GEF-8 REQUEST FOR CEO ENDORSEMENT/APPROVAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION 3

Project Summary 4

Project Description Overview 5

PROJECT OUTLINE 8

A. PROJECT RATIONALE 8

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION 24

Institutional Arrangement and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project 60

Core Indicators 71

Key Risks 74

C. ALIGNMENT WITH GEF-8 PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES AND COUNTRY/REGIONAL PRIORITIES 77

D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS 78

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 78

Stakeholder Engagement 79

Private Sector 79

Environmental and Social Safeguards 80

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS 80

Knowledge management 80

Socio-economic Benefits 80

ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES 81

GEF Financing Table 81

Project Preparation Grant (PPG) 81

Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation 82

Focal Area Elements 82

Confirmed Co-financing for the project, by name and type 82

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS 84

Record of Endorsement of GEF Operational Focal Point (s) on Behalf of the Government(s): 84

ANNEX C: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK 84

ANNEX D: STATUS OF UTILIZATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG) 93

ANNEX E: PROJECT MAP AND COORDINATES 94

ANNEX F: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING 100

ANNEX G: BUDGET TABLE 100

ANNEX I: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS 105

General Project Information

Project Title The Freshwater Challenge: Accelerating Restoration and Conservation of Freshwater Ecosystems	
Region Global	GEF Project ID 11833
Country(ies) Global Brazil Cambodia Tanzania	Type of Project MSP
GEF Agency(ies): WWF-US	GEF Agency Project ID G0072
Project Executing Entity(s) IUCN Conservation International The Nature Conservancy Wetlands International WWF-US	Project Executing Type GEF Agency GEF Agency CSO CSO GEF Agency
GEF Focal Area (s) International Waters	Submission Date 9/24/2025
Type of Trust Fund GET	Project Duration (Months) 48
GEF Project Grant: (a) 4,400,000.00	GEF Project Non-Grant: (b) 0.00
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c) 396,000.00	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant (d) 0.00
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d) 4,796,000.00	Total Co-financing 12,081,256.00
PPG Amount: (e) 150,000.00	PPG Agency Fee(s): (f) 13,500.00
Total GEF Resources: (a+b+c+d+e+f) 4,959,500.00	
Project Tags	

CBIT: No NGI: No SGP: No Innovation: No Competitive Window: No

Project Sector (CCM Only)

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, International Waters, Biodiversity, Biomes, Lakes, Wetlands, Rivers, Freshwater, Aquifer, Lake Basin, River Basin, SIDS : Small Island Dev States, Climate Change, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Paris Agreement, Nationally Determined Contribution, Climate Change Adaptation, Small Island Developing States, Ecosystem-based Adaptation, Climate resilience, Mainstreaming adaptation, National Adaptation Programme of Action, Least Developed Countries, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Ecosystem Approach, Sustainable Fire Management, Income Generating Activities, Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Livelihoods, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands, Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques, Sustainable Development Goals, Influencing models, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances, Stakeholders, Private Sector, Capital providers, Large corporations, Type of Engagement, Participation, Partnership, Consultation, Civil Society, Communications, Strategic Communications, Education, Public Campaigns, Community Based Organization, Non-Governmental Organization, Academia, Beneficiaries, Gender Equality, Gender results areas, Participation and leadership, Capacity Development, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Gender Mainstreaming, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Women groups, Gender-sensitive indicators, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Learning, Indicators to measure change, Theory of change, Adaptive management, Knowledge Exchange, Knowledge Generation, Training, Course, Seminar, South-South, North-South, Field Visit, Peer-to-Peer, Conference

Rio Markers

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

Project Summary

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

Rivers and wetlands are the frontlines of the climate and nature crises. However, freshwater ecosystems remain undervalued, under-funded and overlooked, and their rapid loss is undermining development, climate resilience and conservation gains. To address this global threat, the Freshwater Challenge (FWC) aims to restore 300,000 km of rivers and 350 million hectares of wetlands and conserve intact freshwater ecosystems by 2030. This project will support country-led target setting and prioritization of specific freshwater ecosystems in policies and plans, learning, and communications that strengthen country-level freshwater ecosystem restoration and conservation interventions and accelerate FWC progress towards GBF targets.

