GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

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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	GEF Project ID
Georgia	11141
Country(ies)	Type of Project
Georgia	FSP
GEF Agency(ies):	GEF Agency ID
UNEP	
Executing Partner	Executing Partner Type
The Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (REC Caucasus)	CSO
GEF Focal Area (s)	Submission Date
Multi Focal Area	4/12/2023

Project Sector (CCM Only)
Taxonomy
Biodiversity, Focal Areas, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Mainstreaming, Agriculture and agrobiodiversity, Land Degradation, Land Degradation Neutrality, Sustainable Land Management, Ecosystem Approach, Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques, Sustainable Pasture Management, Income Generating Activities, Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Agriculture, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands, Forest, Stakeholders, Civil Society, Community Based Organization, Non-Governmental Organization, Academia, Type of Engagement, Consultation, Information Dissemination, Participation, Partnership, Communications, Public Campaigns, Awareness Raising, Education, Private Sector, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Local Communities, Beneficiaries, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Gender-sensitive indicators, Gender results areas, Access to benefits and services, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Capacity Development, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Knowledge Exchange, Peer-to-Peer, Field Visit, Knowledge Generation, Workshop, Training, Learning, Theory of change

Type of Trust Fund	Project Duration (Months)
GET	48
GEF Project Grant: (a)	GEF Project Non-Grant: (b)
3,552,970.00	0.00
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c)	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant (d)
337,530.00	0.00
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d)	Total Co-financing
3,890,500.00	24,875,000.00

PPG Amount: (e)	PPG Agency Fee(s): (f)
100,000.00	9,500.00
PPG total amount: (e+f)	Total GEF Resources: (a+b+c+d+e+f)
109,500.00	4,000,000.00
Project Tags	
CBIT: No NGI: No SGP: No Innovation: No	

Project Summary

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

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 southeastern 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.

Indicative Project Overview

Project Objective

To improve biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of ecosystems and restoration of degraded drylands of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve

Project Components

Component 1: 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 enable 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 (Business 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

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

Component Type	Trust Fund
Investment	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
1,800,000.00	12,600,000.00

Outcome:

Outcome 2.1: Enhancing Ecotourism

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 sustainable meeting of local community needs

Output 2.2.2 Promotion of sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity in forest management

Output 2.2.3 Existing pasture management system adapted in collaboration with local pasture users

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)

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 A Gender sensitive communication and awareness strategy, that will include various approaches for gender mainstreaming, developed 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
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)

213,808.00	420,000.00

Outcome:

Monitoring and Evaluation

Output:

Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
Component 1: 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	12,600,000.00
Component 3: Knowledge Management	800,000.00	5,600,000.00
M&E	213,808.00	420,000.00
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

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

The project area is located in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve (BR), 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.

Dedoplistskaro BR is located in the southeastern 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 Iori-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 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. 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, P. eldarica, 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 here. Apart from the individual species some rare plant communities can now only be found in this region in entire Georgia. The zone is an important staging and wintering site for migratory birds.

The project area is vulnerable to climate change and damaging human activities such as deforestation, overgrazing and unsustainable land use and agricultural practices. 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[3][3], 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, parasites, and diseases have degraded forest growth capacity and productivity.

Based on an understanding of trends and interactions between the key elements of the system and its drivers, such as population growth, economic development, climate change, sociocultural and political factors, or technological changes, 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.

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 Dedoplistskaro BR. 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 Dedoplistskaro BR.

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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 Dedoplistskaro BR. 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 Dedoplistskaro BR, as

well as an integrated management plan (business plan) that provides a consensual framework for implementing subsequent actions.

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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 Dedoplistskaro BR. 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 Dedoplistskaro BR. 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.

The project involves various stakeholders, private sector, and local actors who have different roles and interests in the project. The following table summarizes some of the main actors and their roles in the project. The stakeholders will be involved in the project development phase through various mechanisms such as consultations, workshops, meetings, and feedback mechanisms.

National Ministries and Government Agencies	Provide policy guidance, regulatory framework, technical support, and oversight for the project.
Agency of Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture	The administrative authority of Dedoplistskaro BR[1], responsible for managing the core and buffer zones, implementing conservation and restoration activities, and coordinating with other stakeholders.
Local Government Departments	Provide local governance, planning, service delivery, and coordination for the project.
Municipalities and villages	Represent the interests and needs of the local communities, participate in BR governance and management, and benefit from the project interventions.
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.
Vulnerable households	A subset of PAPs who may be disproportionately impacted or less able to benefit from the project due to their condition of vulnerability (e.g., poverty, gender, disability, ethnicity, etc.). They require special attention and engagement to ensure their equal representation and empowerment in the project.
NGOs	Provide technical expertise, advocacy, awareness raising, capacity building, and monitoring for the project. Some NGOs may also implement specific project activities or components.
Press and Media	Disseminate information about the project to the general public, raise awareness about the environmental issues and opportunities in Dedoplistskaro BR, and report on the project progress and outcomes.
Academic institutions	Conduct research, provide scientific data and knowledge, support innovation and learning, and contribute to monitoring and evaluation for the project.
General public, tourists, jobseekers	Have an interest in the project as potential beneficiaries or users of the environmental goods and services provided by Dedoplistskaro BR. They may also influence the project through their opinions, preferences, or behaviors.
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.

