		Month/Year: December 2026
Milestone 2 – Output 1.1.4, Indicator 1.1.4.1, second six-month period. Gender-balanced training conducted to governing and managing institutions from national, state, and local levels on policy coherence, co-governance, and cross-scale coordination for successful biosphere reserve management.		Month/Year: June 2027

1.1.5 An Integrated Management Plan for Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve developed and agreed with all key local and national stakeholders and provides a consensual framework for implementing subsequent forest, pasture and other related land use management actions and pilot for national upscaling.	***Indicator 1.1.5.1:*** # of Integrated Plans developed for the DBR. ***Baseline:*** 0 ***Mid-Term:*** 1 ***End of Project:*** 1	The project receives opposition from sector-specific interests against the integrated approach to planning and management. The project will implement broad and all-inclusive consultation processes to ensure all interests are considered and deliberations are transparent.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 1.1.5, Indicator 1.1.5.1, first six-month period. Technical expertise secured to lead development of Integrated Management Plan for the DBR.		Month/Year: June 2025
Milestone 2 – Output 1.1.5, Indicator 1.1.5.1, second six-month period. Stakeholders' consultations initiated for the development of Integrated Management Plan for the DBR.		Month/Year: December 2025
2.1.1 An Integrated Action Framework that identifies options, determines suitability, and enhances ecotourism opportunities.	***Indicator 2.1.1.1:*** *# of ecotourism options and gender balanced opportunities identified in Integrated Action Framework.* ***Baseline:*** *0* ***Mid-Term:*** ***End of Project:***	Tourism stakeholders do not show optimism and interest in the process to develop Integrated Action Framework. Besides engaging stakeholders early, the project will assertively advocate for the benefits of ecotourism to both people and environment and economic well-being.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 2.1.1, Indicator 2.1.1.1, first six-month period. Gender-balanced stakeholder consultations to develop Integrated Action Framework conducted.		Month/Year: December 2025
Milestone 2 – Output 2.1.1, Indicator 2.1.1.1, second six-month period. Preparation and adoption of the Integrated Action Framework completed.		Month/Year: June 2026
2.1.2 Ecotourism options (e.g. nature-based experiences, adaptive re-use, eco-lodge, eco-facilities) identified.	***Indicator 2.1.2.1:*** *# of Ecotourism Development Plans that address the differentiated needs of men and women.* ***Baseline****: 0* ***Mid-Term****: 1* ***End of Project****: 1*	Tourism stakeholders and tourism authorities do not show interest in ecotourism. The project will execute a cooperation agreement with the Ecotourism Association to engage tourism stakeholders and authorities at all levels to ensure ownership.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 2.1.2, Indicator 2.1.2.1, first six-month period.		Month/Year:

Assessment conducted of ecotourism options that are compatible with the conservation and restoration objectives of the biosphere reserve. .		December 2026
Milestone 2 – Output 2.1.2, Indicator 2.1.2.1, second six-month period. Feasibility assessment conducted to identify ecotourism options as potential sources of income and employment for local communities, including market demand, quantity and quality of services required and available, and capacity needs to meet market requirements.		Month/Year: June 2027
Output 2.1.3 Technical assessments conducted to identify which sites are suitable for which ecotourism option.	***Indicator 2.1.3.1:*** *# of technical assessments of ecotourism options that identify opportunities for both men and women.* ***Baseline****: 0* ***Mid-Term****: 2* ***End of Project****: 2*	Required data not readily available to inform technical assessments. The project will explore different methodologies to ensure a robust outcome even in the presence of data shortages.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 2.1.3, Indicator 2.1.3.1, first six-month period. Site Suitability Assessment conducted to identify ecotourism options, including assessment of associated branding opportunity with the establishment of local branding for selected products.		Month/Year: December 2025
Milestone 2 – Output 2.1.3, Indicator 2.1.3.1, second six-month period. Eco-tourism Development Plan (Programme) for the DBR developed.		Month/Year: June 2026
Output 2.1.4 Ecotourism options in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve linked with the national tourism industry value chain to ensure a sustained income for the communities.	***Indicator 2.1.4.1:*** *# of actions that show alignment with national tourism industry value chain.* ***Baseline****: 0* ***Mid-Term****: At least 2* ***End of Project****: At least 4*	Eco-tourism stakeholder show apathy to actions to promote ecotourism development actions. The project will execute a cooperation agreement with the Ecotourism Association to engage tourism stakeholders and authorities at all levels to ensure ownership.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 2.1.4, Indicator 2.1.4.1, first six-month period. Eco-tourism products developed based on the Eco-tourism Development Plan (Programme).		Month/Year: December 2026

Milestone 2 – Output 2.1.4, Indicator 2.1.4.1, second six-month period. Development of eco-tourism infrastructure (bird and gazelles observation points, etc) supported.		Month/Year: June 2027
Output 2.1.5 Local ecotourism institutional and networking capacities built.	***Indicator 2.1.5.1:*** *# of gender-responsive ecotourism networking actions implemented.* ***Baseline****: 0* ***Mid-Term****: 1* ***End of Project****: 2*	Eco-tourism stakeholder show apathy to actions to promote ecotourism development actions. The project will execute a cooperation agreement with the Ecotourism Association to engage tourism stakeholders and authorities at all levels to ensure ownership.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 2.1.5, Indicator 2.1.5.1, first six-month period. Gender-sensitive training conducted in sustainable ecotourism practices in the DBR to aspiring entrepreneurs in ecotourism and members of the local tourism network.		Month/Year: December 2026
Milestone 2 – Output 2.1.5, Indicator 2.1.5.1, second six-month period. Piloting of implementation of the branding and labelling scheme conducted for at least 2 selected products.		Month/Year: June 2027
2.2.1 Sustainable Forest Management approaches and operational modalities are applied, which ensure the multipurpose use of forests.	***Indicator 2.2.1:*** *# of Sustainable Forest Management modalities developed and applied.* ***Baseline****: 0* ***Mid-Term****: At least 1.* ***End of Project****: At least 3.*	Sustainable Forest Management approaches and modalities are developed too late in the project cycle to allow for them to be operationalized and serve successful demonstration models. The project will prioritize development and operationalization of Sustainable Forest Management approaches and modalities.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 2.2.1, Indicator 2.2.1.1, first six-month period. Gender-sensitive training to relevant personnel of management institutions in sustainable management of degraded forest ecosystems rehabilitation.		Month/Year: December 2025
Milestone 2– Output 2.2.1, Indicator 2.2.1.1, second six-month period. Climate change scenarios to inform agro-forestry and climate-smart agriculture developed.		Month/Year: June 2027
2.2.2 Promotion of sustainable agriculture practices including agro forestry in forest management.	***Indicator 2.2.2.1:*** *# of agro-forestry and climate-smart agricultural demos implemented in the DBR.*	Farmers are slow to uptake and participate in agro-forestry, agro-biodiversity, and climate-smart agricultural demos plans.