The GEF alternative will tackle barriers to investment and implementation of freshwater ecosystem conservation and restoration through: 1) supporting countries and development institutions to develop an indicator framework for the FWC to track the achievement of country-specific targets and the status of rivers and wetlands at national and transboundary levels; 2) supporting countries to operationalize their FWC objectives from source to sea; 3) enabling country learning to strengthen national FWC objectives; and 4) communicating to raise the profile of freshwater ecosystems from local to global levels. The project will benefit some 9,190 people, contribute to national/local reforms in water management, and support engagement in IW:LEARN. It will contribute to countries' commitments on

climate resilience, biodiversity, land degradation, disaster risk reduction and transboundary basin management.

Project Description Overview

Project Objective

Support country-led target setting and prioritization of specific freshwater ecosystems in policies and plans, learning, and communications that strengthen country-level freshwater ecosystem restoration and conservation interventions and accelerate progress of the Freshwater Challenge

Project Components

Component 1: Supporting Countries and Development Institutions to Monitor Freshwater Challenge Objectives

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
526,485.00	1,445,285.81

Outcome:

Outcome 1.1: Improved guidance on indicators and tracking approaches for freshwater ecosystems

Output:

Output 1.1.1: Recommended freshwater indicator framework and guidance document developed and shared

Output 1.1.2: A recommended approach to tracking is developed and shared

Output 1.1.3: Indicators and tracking recommendations piloted with a subset of the project countries and development institutions

Component 2. Supporting Countries to Operationalize their Freshwater Challenge Objectives from Source to Sea

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
1,429,738.00	4,009,347.63

Outcome:

Outcome 2.1: Increased operationalization of FWC objectives in national and sub-national plans and resourcing co-led with selected FWC member countries

Outcome 2.2: Improved integration of Source to Sea actions in country plans in selected FWC member countries

Output:

Output 2.1.1: Pipeline and gap analysis of freshwater restoration and protection interventions and resourcing in selected FWC member countries

Output 2.1.2: Selected FWC member countries supported with technical assistance to operationalize and report on FWC objectives

Output 2.2.1: Selected FWC member countries supported to integrate Source to Sea actions

Component 3: Enabling Country Learning to Strengthen National Freshwater Challenge Objectives

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
875,586.00	2,431,722.49

Outcome:

Outcome 3.1: Improved availability of knowledge and learning resources that supports effective integration, program design, and monitoring of FWC objectives by countries

Outcome 3.2: Improved knowledge among FWC member countries that supports effective FWC-related planning and implementation

Output:

Output 3.1.1: Online FWC Learning Hub with curated content established
Output 3.1.2: Country-led learning cases developed and shared in the Learning Hub

Output 3.2.1: In person and/or virtual group “Challenge Exchanges” held with FWC member countries

Output 3.2.2: In person and/or virtual peer-to-peer exchange and mentorship facilitated between FWC member countries

Component 4: Communicating to Raise the Profile of Freshwater Ecosystems Locally, Nationally, in Transboundary Basins, and Globally and engagement with IW:LEARN

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
1,102,294.00	2,867,682.17

Outcome:

Outcome 4.1: Increased awareness of freshwater ecosystem threats and solutions among the general public and decision makers

Outcome 4.2: Strengthened engagement of diverse stakeholders in FWC messaging and objectives

Output:

Output 4.1.1: FWC-related communications disseminated through multiple media channels

Output 4.1.2: Regional roundtables on freshwater challenges and solutions held

Output 4.2.1: New and diverse partnerships built in support of FWC communications

Output 4.2.2: Youth partners engagement in the FWC strengthened through “Youth Challenge Grants”

M&E

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
241,492.00	712,261.06

Outcome:

Effective on-going Monitoring and Evaluation.