Although the Georgian government has made some positive attempts to elaborate and implement a gender equality strategy and has adopted international obligations, there is an overall consensus that it must make a greater commitment to ensure gender equality and combat all kinds of discrimination against women. As of 2021, share of women was more than 53% out of total population in Georgia. According to the Human Development Report of 2021-22 by UNDP , the Gender Development Index is 1.007 which puts Georgia in group 1 (highest group), which comprises countries with high equality in HDI achievements between women and men (absolute deviation of less than 2.5 percent) and the Gender Inequality Index is 0.280 which ranks Georgia 66th of 170 countries. Therefore, in general Georgia can be considered quite gender equitable according to these indices that, in turn, gives the project good opportunity to make progress with many issues and improvements with the above regard. The project activities will contribute directly and indirectly towards improving the condition of women by enhancing their capacity to participate in decision-making processes and to engage in ecosystem restoration and their sustainable management activities that have the potential to improve their economic situation. The project will encourage active and effective participation of women, reflect the needs of women and girls in process of the project implementation, and support gender-sensitive budgeting in planning and programming. According to the UNDP study, 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.

[1] **(2022-06-14)** UNESCO designation of new biosphere reserves. UNESCO Press Release.

https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-designates-11-new-biosphere-reserves

[2] *Source: Conservation International (2020).*

https://www.cepf.net/our-work/biodiversity-hotspots/hotspots-defined / https://zenodo.org/record/4311850#.Y7xYx3ZBy3B

[3] Fourth National Communication of Georgia under the UNFCCC (2021).

https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/4%20Final%20Report%20-%20English%202020%2030.03_0.pdf

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project description

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

The project's theory of change describes the project's logic for addressing the problems described in the project rationale and achieving the intended global environmental benefits. The theory of change is based on the following assumptions and causal pathways:

- Assumption 1: The degradation of biodiversity and ecosystems in Dedoplistskaro BR is mainly caused by unsustainable land use and agricultural practices, exacerbated by climate change and other environmental stressors.

- Assumption 2: 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 3: 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 4: 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 5: 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 6: The project's interventions will be aligned with national policies and priorities, as well as with international commitments and frameworks, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- Assumption 7: 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.

Based on these assumptions, the theory of change can be summarized as follows:

- If the project enhances national legislation, policies and capacities for sustainable use of biodiversity in Georgia's biosphere reserves (Component 1), 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.

- If the project applies and demonstrates collaborative management of Dedoplistskaro BR (Component 2), then it will improve ecosystem management and restoration of degraded drylands, enhance ecotourism opportunities, and provide alternative livelihood options for local communities.

- If the project manages knowledge effectively (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.

- If these three components are implemented successfully, then they will lead to the project objective: to improve biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of ecosystems and restoration of degraded drylands of Dedoplistskaro BR.

- If the project objective is achieved, then it will generate global environmental benefits that would not have accrued without the GEF project (additionality), such as 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% women).

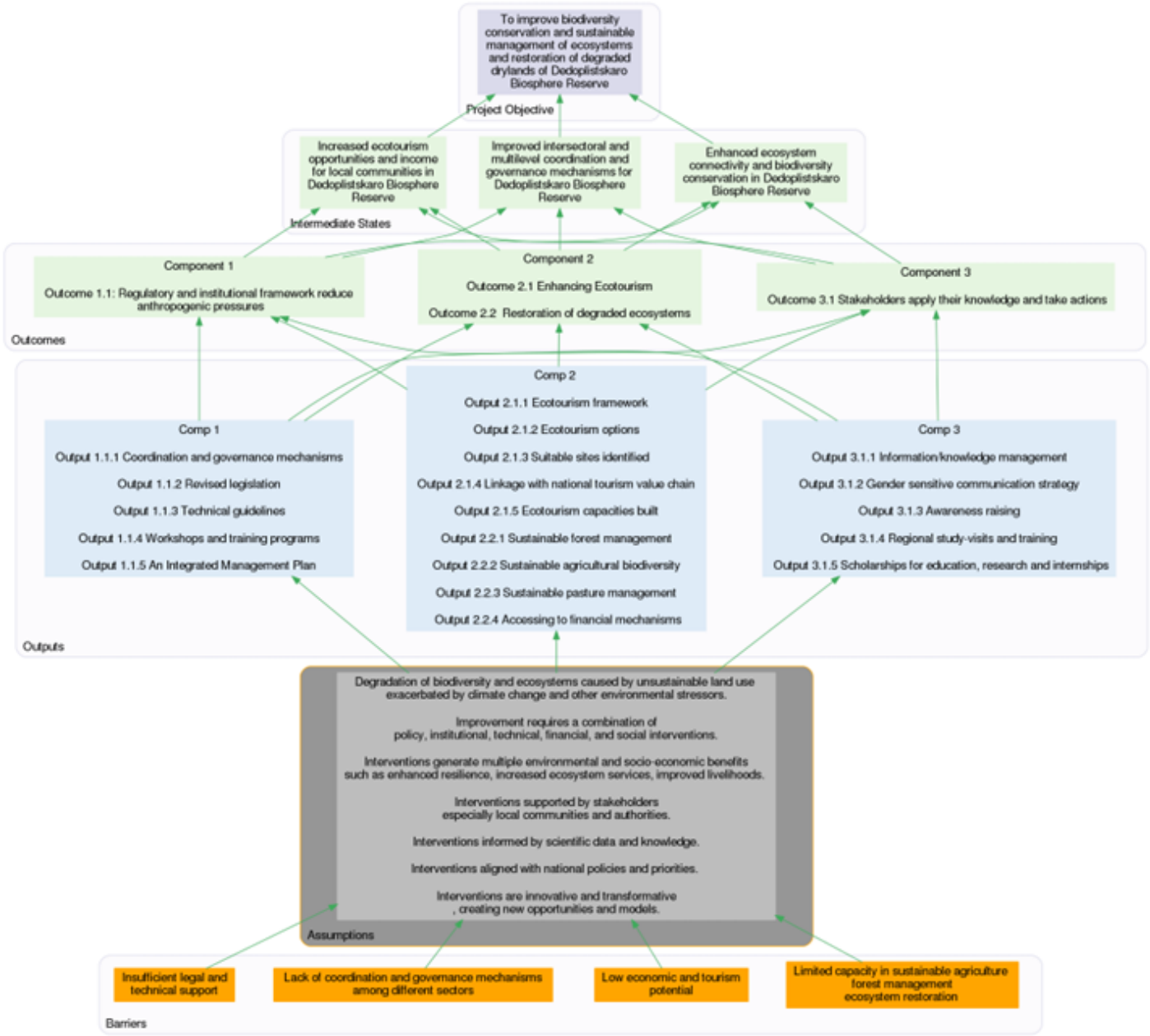
The project logic shows how the project would ensure that expected outcomes are enduring and resilient to possible future changes in the drivers identified in the simple future narratives, and to the effects of any conflicting policies. The project logic is based on the following three strategies and mechanisms:

Strategy 1: The project will enhance national legislation, policies and capacities for sustainable use of biodiversity in Georgia's biosphere reserves (Component 1), which will provide a long-term and stable framework for integrated and collaborative planning and management of Dedoplistskaro BR, as well as for other existing or potential biosphere reserves in the country. The project will also align with national policies and priorities, as well as with international commitments and frameworks, such as the CBD, the UNFCCC, the UNCCD, and the SDGs, which will ensure coherence and consistency of the project interventions with other relevant initiatives and actions at different levels.

Strategy 2: The project will apply and demonstrate collaborative management of Dedoplistskaro BR (Component 2), which will involve relevant stakeholders, especially local communities and authorities, in the governance and management of the biosphere reserve, ensuring their participation, ownership, and empowerment. The project will also provide alternative livelihood options for local communities, such as ecotourism, sustainable agriculture, and forest management, which will reduce their dependence on natural resources and increase their income and well-being. The project will also improve ecosystem management and restoration of degraded drylands, which will enhance the resilience of ecosystems and communities to climate change and other environmental stressors, as well as increase the provision of ecosystem services and values.

Strategy 3: The project will manage knowledge effectively (Component 3), which will increase awareness and understanding of the benefits of conservation and restoration efforts among different target groups, such as policy makers, practitioners, researchers, media, general public, tourists, jobseekers, etc. The project will also build capacity of stakeholders through training, workshops, study visits, scholarships, etc., which will improve their skills and knowledge for implementing sustainable practices. The project will also disseminate best practices and lessons learned from the project interventions through various channels, such as website, newsletter, printed materials, informational meetings and presentations, etc., which will support innovation and learning for future projects. The project will also conduct research and provide scientific data and knowledge to inform decision making and monitoring for the project.

See below the ToC showing the linkages from barriers to project objective:



In order to sustain the project outcomes, the project will establish three mechanisms. The project will establish a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism for Dedoplistskaro BR, which will ensure effective

communication, collaboration, and cooperation among different actors involved in or affected by the project. The mechanism will also facilitate conflict resolution and consensus building among stakeholders with different interests or perspectives. The mechanism will also enable adaptive management of the project interventions based on feedback and learning. The second mechanism will be for the development of an integrated management plan for Dedoplistskaro BR, which will provide a consensual framework for implementing subsequent forest, pasture and other related land use management actions and pilot for national upscaling. Lastly, the third mechanism will be for establishing a monitoring and evaluation system for Dedoplistskaro BR, which will measure the progress and performance of the project interventions against the expected outcomes and indicators. The system will also assess the impacts and benefits of the project interventions on ecosystems and communities.

The project components are designed to address the problem analysis and deliver the theory of change. Each component consists of a set of interventions

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. The need to improve the regulatory and institutional framework for biosphere reserves in Georgia, which is currently weak or lacking in some aspects, such as intersectoral coordination, stakeholder participation, financial sustainability. In addition, there is a need to to align the national legislation with the international frameworks and commitments related to biosphere reserves. The need to provide technical guidance and support for sustainable management of the biosphere reserves, based on scientific data and knowledge, as well as best practices and lessons learned from previous or similar projects in the country continues as a priority area. The key results planned under this component are (i) to establish intersectoral and multilevel coordination and governance mechanisms for Dedoplistskaro BR, involving relevant stakeholders from national, regional, and local levels, as well as from different sectors, such as environment, agriculture, tourism, etc.;(ii) to revise legislation to support integrated and collaborative planning and management of Dedoplistskaro BR, such as the Law on Biosphere Reserves, the Law on Protected Areas, the Law on Forests, etc., to ensure coherence and consistency with the principles and objectives of biosphere reserves; (iii) to develop technical guidelines, manuals, standards and norms for sustainable management of the biosphere reserves, such as guidelines for ecosystem restoration, sustainable forest management, sustainable pasture management, ecotourism development, etc., based on scientific data and best practices; (iii) to conduct national and local workshops and training programs for key stakeholders, such as policy makers, practitioners, researchers, media, general public, etc., to increase their awareness and understanding of the benefits of conservation and restoration efforts, as well as to build their capacity for implementing sustainable practices; and lastly (iv) to develop an integrated management plan (business plan) for Dedoplistskaro BR, which will provide a consensual framework for implementing subsequent forest, pasture and other related land use management actions and pilot for national upscaling. The plan will also define the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders for the governance and management of the biosphere reserve. The plan will also identify potential sources of funding and revenue for the biosphere reserve, such as environmental funds, payments for ecosystem services (PES), carbon credits, etc.