	***Baseline**: 0* ***Mid-Term:** at least 4.* ***End of Project**: At least 10.*	Through its knowledge management approach, the project will completely engage farmers on the benefits of agro-forestry, agro-biodiversity, and climate-smart agriculture in preparation for the demo plans.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 2.2.2., Indicator 2.2.2.1, first six-month period. Demo plans developed for agro-forestry, agro-biodiversity, and climate-smart agriculture developed and adopted.		Month/Year: June 2026
Milestone 2 – Output 2.2.2., Indicator 2.2.2.1, second six-month period.		Month/Year: December 2027
2.2.3 Existing pasture management system adapted in collaboration with local pasture users.	***Indicator 2.2.3.1:** # of hectares subject to sustainable pasture management demo programme.* ***Baseline**: 0* ***Mid-Term:** 200 ha.* ***End of Project:** At least 500 ha.*	Farmers are not convinced that adapting the sustainable pasture management system will be economically viable. The Project will assess feasibility and economic viability as part of the demos on sustainable grazing, so farmers are well informed.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 2.2.3, Indicator 2.2.3.1, first six-month period. Assessment of the current situation and future scenarios of pasture use and degradation in Dedoplistskaro BR conducted.		Month/Year: December 2025
Milestone 2 – Output 2.2.3, Indicator 2.2.3.1, second six-month period. Pastures inventory (*identification, zoning, categorisation, definition of use regimes and mapping*) within the DBR.		Month/Year: December 2025
Output 2.2.4 Accessing to financial mechanisms and investments for ecosystem restoration (e.g., preparation of feasibility study for the establishment of an environmental fund for the development of the Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve).	***Indicator 2.2.4.1:** # of feasibility assessments for environmental fund.* ***Baseline**: 0* ***Mid-Term:** 1* ***End of Project:** 1*	The project experience challenges to secure the skills necessary to address design of environmental fund. The project will employ a national and international procurement process, using a talent head-hunter if necessary to secure the required skills.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 2.2.4, Indicator 2.2.4.1, first six-month period.		Month/Year: December 2025
Milestone 2 – Output 2.2.4, Indicator 2.2.4.1, first six-month period.		Month/Year: June 2026

2.2.5 Enhanced conservation of Goitered Gazelle as a flagship species and monitoring of selected biodiversity features.	***Indicator 2.2.5.1**: # of Goitered Gazelle benefiting from improved capacity and strengthened response measures to minimize adverse impacts on the population.* ***Baseline**: 0* ***Mid-Term:** At least 200.* ***End of Project**: At least 200.*	Predators, competition, and conflict with livestock herders render the project's efforts ineffective in reducing negative impacts on the Goitered Gazelle population in the DBR. To better understand the survival context of the Goitered Gazelle, the project will conduct a on gazelle-livestock interactions (possible competition, livestock herders' attitudes, assessment of risks of disease transfer from livestock to the Gazelles, etc.) and develop the conservation plan for the Goitered Gazelle, including species/habitat restoration activities.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 2.2.4, Indicator 2.2.5.1, first six-month period. Conservation plan for the Goitered Gazelle developed and adopted.		Month/Year: June 2026
Milestone 2 – Output 2.2.4, Indicator 2.2.5.1, second six-month period. Strengthening of staff capacity in Gazelle population conservation management tools and instruments.		Month/Year: December 2026
3.1.1 Information/Knowledge Management System developed and made accessible to stakeholders.	***Indicator 3.1.1.1**: # of academic institutions engaged through the DBR Knowledge Management Hub to collaborate and promote the BR concept.* ***Baseline**: 0* ***Mid-Term:** At least 2.* ***End of Project**: At least 4.*	Bureaucratic red tape may delay the formalization of collaboration agreements with academic institutions. The project will work at both the level of the authorities for education and with the academic institutions themselves to minimize any chances of delay.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 3.1.1, Indicator 3.1.1.1, first six-month period. DBR Knowledge Management hub developed and launched.		Month/Year: December 2025
Milestone 1 – Output 3.1.1, Indicator 3.1.1.1, second six-month period. Collaboration agreements with academic institutions formalized.		Month/Year: June 2026
3.1.2 Gender-sensitive Communication and Awareness Strategy developed and implemented to support sustainable management of the Biosphere Reserve.	***Indicator 3.1.2.1:** # of communication and awareness products developed and disseminated that address the differentiated needs of men and women.* ***Baseline**: 0* ***Mid-Term**: At least 5.* ***End of Project**: At least 10.*	Stakeholders and the public show little or no interest in communications and awareness efforts of the project. The project will carefully assess the characteristics of the audience and develop and disseminate audience-specific and gender-sensitive messaging with differentiated delivery methods based on particular needs of the audience.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**

Milestone 1 – Output 3.1.2, Indicator 3.1.2.1, first six-month period. Suite of KM products developed on ecosystem management and restoration within the DBR to facilitate technical exchanges, trainings, and study visits.		Month/Year: June 2026
Milestone 1 – Output 3.1.2, Indicator 3.1.2.1, second six-month period. Medi tours conducted within the Biosphere Reserve to promote biodiversity conservation, sustainable ecosystem/land management, and ecosystems restoration activities.		Month/Year: June 2026
3.1.3 Technical exchanges, training and educational opportunities implemented.	***Indicator 3.1.3.1**: # of gender-responsive and gender-balanced capacity building events implemented on conservation and restoration.* ***Baseline**: 0* ***Mid-Term**: At least 4.* ***End of Project**: At least 10.*	Technical exchanges and training in conservation and biosphere reserves not attractive to young people. The project will develop mobile and interactive exhibition to inspire the children and young people for the biosphere reserve and provide regularly eco-lessons in each school and professional collage in Dedoplistskaro.
Interim targets *(specify which indicator each interim target refers to)*		**Interim Target attainment date**
Milestone 1 – Output 3.1.3, Indicator 3.1.3.1, first six-month period. Educational and public awareness materials developed and disseminated on key biodiversity, social and cultural features of the DBR, Biosphere Reserve concept, management, and monitoring.		Month/Year: December 2026
Milestone 1 – Output 3.1.3, Indicator 3.1.3.1, second six-month period. Conduct at least 2 gender-sensitive trainings to practitioners on ecosystems management and restoration within the DBR.		Month/Year: December 2026

[1] One (1) per reporting period: June and December of each year

[2] One (1) per reporting period: June and December of each year

[3] One (1) per reporting period: June and December of each year

[4] 1 per reporting period: June and December of each year

ANNEX D: STATUS OF UTILIZATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)

Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:

Project Preparation Activities Implemented	GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount ($)		
	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent To date	Amount Committed
International Consultant	20,000.00	20,000.00	
National Consultants	46,150.00	46,150.00	

Travels in the project area	6,000.00	6,000.00	
International travel	2,000.00	2,000.00	
Per diems	3,500.00	3,500.00	
Meetings and Stakeholders consultations at national, regional and local levels	14,000.00	14,000.00	
Bank Charges	350.00	346.00	4.00
HACT assessment	8,000.00		8,000.00
Total	**100,000.00**	**91,996.00**	**8,004.00**

ANNEX E: PROJECT MAP AND COORDINATES

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

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
01-TPA	41.1985	46.5580	

Location Description:

Vashlovani National Park

(IUCN Cat. II)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
08-TPA	41.3161	45.9055	

Location Description:

Chachuna Managed Reserve[1][31]

(IUCN Cat. IV)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
09-TPA	41.3187	45.8536	

Location Description:

Chachuna Managed Reserve[1][32]

(IUCN Cat. IV)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
10-TPA	41.3471	45.8251	

Location Description:

Iori Managed Reserve[1][33]

(IUCN Cat. IV)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
11-TPA	41.2454	45.8446	

Location Description:

Takhti-Tepa Natural Monument

(IUCN Cat. III)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID

12-TPA	41.4894	46.0981	

Location Description:

Eagle Canyon Natural Monument[1][34]

(IUCN Cat. III)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
13-TPA	41.4862	46.1353	

Location Description:

Eagle Canyon Natural Monument[1][35]

(IUCN Cat. III)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
14-TPA	41.3553	46.6516	

Location Description:

Alazani Floodplain Forest Natural Monument

(IUCN Cat. III)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
15-TPA	41.3553	46.6516	

Location Description:

Samukhi Multiple Use Area

(IUCN Cat. VI)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
04-TPA	41.2209	46.1481	

Location Description:

Chachuna Managed Reserve[1][36]

(IUCN Cat. IV)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
02-TPA	41.2001	46.4403	

Location Description:

Vashlovani State Nature Reserve[1][37]

(IUCN Cat. I)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
05-TPA	41.1870	46.0987	

Location Description:

Chachuna Managed Reserve[1][38]

(IUCN Cat. IV)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
06-TPA	41.2076	45.9233	

Location Description:

Chachuna Managed Reserve[1][39]

(IUCN Cat. IV)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
07-TPA	41.2274	45.9586	

Location Description:

Chachuna Managed Reserve[1][40]

(IUCN Cat. IV)

Activity Description:

Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
03-TPA	41.1322	46.6040	

Location Description:

Vashlovani State Nature Reserve[1][41]

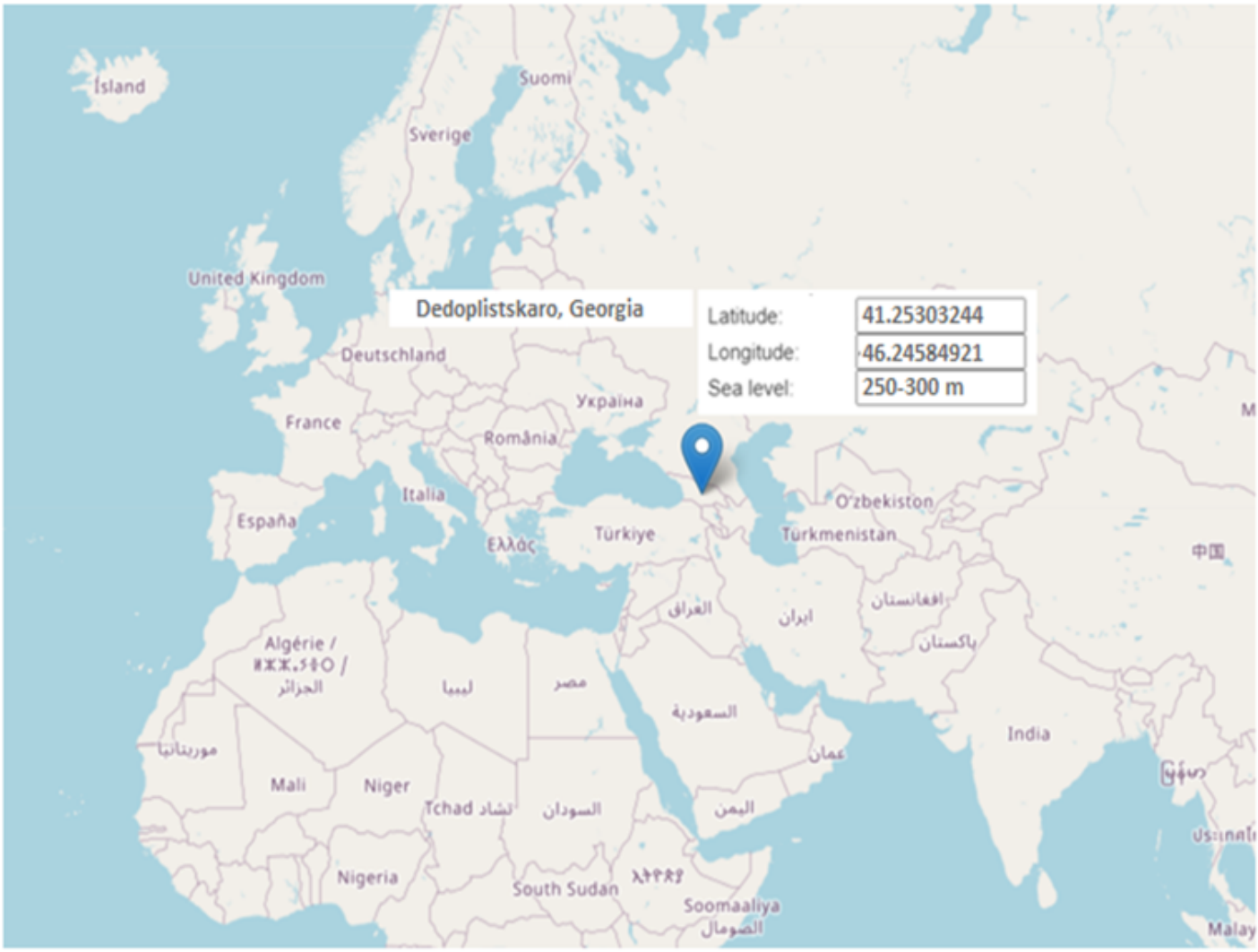
(IUCN Cat. I)

Activity Description:

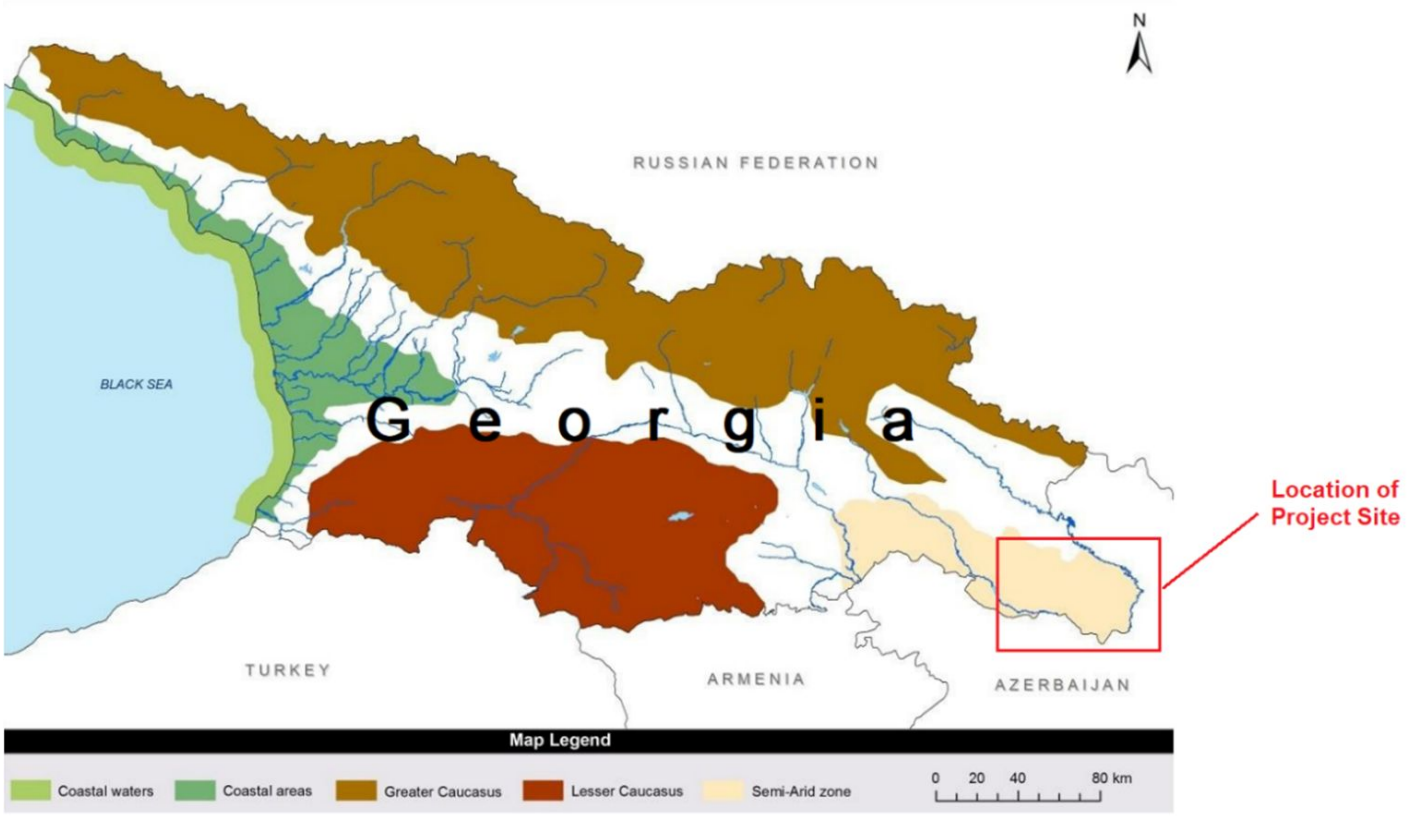
Measures aimed at improved management of terrestrial protected area

Please provide any further geo-referenced information and map where project interventions are taking place as appropriate.

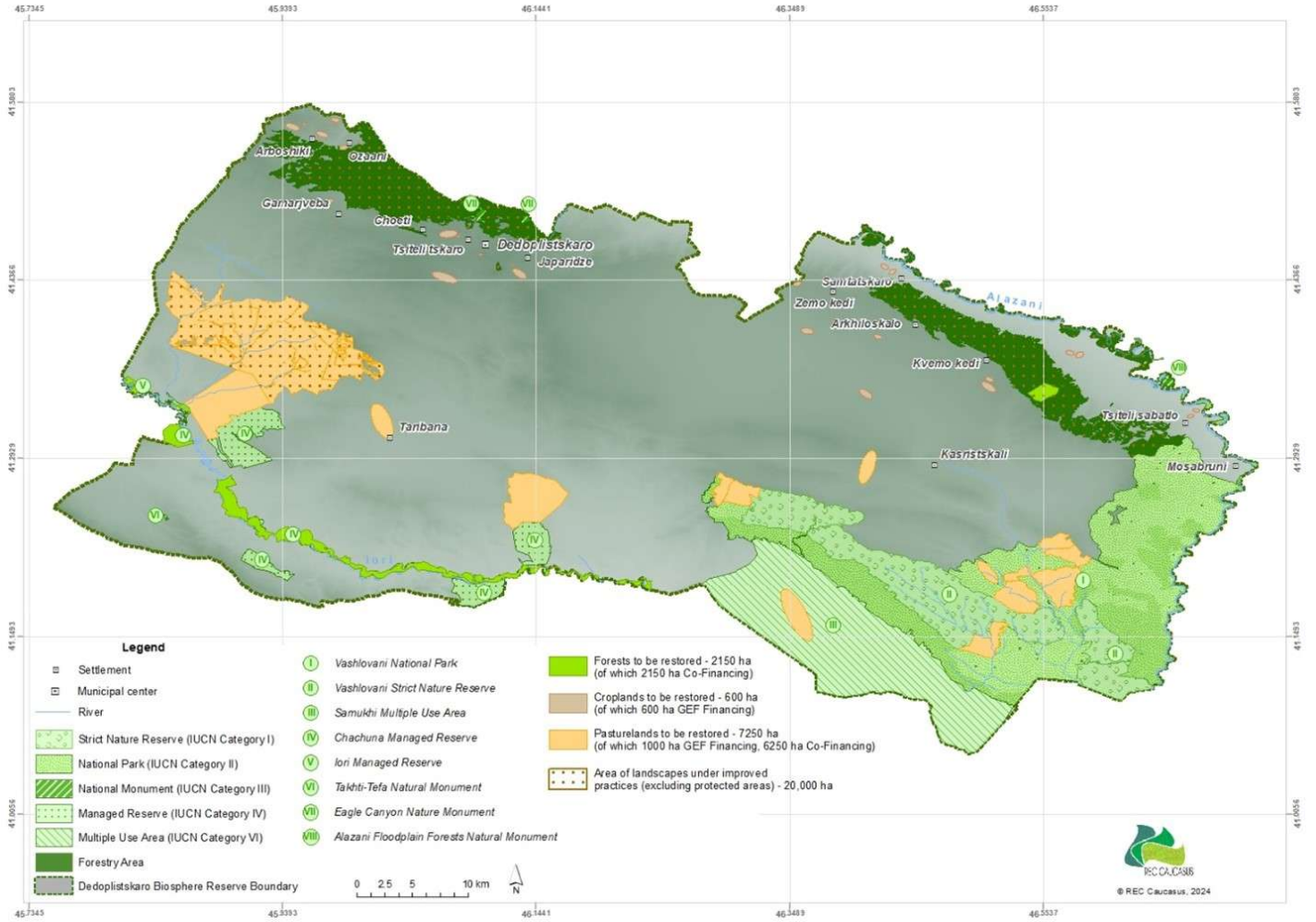
Location of the Project Intervention Area: Dedoplistskaro Municipality, Georgia, within the Broader Geographic Context