Output:

- M&E reports, including project progress reports, midterm evaluation, and terminal evaluation completed, including reporting on gender-related and gender-specific results

Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
Component 1: Supporting Countries and Development Institutions to Monitor Freshwater Challenge Objectives	526,485.00	1,445,285.81
Component 2. Supporting Countries to Operationalize their Freshwater Challenge Objectives from Source to Sea	1,429,738.00	4,009,347.63
Component 3: Enabling Country Learning to Strengthen National Freshwater Challenge Objectives	875,586.00	2,431,722.49
Component 4: Communicating to Raise the Profile of Freshwater Ecosystems Locally, Nationally, in Transboundary Basins, and Globally and engagement with IW:LEARN	1,102,294.00	2,867,682.17
M&E	241,492.00	712,261.06
Subtotal	**4,175,595.00**	**11,466,299.16**
Project Management Cost	224,405.00	614,956.84
Total Project Cost ($)	**4,400,000.00**	**12,081,256.00**

Please provide Justification

PMC is slightly greater than 5% to allow for a full time project manager and a finance and administrative staff person to be partially funded. The level of complexity of sub-granting to partner organizations requires highly qualified staff members. The level of staff and costs for hosting in the IUCN regional office of Bonn and Gland headquarters are reflected in the staff salaries.

PROJECT OUTLINE

A. PROJECT RATIONALE

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

Justification for the Project

To address the rapid decline of freshwater ecosystems, the Freshwater Challenge (FWC) was launched at the UN Water Conference (New York) in March 2023 This country-led initiative aims

to restore 300,000 km of rivers and 350 million ha of wetlands (equivalent to 30% of degraded rivers and 30% of degraded or lost wetlands)[1][1] and conserve freshwater ecosystems important for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, in line with “30x30” commitments in the GBF and complementary with the efforts of the High Ambition Coalition on Nature and People. As a country-led initiative, governments form the FWC membership (for the current membership status, see: https://www.freshwaterchallenge.org/joining). As of October 2025, 54 national governments and the European Union have joined the FWC. Thirty-eight of the FWC member countries are GEF recipient countries, including seventeen Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and two Small Island Developing States (SIDs).

The FWC is supported by a coalition of organizations and agencies: Conservation International (CI), the World Conservation Union (IUCN), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Wetlands International (WI), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Secretariats of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and UN Convention on Combatting Desertification (UNCCD). In addition to the supporting coalition of the FWC, multilateral development banks, the Green Climate Fund, and philanthropic organizations are committed to improving freshwater outcomes through the FWC. The FWC also requires the proactive support of water-dependent cross-sectoral actors from agriculture, infrastructure, finance, energy, urban planning, conservation, and other areas as well as stakeholder engagement from local to global levels. The FWC Supporting Coalition is already actively engaging a range of stakeholders in support of the FWC.

The FWC aims to *elevate* restoration and conservation of freshwater ecosystems in global, regional, transboundary, and national government strategies and processes; define and *substantiate* targets at a national scale and ownership of and contributions by country and locally-based stakeholders; and *accelerate* overall investment in, and implementation of, restoration and conservation of freshwater ecosystems. In addition, the FWC aims to make investments more effective and substantially increase the environmental, social and economic returns of those investments. The FWC aims to serve as a “matchmaker” for country members with potential funding sources to leverage greater investment towards meeting FWC commitments. By doing so, the FWC will support countries to reach their international commitments (e.g., on climate, biodiversity, land degradation, disaster risk reduction (DRR), and the SDGs) in synergy with their ambitions for a sustainable socioeconomic development.

This project responds to the requests by FWC member countries to the Supporting Coalition of the FWC. Member countries would like support to integrate freshwater ecosystem objectives into policies and plans across key water-dependent sectors, unlock resources and build expertise to implement freshwater ecosystem restoration and protection in their countries, and inspire and collectively engage stakeholders- like the private sector- to drive strategic basin-level investments and interventions. Therefore, in the context of the global environmental and resilience problem and barriers discussed below, this project’s objective is to support country-led target setting and prioritization of specific freshwater ecosystems, learning, and communications that strengthen their freshwater ecosystem interventions and accelerate progress towards the achievement of their 2030 FWC commitments.

Project Geography:

The project is designed as a truly global initiative, bringing together partners and beneficiaries from around the world with a shared commitment to advancing freshwater goals. By selecting a pilot group of countries, the project aims to demonstrate how targeted engagement can drive stronger integration of freshwater priorities into national agendas, while also serving as a catalyst for greater mobilization of future freshwater funding. As part of this approach, three countries have been identified as the main stakeholders for demonstration activities, providing diverse regional perspectives and creating an opportunity to showcase scalable models that can inspire broader adoption and investment in freshwater conservation worldwide.