Component 2: Practical application and demonstration of collaborative management of Dedoplistskaro BR: This component aims to improve ecosystem management and restoration of degraded drylands, enhance ecotourism opportunities, and provide alternative livelihood options for local communities. The experience and demonstration will be based on (i) developing an integrated action framework 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; (ii) identifying and implementing ecotourism options in Dedoplistskaro BR, such as nature-based experiences, adaptive re-use of historical or cultural sites, eco-lodges, eco-facilities, etc., that are compatible with the conservation and restoration objectives of the biosphere reserve, and that provide income and employment opportunities for local communities; (iii) linking the ecotourism options in Dedoplistskaro BR with the national tourism industry value chain, to ensure a sustained demand and supply for the ecotourism products and services, as well as to promote the biosphere reserve as a destination for domestic and international tourists; (iv) building local ecotourism institutional and networking capacities, through training, mentoring, coaching, certification, etc., to improve the quality and standards of the ecotourism products and services, as well as to enhance the collaboration and coordination among different actors involved in or affected by ecotourism development; (v) developing and applying sustainable forest management approaches and operational modalities in Dedoplistskaro BR, which ensure the sustainable meeting of local community needs for forest products; (vi) promoting sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity in forest management, such as agroforestry, silvopastoralism, etc., which integrate trees with crops or livestock on the same land unit, providing multiple benefits for ecosystems and communities, such as soil fertility improvement, erosion control, carbon sequestration, diversification of income sources; (vii) adapting the existing pasture management system in collaboration with local pasture users, based on a participatory assessment of the current situation and future scenarios of pasture use and degradation in Dedoplistskaro BR and finally (viii) accessing financial mechanisms and investments for ecosystem restoration in Dedoplistskaro BR such as preparation of feasibility study for the establishment of an environmental fund for the development of the Dedoplistskaro BR, which will provide financial resources for conservation and restoration activities, as well as for supporting local livelihoods and ecotourism development.

Component 3: Knowledge management: This component aims to increase awareness and understanding 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 main interventions and activities under this component are (i) developing an information/knowledge management system for Dedoplistskaro BR, which will collect, store, analyze, and share relevant data and information on the biosphere reserve; (ii) developing a gender-sensitive communication and awareness strategy for Dedoplistskaro BR, which will define the objectives, messages, target groups, channels, and indicators for communication and awareness raising activities related to the biosphere reserve, taking into account gender balance and diversity; (iii) developing and disseminating awareness raising and technical materials for Dedoplistskaro BR, based on best practices identified through Component 1 and 2, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, videos, etc. (iv) organizing bi-lateral and regional study visits 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; (v) providing 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.

The project will generate global environmental benefits that would not have accrued without the GEF project by:

- Supporting the establishment of two biosphere reserves in Georgia, Dedoplistskaro and Three Alazani Rivers, which will contribute to the World Network of Biosphere Reserves of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, a dynamic and interactive network of sites of excellence that fosters the harmonious integration of people and nature for sustainable development.

- Restoring 10,000 ha of land and ecosystems in Dedoplistskaro BR, which will enhance the resilience and connectivity of dryland ecosystems and biodiversity, as well as increase the provision and valuation of ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration, soil fertility, water regulation, pollination, etc.

- Improving practices on 20,000 ha of landscape (excluding protected areas) in Dedoplistskaro BR, which will reduce the pressure and degradation of natural resources and biodiversity caused by unsustainable land use and agricultural practices, such as overgrazing, deforestation, monoculture, etc.

- Mitigating 1.7 million MtCO2 greenhouse gas emissions in Dedoplistskaro BR, which will contribute to the global efforts to combat climate change and its impacts, as well as to the national commitments under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreemet.

- Benefiting about 5,000 people (of which 53% women) in Dedoplistskaro BR, who will improve their livelihoods and well-being through alternative income sources, such as ecotourism, sustainable agriculture, forest management, etc., as well as through increased access to education, training, health, and social services.

The relevant stakeholders that were elaborated in Section A. Project Rationale will contribute to developing and implementing the project, and their respective roles, and how they will benefit from the project are:

- National authorities, including the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture, the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, the National Agency of Protected Areas, etc., who will provide policy and institutional support, coordination, and guidance for the project, as well as align the project interventions with national policies and priorities. They will benefit from the project by enhancing their capacity and performance for sustainable use of biodiversity in biosphere reserves, as well as by fulfilling their international commitments and frameworks.

- Regional and local authorities, the Dedoplistskaro Municipality, the Kakheti Regional Administration, etc., who will participate in the governance and management of Dedoplistskaro BR, as well as provide financial and technical support for the project interventions. They will benefit from the project by improving their service delivery and accountability for local communities, as well as by increasing their revenue and recognition from ecotourism development.