Location of Project Site with view of 5 largest bio-geographical zones (Coastal Water Zone; Coastal Areas Zone; Greater Caucasus Mountain Zone; Lesser Caucasus Mountain Zone and Semi-Arid Zone) in Georgia



Overall Map of the Project Intervention Area: Dedoplistskaro Municipality



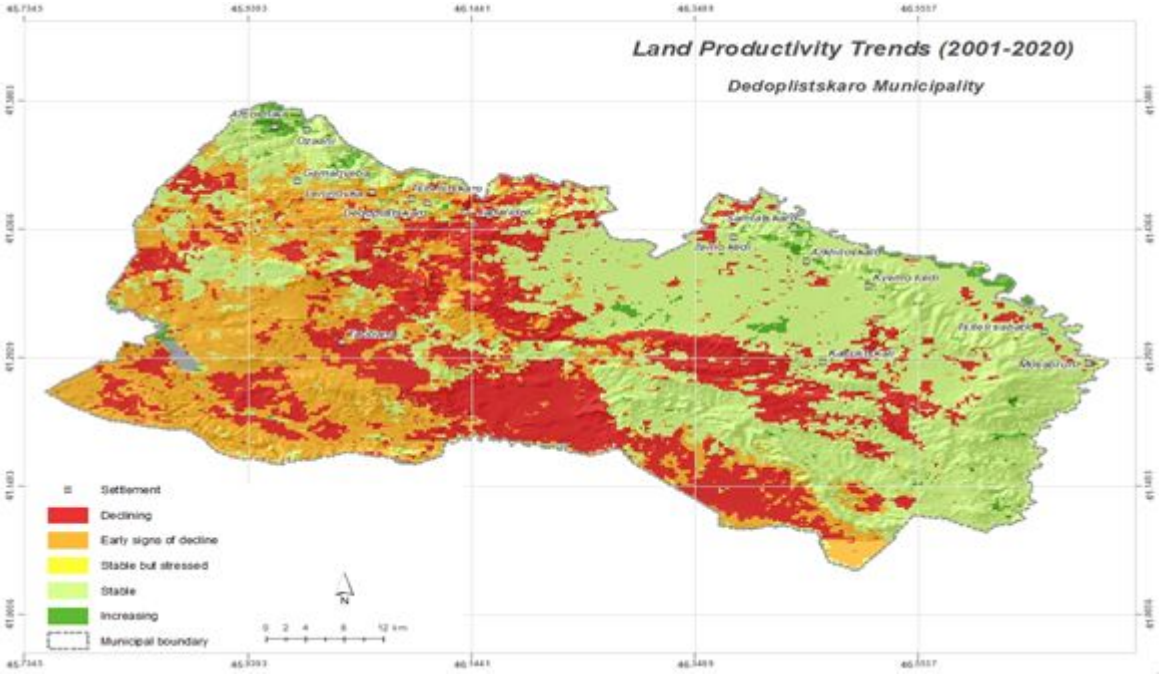
Maps of Productivity and Degradation in Project Intervention Area

Land degradation trends within the Dedoplistaskaro municipality have been revealed based on the analyses of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15.3.1 sub-indicators (Land cover, Land productivity and Soil Organic Carbon (SOC)). It is worth mentioning that this process has been performed by using Trends.Earth[1] (formerly the Land Degradation Monitoring Toolbox), which is a platform from Conservation International for monitoring land change using earth observations in an innovative desktop and cloud-based system. Trends.Earth is a free and open-source tool to understand land change: the how and why behind changes on the ground. It draws on open data sources. The data sets have a global extent and public domain. The integration of the above-mentioned sub-indicators has been done following the one-out all-out rule, this means that if an area was identified as potentially degraded by any of the sub-indicators, then that area will be considered potentially degraded for reporting purposes. Thus, SDG Indicator 15.3.1 has been calculated and consequently, the following thematic maps have been generated:

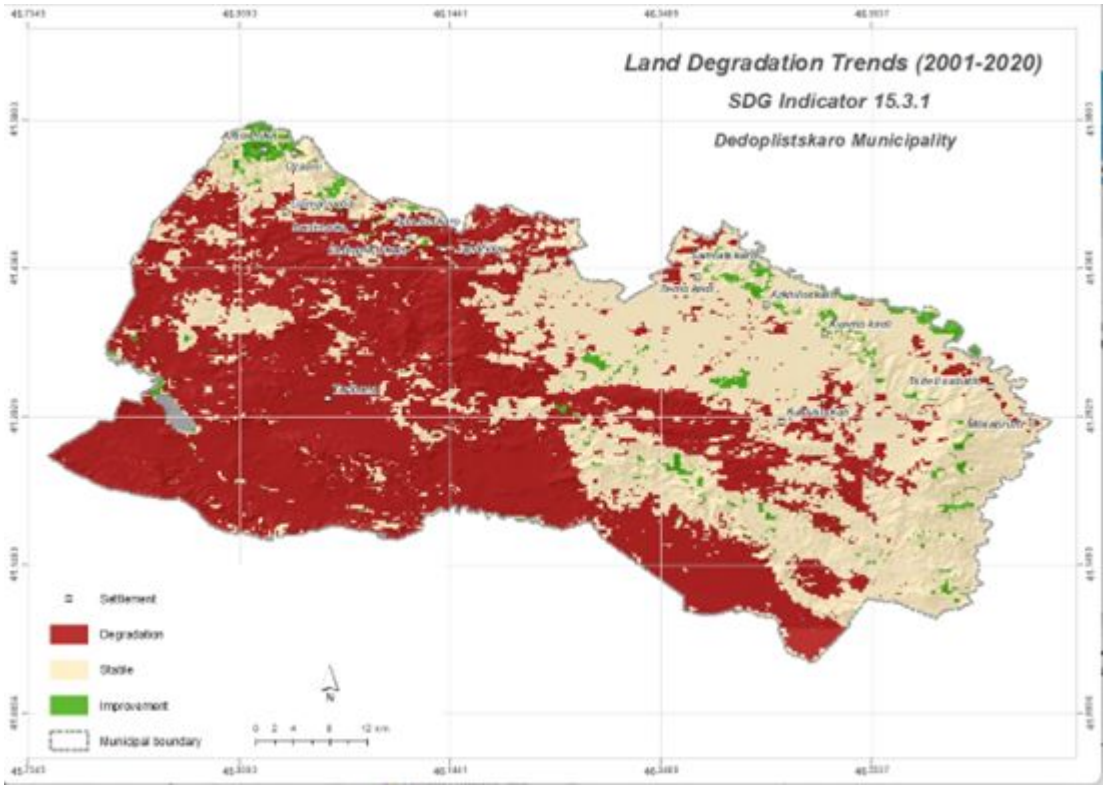
-Land productivity trends (2001-2020) in the Dedoplistskaro municipality