- Local communities, such as farmers, herders, forest users, etc., who will participate in the planning and implementation of the project interventions, such as ecosystem restoration, sustainable forest management, sustainable pasture management, ecotourism development, etc., as well as adopt sustainable practices and behaviors. They will benefit from the project by improving their livelihoods and well-being through alternative income sources, increased access to education, training, health, and social services, as well as by enhancing their resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change and other environmental stressors.

- Civil society organizations, such as NGOs, CBOs, media, etc., who will participate in the awareness raising and capacity building activities of the project, as well as monitor and evaluate the project interventions and outcomes. They will benefit from the project by increasing their knowledge and skills for conservation and restoration activities, as well as by strengthening their voice and influence in decision making processes.

- Private sector actors, such as tourism operators, investors, etc., who will participate in the ecotourism development activities of the project,

- Private sector actors, such as tourism operators, investors, etc., who will participate in the ecotourism development activities of the project, such as providing ecotourism products and services, investing in eco-facilities and infrastructure, etc., as well as complying with the environmental and social standards and norms of the biosphere reserve. They will benefit from the project by accessing new markets and opportunities for ecotourism development, as well as by enhancing their reputation and competitiveness.

- Research and academic institutions, such as universities, research centers, etc., who will participate in the research and knowledge generation activities of the project, such as conducting ecological and socio-economic assessments, providing scientific data and information, etc., as well as collaborating with other stakeholders for knowledge exchange and dissemination. They will benefit from the project by increasing their research capacity and output, as well as by contributing to the advancement of science and innovation for conservation and restoration activities.

The stakeholder participation in the project will ensure that the global environmental benefits will be enduring by enhancing the ownership, improving the communication and collaboration, and strengthening the capacity and performance of stakeholders for implementing sustainable practices in Dedoplistskaro BR. The project will generate knowledge, manage and exchange it, and capture lessons learned to benefit future projects by generating knowledge through various research and assessment activities, such as ecological and socio-economic assessments, feasibility studies, monitoring and evaluation, etc., which will provide scientific data and information on the ecological and socio-economic characteristics of Dedoplistskaro BR; managing knowledge through an information/knowledge management system for Dedoplistskaro BR, which will collect, store, analyze, and share relevant data and information on the biosphere reserve, using various tools; exchanging knowledge through various communication and awareness raising activities, organizing study visits and training, providing scholarships for education, research and internships.

Women will benefit from this project activities particularly from skill development (education/training) and improved access to modern technologies and knowledge, which will contribute to increasing both the incomes and social capital of women. Expected gender study under the project will include gender-mainstreaming recommendations to ensure that gender consideration is properly taken into account ecosystem restoration with a view of national gender equality legislation and existing nationwide gender equality barriers and obstacles. In addition, gender sensitive communication and awareness strategy, that is planned to be developed under Component 3 to support sustainable management of the Biosphere Reserve will include various approaches for gender mainstreaming across knowledge products. This will be also comprised of, but will not be limited to, the following:

- Use of male and female knowledge product, communication, and public education material developers for the diversity of perspectives and approaches, as well as male and female reviewers of these products.

- Use of gender-sensitive language and gender-balanced images (women not presented as victims but as agents of change).

- Examining context and content (use gender analysis; use convincing gender arguments based on reliable sources and qualitative and quantitative data including sex-disaggregated data).

- Referring to (inter-)national policy framework, policies, strategies, and plans, as applicable and appropriate.

Specifically, women and gender experts will contribute to biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of ecosystems and restoration of degraded drylands of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve by taking the following actions:

- Output 1.1.5: Women and gender experts will engage in the development of an Integrated Management Plan by providing their input and expertise on how to implement subsequent forest, pasture and other related land use management actions that are gender-sensitive and inclusive of women's needs and perspectives. They can also participate in local and national stakeholder meetings.

- Output 2.1.5: Women and gender experts will participate in training programs for key stakeholders. They will provide their input on how to link ecotourism options in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve with the national tourism industry value chain to ensure a sustained income for the communities and women.

- Output 2.2.1: Women and gender experts will participate in the development of sustainable forest management approaches and they will provide their input on how to promote gender inclusive actions of sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity.

- Output 2.2.3: Women and gender experts will collaborate with local pasture users to adapt existing pasture management systems that are gender-sensitive and inclusive of women's needs and perspectives.

- Output 3.1.5: Women and gender experts will be encouraged to apply for scholarships for education, research, and internships to increase their knowledge on integrated land use planning, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services in Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve.

Comprehensive Gender Action Plan for the project will be developed at PPG stage that will capture and utilize the dimensions of the in-depth gender analysis aiming to empower women as well as men and work towards achieving gender-equitable outcomes with consideration of:

- Equal/appropriate participation or representation of women and men – in decision-making as well as project implementation activities.

- Women's and men's different needs based on their concerns, experiences (including with regards to their roles and responsibilities), and constraints.

- Whether proposed activities/approaches will lead to gender-responsive results (and not unintendedly reinforce gender inequity).

- Collection of gender-disaggregated data.

- Development of gender indicators/targets /outputs, so they'll be part of ongoing monitoring like the rest of the project. Additionally, it will be to ensured that gender is properly mainstreamed the project budget to have clear sufficient financial and human resources dedicated to the corresponding activities.

The project will improve or develop national policies, including an improved alignment of existing policies (policy coherence) by:

- Supporting the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), which aims to protect and rehabilitate unique ecosystems, by establishing two biosphere reserves in Georgia,

- Supporting the achievement of the Land Degradation Neutrality Target by restoring 10,000 ha of land and ecosystems in Dedoplistskaro BR, as well as improving practices on 20,000 ha of landscape.

- Supporting the fulfillment of Georgia's 2030 Climate Change Strategy and Climate Action Plan (CSAP) and Georgia's Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), which aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon capture capacity of forests, by mitigating 1.7 million MtCO2 greenhouse gas emissions in Dedoplistskaro BR.

- Supporting the realization of the Fourth National Environmental Action Programme of Georgia (NEAP), which represents 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, by adapting the existing pasture management system in collaboration with local pasture users in Dedoplistskaro BR.

- Supporting the implementation of the Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy (2021-2027) & Action Plan, which aims to ensure 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, by promoting sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity in forest management, such as agroforestry, silvopastoralism, etc., as well as identifying and implementing ecotourism options in Dedoplistskaro BR.

- Supporting the attainment of the National Document for Sustainable Development Goals (2020-2030), which aims 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, by enhancing the resilience and connectivity of dryland ecosystems and biodiversity in Dedoplistskaro BR.

- Supporting the alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (adopted by CBD COP 15 in 2022), which aims to catalyze, enable and galvanize 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, by addressing several global targets at national level through the project interventions in Dedoplistskaro BR.

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. Scaling up could be achieved by replicating the biosphere reserve model in other regions of Georgia or neighboring 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. 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 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. 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.

Coordination and Cooperation with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

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

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

UNEP will not take any project execution role in this project.

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. UNEP will be the GEF Implementing Agency (IA) for the project. A task manager will be appointed to oversee the implementation of the project, assisted by support staff. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) will be the beneficiary of the project. REC Caucasus, with technical competence and administrative preparedness for entering into delivery-based contracts, will serve as the project Executing Agency (EA). A Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be established by the MEPA and chaired by the representatives of the MEPA. REC Caucasus will perform tasks of the secretariat for the PSC. Along with the representatives of the MEPA, the PSC will be comprised of representatives from relevant line ministries and agencies, regional administrations and relevant municipalities and other stakeholders. The PSC will hold meetings at least twice a year, but additional meetings can be held if necessary. The PSC should make necessary decisions/recommendations in accordance with the rules and regulations of UNEP and the GEF.

Core Indicators

Indicator 3 Area of land and ecosystems under restoration

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

Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration

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

Rangeland and pasture	5,000.00			
Cropland	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	0	0	0

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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
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	0	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			
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting	2026			
Duration of accounting	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			
Male	2,350			
Total	**5,000**	**0**	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)

The cropland, grassland areas and forest land with biodiversity enhancements are estimated based on the planned funding for pilot demonstrations. The exact areas will be determined and mapped during the PPG phase. Carbon calculations are based on FAO's exact tool. The number of people is estimated according to the number of people targeted for training programs.

Risks to Project Preparation and Implementation

Summarize risks that might affect the project preparation and implementation phases and what are the mitigation strategies the project preparation process will undertake to address these (e.g. what alternatives may be considered during project preparation- such as in terms of consultations, role and choice of counterparts, 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.

Risk Categories	Rating	Comments
Climate	Moderate	The wide specter 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.
Environment 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.
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 mln ha and restoration of forests on 13,500 ha by 2030.
Macro-economic	Low	Georgia has made much progress over the past decade. As a result of

		sound economic management, GNI per capita converged toward European Union (EU) levels, increasing from $3,048 in 2010 to $4,608 in 2021 (constant 2015 US$) . The poverty rate (measured by the national poverty line) was more than halved over the same period. Nevertheless, structural challenges persist, notably weak productivity and limited high-quality job creation. More than a third of all workers are engaged in low-productivity agriculture. Poor learning outcomes and lack of skills also constitute a barrier to private sector growth. Because of its trade openness and reliance on tourism, the demand on conservation sites, sustainable natural and agricultural resources is on the rise in Georgia. On the other end, a significant potential exists of increasing small farmers' revenues relying on sustainable practices through the payment for environmental services and other market-driven incentives. However, Georgia is vulnerable to external shocks. Nevertheless, the swift post-pandemic rebound and the recovery from the initial impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and related sanctions have demonstrated growing economic resilience, supported by sound macroeconomic management. The application for EU candidacy initiated in 2022 provides opportunities for further income convergence while requiring significant and sustained reforms. The Georgian economy has performed strongly in 2022 as adverse spillovers expected from the war in Ukraine have not materialized thus far. Buoyant tourism revenues, a surge in war-related immigration and

		financial inflows, and a rise in transit trade through Georgia have lifted growth and fiscal revenues, strengthened the current account balance and the national currency, and supported reserve accumulation. Inflation remains elevated, reflecting still high commodity prices and strong domestic demand. Growth and inflation are expected to moderate in 2023 with subsiding external inflows, less favorable global economic and financial conditions, smaller fiscal deficits, and a sufficiently tight monetary policy stance. In 2024, growth is projected to converge to its potential rate and inflation is forecast to fall to the NBG's target.
Strategies and Policies	Low	The project is aligned with strategies and policies stemmed from main commitments of the country under the MEAs, particularly to the UNCBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC: National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan; Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting National Programme; Georgia's National Action Program to Combat Desertification; Georgia's 2030 Climate Change Strategy and Climate Action Plan and Georgia's Updated Nationally Determined Contribution; Forth National Environmental Action Programme of Georgia (NEAP) for 2022-2026; Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy for 2021-2027; and National Document for Sustainable Development Goals for 2020-2030 – jointly aimed at protecting and rehabilitating of country's unique eco-systems; with LDN targets of 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; with