-Land degradation trends (2001-2020) in the Dedoplistskaro municipality

Productivity Map of Project Intervention Area



Degradation Map of Project Intervention Area



[1] Source: https://trends.earth/en/v1.0.8/index.html

ANNEX F: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING

Attach agency safeguard datasheet/assessment report(s), including ratings of risk types and overall project/program risk classification as well as any management plans or measures to address identified risks and impacts (as applicable).

Title

20240923_ANNEX F Safeguard Risk Identification Form_NE

ANNEX G: BUDGET TABLE

Please upload the budget table here.

Project title: Transforming Policy and Investment through Improving Ecosystem Management and Restoration of Degraded Drylands of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve in Georgia to Generate Multiple Environmental and Socio-Economic Benefits

Project number: 11141
Project executing partner: REC Caucasus
Project implementation period: 48 months
From: 01.01.2025
To: 31.12.2028

Expenditure Category	Budget Code	Detailed Description	Budget Distribution by Component/Outcome (USDeq.)							Total (USDeq.)	Budget Distribution by Year (USDeq.)				Total for 4 Years (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
			Comp. 1	Comp. 2		Comp. 3	Total 3 Components without PMC and M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)	Project Management Cost (PMC)		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4		
			Outcome 1.1	Outcome 2.1	Outcome 2.2	Outcome 3.1										
Salary and benefits / Staff costs: Project personnel	FT30_Class_010	**Project personnel**														
		Project Director/Supervisor	11,500	10,500	10,500	11,500	44,000		28,000	**72,000**	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	**72,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Sub-total	**11,500**	**10,500**	**10,500**	**11,500**	**44,000**	**0**	**28,000**	**72,000**	**18,000**	**18,000**	**18,000**	**18,000**	**72,000**	
Local Consultants	FT30_Class_010	**National Experts**														
		of which:														
		Biodiversity & ecosystem restoration lead expert	*40,000*	*13,173*	*11,700*	*79,127*	144,000			**144,000**	36,000	36,000	36,000	36,000	***144,000***	**REC Caucasus**

		Biodiversity Management Expert	*70,000*				70,000			**70,000**	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500	***70,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Biosphere reserve Field Expert			*40,000*		40,000			**40,000**	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	***40,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Legal Expert	*40,000*				40,000			**40,000**	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	***40,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Policy & Institutional Expert	*32,500*				32,500			**32,500**	8,125	8,125	8,125	8,125	***32,500***	**REC Caucasus**
		Geobotanist/ Rangeland Specialist		*20,000*			20,000			**20,000**	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	***20,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Controlled Grazing and Sustainable Pasture Pilot Program Management Expert	*10,000*		*30,000*		40,000			**40,000**	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	***40,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Socio-Economic Analyses Expert		*35,000*			35,000			**35,000**	8,750	8,750	8,750	8,750	***35,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Tourism Expert		*5,000*			5,000			**5,000**	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250	***5,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Climate Change Expert			*30,000*		30,000			**30,000**	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	***30,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Capacity Development Expert	*5,000*			*15,000*	20,000			**20,000**	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	***20,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Agroforestry expert	*20,000*	*10,000*			30,000			**30,000**	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	***30,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Economist	*5,800*				5,800			**5,800**	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450	***5,800***	**REC Caucasus**
		Ecosystem Restoration/Soil Expert	*40,000*				40,000			**40,000**	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	***40,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Knowledge Management Expert				*40,000*	40,000			**40,000**	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	***40,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Species Management Expert			*15,000*		15,000			**15,000**	3,750	3,750	3,750	3,750	***15,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Biodiversity Monitoring Expert			*40,000*		40,000			**40,000**	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	***40,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		GIS Expert	*10,000*			*40,000*	50,000			**50,000**	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	***50,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		PR & Communications Expert	*10,000*	*5,000*	*5,000*	*10,000*	30,000			**30,000**	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	***30,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Gender Expert	*10,000*	*5,000*	*5,000*	*10,000*	30,000			**30,000**	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	***30,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		IT Expert	*6,000*			*7,000*	13,000			**13,000**	3,250	3,250	3,250	3,250	***13,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Project Support Expert	*7,500*	*4,500*	*4,000*	*9,000*	25,000			**25,000**	6,250	6,250	6,250	6,250	***25,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Project Operations and Administrative Expert	*7,500*	*4,500*	*4,000*	*9,000*	25,000			**25,000**	6,250	6,250	6,250	6,250	***25,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Project Financial Management Expert	*20,000*	*10,000*	*10,300*	*30,200*	70,500			**70,500**	17,625	17,625	17,625	17,625	***70,500***	**REC Caucasus**
		Sub-total	**334,300**	**112,173**	**195,000**	**249,327**	**890,800**	**0**	**0**	**890,800**	**222,700**	**222,700**	**222,700**	**222,700**	**890,800**	
International Consultants	FT30_Class_010	**International Experts**														
		of which:														
		Sustainable Land Management Specialist	*14,373*	*15,627*	*7,000*		*37,000*			**37,000**	*10,000*	*10,000*	*17,000*		***37,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Sustainable Development Specialist	*20,000*				*20,000*			**20,000**	*10,000*	*10,000*			***20,000***	**REC Caucasus**

		Resource Mobillization Expert	*20,000*				*20,000*			**20,000**		*10,000*	*10,000*		***20,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Tourism Marketing Specialist		*20,000*			*20,000*			**20,000**		*20,000*			***20,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Conservation Expert			*5,000*	*20,000*	*25,000*			**25,000**		*25,000*			***25,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Sub-total for Experts	**54,373**	**35,627**	**12,000**	**20,000**	**122,000**	**0**	**0**	**122,000**	**20,000**	**75,000**	**27,000**	**0**	**122,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Evaluation														
		Midterm Evaluation					0	27,000		**27,000**		27,000			**27,000**	**UNEP IA**
		Terminal Evaluation					0	32,000		**32,000**				32,000	**32,000**	**UNEP IA**
		Audit Service Fee	500	500	500	500	2,000		15,000	**17,000**	4,000	4,000	4,000	5,000	**17,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Sub-total for Evaluation	**500**	**500**	**500**	**500**	**2,000**	**59,000**	**15,000**	**76,000**	**4,000**	**31,000**	**4,000**	**37,000**	**76,000**	
		Sub-total	**54,873**	**36,127**	**12,500**	**20,500**	**124,000**	**59,000**	**15,000**	**198,000**	**24,000**	**106,000**	**31,000**	**37,000**	**198,000**	
Travel	FT30_Class_160	**Travel on official business**														
		Travel Local (Fuel & Maintenance)	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	80,000			**80,000**	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	**80,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		International Travel/Airfare	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	40,000			**40,000**	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	**40,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Per Diems ,Accommodation	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	40,000			**40,000**	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	**40,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Study tour (Two tours)				40,000	40,000			**40,000**		20,000		20,000	**40,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Sub-total	**40,000**	**40,000**	**40,000**	**80,000**	**200,000**	**0**	**0**	**200,000**	**40,000**	**60,000**	**40,000**	**60,000**	**200,000**	
Sub-contracts to executing partner/ entity	FT30_Class_140	**Sub-contracts (for commercial purposes)**														
		Implement at least 10 demo plans on restoration of degraded drylands ecosystem via nature based agro-forestry, agro-biodiversity, and climate-smart land-use practices in total of 500 ha of agriculture lands.			457,000	5,800	462,800			**462,800**	115,700	115,700	115,700	115,700	**462,800**	**TBD**
		Assessment and inventory of DBR dry land Rangelands and implementation of demo pilots of sustainable grazing considering herd size, land tenure, and size of land on at least 500 ha in DBR.	10,000		*395,000*		405,000			**405,000**	101,250	101,250	101,250	101,250	**405,000**	**TBD**
		Subcontract with the Ecotourism Association for implementing nature-based tourism development		100,000			100,000			**100,000**	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	**100,000**	**Ecotourism Association**

		activities in DBR														
		Subcontract with NACRES for implementing biodiversity monitoring and conservation activities in DBR			210,000		210,000			**210,000**	52,500	52,500	52,500	52,500	**210,000**	**NACRES**
		Construction of 2 shepherd houses		40,000			40,000			**40,000**		40,000			**40,000**	**TBD**
		Ecotourism infrastructure (bird and gazelle observation points)		40,000			40,000			**40,000**			40,000		**40,000**	**TBD**
		Knowledge Management Services		1,100		167,173	168,273			**168,273**	42,068	42,068	42,068	42,068	**168,273**	**TBD**
		Pasture inventory and registration				160,000	160,000			**160,000**	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	**160,000**	**TBD**
		Sub-total	**10,000**	**181,100**	**1,062,000**	**332,973**	**1,586,073**			**1,586,073**	**376,518**	**416,518**	**416,518**	**376,518**	**1,586,073**	
Other Operating Costs	FT30_Class_010	**Other Operating Costs**														
		Measurement of project progress and performance indicators					0	10,000		**10,000**	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	**10,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Baseline measurement of project outcome indicators, GEF Core indicators					0	25,000		**25,000**	6,250	6,250	6,250	6,250	**25,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Mid-point measurement of project outcome indicators, GEF Core indicators					0	25,000		**25,000**			25,000		**25,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		End-point measurement of project outcome indicators, GEF Core indicators					0	25,000		**25,000**				25,000	**25,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Monitoring of Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) Risks					0	20,000		**20,000**	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	**20,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Reports of PSC meetings					0	5,000		**5,000**	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250	**5,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Monitoring visits to field sites					0	30,000		**30,000**	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	**30,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Project Operational Completion Report					0	5,000		**5,000**				5,000	**5,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Gender Action Plan*		20,000		6,000	26,000			**26,000**	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	**26,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Sub-total	**0**	**20,000**	**0**	**6,000**	**26,000**	**145,000**	**0**	**171,000**	**29,000**	**29,000**	**54,000**	**59,000**	**171,000**	
Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	FT30_Class_120	**Meetings/Conferences**														
		Inception Meeting & Report	1,000			1,500	2,500	9,808		**12,308**	12,308				**12,308**	**REC Caucasus**
		National/local Workshops/Conferences	19,800		6,000	13,800	39,600			**39,600**	8,800	10,800	10,000	10,000	**39,600**	**REC Caucasus**
		Steering Committee Meetings	10,500		3,000	7,500	21,000			**21,000**	5,250	5,250	5,250	5,250	**21,000**	**REC Caucasus**

		Biodiversity conservation and FLM training	5,000		1,000	64,000	70,000			**70,000**	20,000	10,000	20,000	20,000	**70,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Awareness raising, Media Events	9,000	1,100	10,000	9,900	30,000			**30,000**	7,500	7,000	7,500	8,000	**30,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Sub-total	**45,300**	**1,100**	**20,000**	**96,700**	**163,100**	**9,808**	**0**	**172,908**	**53,858**	**33,050**	**42,750**	**43,250**	**172,908**	
Office Supplies	FT30_Class_130	**Expendable equipment**														
		Office supply					0		6,189	**6,189**	1,547	1,547	1,547	1,547	**6,189**	**REC Caucasus**
		Sub-total	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**6,189**	**6,189**	**1,547**	**1,547**	**1,547**	**1,547**	**6,189**	
Goods	FT30_Class_135	**Non-expendable equipment**														
		Computers/ Laptops	4,000	4,000	5,000	3,000	16,000			**16,000**	12,000	4,000			**16,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Office and field equipment for operationalization of DBR Integrated Management Plan	70,000				70,000			**70,000**		35,000	35,000		**70,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Equipment for Biodiversity Monitoring			50,000		50,000			**50,000**	25,000	25,000			**50,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Sub-total	**74,000**	**4,000**	**55,000**	**3,000**	**136,000**	**0**	**0**	**136,000**	**37,000**	**64,000**	**35,000**	**0**	**136,000**	
Other Direct Costs	FT30_Class_125	**Premises**														
		Office rent					0		72,000	**72,000**	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	**72,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Sub-total for Premises	***0***	***0***	***0***	***0***	***0***	***0***	***72,000***	***72,000***	***18,000***	***18,000***	***18,000***	***18,000***	***72,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Office costs														
		Communication					0		8,000	**8,000**	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	**8,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Office Utilities/Other services (tel/fax, electricity/heating, maintenance)					0		40,000	**40,000**	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	**40,000**	**REC Caucasus**
		Sub-total for Office Costs	***0***	***0***	***0***	***0***	***0***	***0***	***48,000***	***48,000***	***12,000***	***12,000***	***12,000***	***12,000***	***48,000***	**REC Caucasus**
		Sub-total	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**120,000**	**120,000**	**30,000**	**30,000**	**30,000**	**30,000**	**120,000**	
GRAND TOTAL			**569,973**	**405,000**	**1,395,000**	**800,000**	**3,169,973**	**213,808**	**169,189**	**3,552,970**	**832,624**	**980,816**	**891,516**	**848,016**	**3,552,970**	

*This is the budget required to implement the Gender Action Plan beyond what is budgeted under components.