		priorities to ensure land restoration, food security and alleviation of poverty by providing sustainable livelihood options in arid and semi-arid regions; with aims to reduce GHG emissions to 35% below the emission levels in 1990 by 2030 etc. Basic legal instruments such as Environmental Protection Act (1996), Protected Areas Act (1996), Wildlife Act (1996), Spatial Planning, Architectural and Building Code (2018) and Forestry Code (2020) are also in place to support ecosystem restoration efforts under the proposed project.
Technical design of project or program	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.
Institutional capacity for implementation and sustainability	Moderate	Weak governance at local (municipal) level and inter-institutional coordination on ecosystem restoration and sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity issues is defined by a set of relationships that influences access to and conservation, exchange, and commercialization of biodiversity values, ecosystem services and restoration practices, that have impact on their sustainable use. Local governance and inter-institutional coordination system

		lacks clear criteria and coordination and collaboration across the sector and is still limited and/or not effective. Under the project Component 1 it is envisaged to create intersectoral and multilevel coordination and governance mechanism and make it operational during the project implementation to mitigate this risk.
Fiduciary: Financial Management and Procurement	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 Engagement	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.
Financial Risks for NGI projects		
Overall Risk Rating	Moderate	

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

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

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

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

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 forests and pasture lands, *inter alia*, to support environmentally friendly agriculture in order 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][4], *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.

Georgia joined the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework** (adopted by CBD COP 15 in 2022[2][5]), aimed at catalyzing, 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).

Taget 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.

The Project is planning to elaborate project-tailored detailed targets during PPG phase.

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][6]. 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.

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[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] [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 as per GEF Policy and are clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B).

Yes

Stakeholder Engagement

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

Yes

Were the following stakeholders consulted during project identification phase:

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities: Yes

Civil Society Organizations: Yes

Private Sector: Yes

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

Series of stakeholder consultations were held during the period of October, 2022 – March, 2023. In total, during the PIF preparation phase, 4 stakeholder engagement and consultation meetings of more than 100 people (of which 60% women and 40% men) were arranged with central government and local municipal authorities, local civil society organizations, private sector entities and representatives of the local population (communities) which actively participated in the consultation process. Key decision makers responsible for biodiversity, land degradation, protected areas and forestry from the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), Protected Areas Agency (APA), National Forest Agency (NFA) and Dedoplistskaro Municipal Administration were involved in the consultation process.

List of Consultation Meetings and Worskhops

The following consultation meetings have been organized with the following stakeholders:

9th of October, 2022; Initial Stakeholder Consultation Meeting; Governmental Agencies, CSOs, Private Sector, Partner Organizations

11th of October, 2022; Stakeholder Consultation Meeting; Governmental Agencies, CSOs, Private Sector, Partner Organizations;

27th of November, 2022; National Stakeholder Consultation Workshop; Governmental Agencies, CSOs, Private Sector, Partner Organizations;

27th of March, 2023; Stakeholder Validation Workshop; Governmental Agencies

All stakeholder groups mentioned in the end of the project rationale section will be involved in the project planning, implementation and monitoring activities. This will be part of a broader stakeholder engagement strategy, which also will encompass central and local governments, civil society and others with interest in the project. Their roles in project development have been summarized in the project rationale section.

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

Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

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

Yes

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

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

Yes

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Medium/Moderate			

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge management

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

Yes

ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

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

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	GEF Project Grant($)	Agency Fee($)	Total GEF Financing ($)
UNEP	GET	Georgia	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	Grant	2,664,727.00	253,148.00	2,917,875.00
UNEP	GET	Georgia	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-1	Grant	888,243.00	84,382.00	972,625.00

Total GEF Resources ($)		**3,552,970.00**	**337,530.00**	**3,890,500.00**

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Is Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount ($)

100000

PPG Agency Fee ($)

9500

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	PPG($)	Agency Fee($)	Total PPG Funding($)
UNEP	GET	Georgia	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	Grant	75,000.00	7,125.00	82,125.00
UNEP	GET	Georgia	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-1	Grant	25,000.00	2,375.00	27,375.00
Total PPG Amount ($)						**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	3,000,000.00
UNEP	GET	Georgia	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	1,000,000.00
Total GEF Resources					**4,000,000.00**

Indicative Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Co-financing($)
BD-1-1	GET	2,664,727.00	18875000
LD-1	GET	888,243.00	6000000

Total Project Cost		**3,552,970.00**	**24,875,000.00**

Indicative Co-financing

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	350000
Recipient Country Government	Protected Areas Agency (APA)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1950000
Recipient Country Government	Municipality of Dedoplistskaro	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1600000
Civil Society Organization	REC Caucasus	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	12000000
Civil Society Organization	REC Caucasus	Grant	Investment mobilized	6975000
Donor Agency	GIZ	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2000000
Total Co-financing				**24,875,000.00**

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) will support project activities with a total of US$ 350,000 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 programing 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 local agricultural development.

Dedoplistskaro Municipality will allocate US$ 1,600,000 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$ 2,000,000 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.

In addition, the executing agency, REC Caucasus, will support project activities with a total of US$ 18,975,000 USD co-financing. Out of total amount of co-financing, in-kind contribution in amount of 12,000,000 USD (Recurrent Expenditures) will be provided during the project implementation period in a form of voluntary labor, donation of meeting and office premises of the organisation, free use of vehicles and equipment. Grants (Investment Expenditures) with total amount of 6,975,000 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 2.000,000 USD .