Please explain any aspects of the budget as needed here

S/NDescription

1 Salary for Project Director to be hired with full responsibility for overall project day to day implementation.
2 Salary for Project Assistant to be hired to assist with daily project implementation activities
3 A consultant will be hired to lead biodiversity & ecosystem restoration.
4 A consultant will be hired to lead biodiversity management plan for the DBR.
5 A consultant will be hired to lead biosphere reserve management plan for the DBR.
6 A legal expert will be hired to develop legal amendments to be advocated for by the project.
7 A Policy & Institutional Expert will be hired to oversee the institutionalization of policy reforms promoted by the project.

8	A Geobotanist/Rangeland Specialist will b erecruited to provide expertise on rangeland management approaches.
9	A Controlled Grazing and Sustainable Pasture Pilot Program Management Expert will be hired to devise strategies to reduce overgrazing.
10	A Socio-Economic Analyses Expert to manage all socio-economic assessments and assit with the ESIA and ESMF.
11	A Tourism Expert will be recurited to lead the project's ecotourism objectives.
12	A Climate Change Expert will be contracted to oversee climate-smart strategies and CO2 mitigation calculations.
13	A Capacity Development Expert will be recurited to oversee all capacity building efforts of the project.
14	An Agroforestry expert will be recruited to develop the agroforestry interventions of the project.
15	An Economist will be contracted to assist in modelling the cost and benefits of rotational grazing and ecotourism ventures.
16	An Ecosystem Restoration/Soil Expert will be recruited to assist in efforts to restore overgrazed areas in the DBR.
17	A Knowledge Management Expert will be hired to oversee implementation of the project's KM Strategy.
18	A Species Management Expert will be sourced to lead Gazelle reintroduction and management efforts by the project.
19	A Biodiversity Monitoring Expert will be contracted to assist development monitoring plan for the DBR.
20	A GIS Expert will be recruited to oversee all mapping and remote sensing activities of the project.
21	A PR & Communications Expert will be hired to implement the project's public awareness campaign and communicaitons.
22	A Gender Expert will be hired to oversee all gender mainstreaming events and the Gender Action Plan
23	An IT Expert will be contracted to assist in stting up and maintaining the KM online hub and project website.
24	A Sustainable Land Management Specialist will be recruited to work with biodiversity and biosphere experts to develop management plan for the DBR.
25	A Sustainable Development Specialist will be hired to lead development of integrated management plan for the DBR.
26	A Resource Mobillization Expert will be contracted to develop and deliver traiing in resource mobilization to personnel from national, state, and local levels.
27	A Tourism Marketing Specialist will be hired to complement work of Tourism Expert in the development of ecotoruism options for the DBR.
28	A Conservation Expert will be recruited to work with Species Management Expert on Gazelle reintroduciton and management.
29	A Financial Officer will be hired to oversee the management of project resources within RECC.
30	An Administration/Procurement Officer will be hired to assist with administrative and procurement needs of the project within RECC.
31	Travel Local (Fuel & Maintenance) will cover associated vehicle costs of site supervision to the DBR from Tbilisi.
32	International Travel/Airfare will cover technical exchanges, sharing of knowledge, and South-South Cooperation.
33	Per Diems ,Accommodation associated with technical exchanges, sharing of knowledge, and South-South Cooperation.
34	Study tour (Two tours) will cover costs of technical exchange an dlearning to Turkey and Germany specifically on biosphere reserve management.
35	Budget to cover at least 10 demo plans on restoration of degraded drylands ecosystem via nature based agro-forestry, agro-biodiversity, and climate-smart land-use practices in total of 500 ha of agriculture lands.

36	Budget to cover costs of assessment and inventory of DBR dry land Rangelands and implementation of demo pilots of sustainable grazing considering herd size, land tenure, and size of land on at least 500 ha in DBR.
37	Budget for subcontract with the Ecotourism Association for implementing nature-based tourism development activities in DBR
38	Budget for subcontract with NACRES for implementing biodiversity monitoring and conservation activities in DBR.
39	Budget for construction of 2 shepherd houses.
40	Budget for two ecotourism infrastructure (bird and gazelle observation points).
41	Budgeet to implement the project's overall Knowledge Management strategy.
42	Budget for pasture inventory and registration.
43	Budget for measurement of project progress and performance indicators
44	Budget for baseline measurement of project outcome indicators, GEF Core indicators
45	Budget for mid-point measurement of project outcome indicators, GEF Core indicators
46	Budget for end-point measurement of project outcome indicators, GEF Core indicators
47	Budget for Monitoring of Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) Risks
48	Budget to preparae Reports of PSC meetings
49	Budget to cover costs of Monitoring visits to field sites
50	Budget to prepare Project Operational Completion Report
51	Budget required to implement the Gender Action Plan beyond what is budgeted under components.
52	Budget to conduct Inception Meeting & prepare corresponding report
53	Budget to cover costs of National/local Workshops/Conferences to be implemented by the project
54	Budget to cover costs of Steering Committee Meetings at least twice annually
55	Budget to deliver Biodiversity conservation and FLM training (venue, delivery and other associated costs)
56	Budget to implement the project's awareness campaign and Media Events
57	Office supply will cover standard costs associated staionery, toner, ink, etc.
58	Budget to cover costs of Computers (2)/ Laptops (3) for project implementation.
59	Budget to cover assorted office and field equipment for operationalization of DBR Integrated Management Plan; specifics to be determined oncd the plan has been developed.
60	Budget to cover assorted equipment for Biodiversity Monitoring (bionoculars, camera traps, cameras, field guides, sampling equipment and kits, soil testing kits, etc.)
61	Budget to cover office rent for the duration of the project.
62	Budget to cover the project's communications
63	budget to cover Office Utilities/Other services (tel/fax, electricity/heating, maintenance)
64	A consultant will be hired to conduct the Midterm Evaluation.
65	A consultant will be hired to conduct the Terminal Evaluation
66	A firm will be hired to conduct annual audits of the project.

ANNEX I: 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.