(b) Cambridge Conservation Initiative (CCI) funded Programme for Endangerd Landscapes Programme (ELP) / Project: "Kakheti Steppes: Balancing Between a Living Landscape or a Future Desert". The five years (2023-2027) project is expected to to preserve the steppe and semi-arid landscapes between the Iori 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 Iori-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 525,000 USD .

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

GEF Agency(ies) Certification

GEF Agency Type	Name	Date	Project Contact Person	Phone	Email
GEF Agency Coordinator	Victoria Luque		Ersin Esen	+25420-762 4544	Victoria.Luque@un.org

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

Name	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

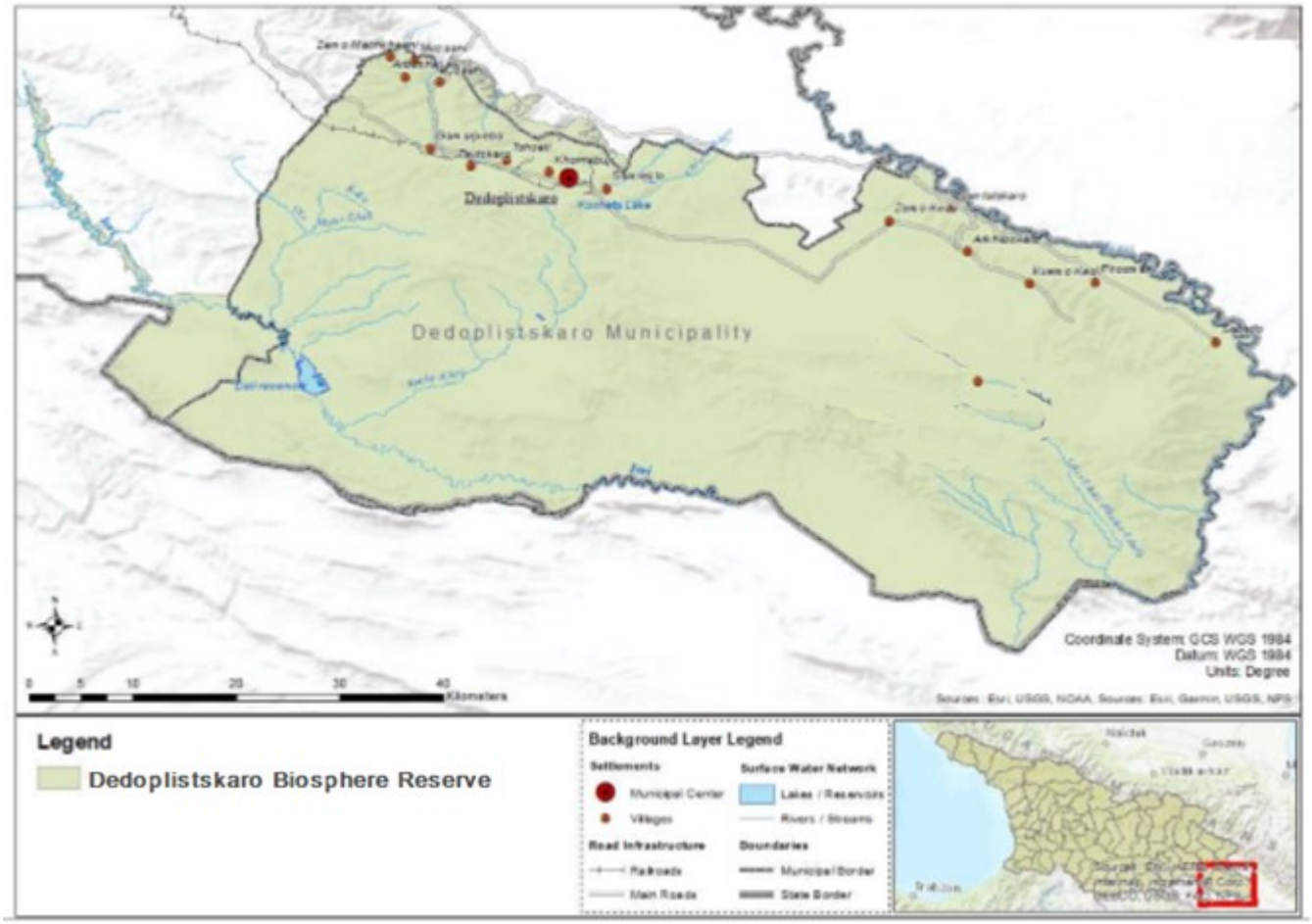
Nino Tkhilava	Head of Environment and Climate Change Department	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture	4/7/2023

ANNEX C: PROJECT LOCATION

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

Map 1. 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

Map 2. Boundaries of Dedoplistskaro Biosphere Reserve with view of Project Site Location



ANNEX D: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING

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

Title
SRIF_Safeguard Risk Identification Georgia Bioshpere_PIF stage_final

ANNEX E: RIO MARKERS

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

ANNEX F: TAXONOMY WORKSHEET

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Influencing Models	Transform policy and regulatory environments		
Stakeholders	Stakeholder engagement		
Capacity, Knowledge and Research	Knowledge Generation and Exchange		
Gender Equality	Gender mainstreaming		

Focal Area/Theme	Biodiversity		