The three countries: Brazil, Cambodia and Tanzania, have been selected as the main stakeholders for this component, based on criteria (see **Annex 7**) that were developed and applied during project preparation, including: GEF eligibility; regional balance; inclusion of LDCs and SIDS, evidence of active commitment to FWC operationalization (readiness) in their country; potential to generate future global environmental benefits and enhance resilience; and commitment to transboundary basin collaboration. Further, it considered which countries are already supported under the GEF's ERIP (10 countries in both FWC and ERIP), to take advantage of potential complementarities. In coordination with the lead FWC Core Partners for each of the selected countries, the country offices (CI Cambodia, Wetlands International Brazil and TNC Tanzania) will be responsible for delivering the outputs under Outcomes 2.1 and 2.2. Geographies within each of the countries are described below.

Brazil:
The São Francisco River Basin, covering approximately 639,219 km² (nearly 8% of Brazil's land area) stretches around 2,900 km from its origins in the Serra da Canastra to the Atlantic Ocean (Andrade, 2024). Crossing seven states and 508 municipalities, this vast area includes three distinct biomes - the Cerrado, Caatinga, and Atlantic Forest - and is home to about 15 million people who depend directly or indirectly on the water, biological, and economic resources provided by the river. The basin also supports significant biodiversity, with over 140 species of fish and various endangered mammals. With an average discharge of approximately 2,700 cubic meters per second, the São Francisco River traverses some of Brazil's driest regions and plays a vital role in the country's water supply, irrigation, hydropower generation, and transportation, and supporting towns such as Petrolina and Juazeiro that thrive on irrigated fruit and export industries (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2025). The basin region represents about 10.26% of Brazil's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), equivalent to approximately USD 200 billion, highlighting its strategic importance for the country's sustainable development.

The vast São Francisco River Basin holds exceptional importance in the history of Brazil's colonization and settlement, as well as in the cultural and identity formation of the Brazilian people. It could even be said that it is within this basin that the first Brazilian identities emerged—a new, mixed people with distinct identities and cultural profile. Within this vast and diverse basin territory, it became necessary, for various reasons, to select a smaller unit within it—one that would possess its own "identity," while maintaining alignment with the project's requirements and ensuring a clear relationship between "the part (the sub-basin)" and "the whole (the basin)" within its broader context. With respect to hydrographic organization—and with a view toward the future replicability of the project and its lessons learned, the Velhas River sub-basin was chosen, as it is the most degraded of the São Francisco sub-basins, the first to be settled, and home to an important and well-studied lagoon system that serves as a nursery for biodiversity. The Velhas River sub-basin presents both areas in urgent need of rehabilitation and others that remain relatively pristine, with conservation characteristics that will enable the project's success. Moreover, in the event of success, the project can be replicated in other São Francisco sub-basins, with any necessary adaptations. The selection of the Velhas River sub-basin thus simultaneously responds to the technical need to address long-

standing environmental challenges in the basin and sub-basin, as well as to the aspirations and formal requests of the River Basin Committees of both the São Francisco and the Velhas Rivers.

Cambodia:

Tonle Sap Lake is the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia, covering over 1.6 million hectares. The Tonle Sap Basin extends over 80,000 square kilometres, accounting for 44% of Cambodia's total land area (Tonle Sap Information Guide, 2007). Tonle Sap is one of the world's largest and most productive inland fisheries, directly supporting the livelihoods of over one million people. A UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, the lake contains three Ramsar sites and provides habitat for around 200 fish species and a range of globally threatened and migratory species. During the Asian monsoon, the Tonle Sap River, fed by sediment-rich water from the transboundary Mekong River system, reverses flow, and the lake level rises by up to eight meters, inundating a vast area of floodplain including unique flooded forest biome. The lake's productivity and ecological integrity hinges on this seasonal flood pulse, supporting an inland fishery that provides around 300,000 to 500,000 tons of fish each year that provide protein and employment to millions of people.

Tanzania:

The Malagarasi–Muyovozi Wetlands in northwestern Tanzania form one of East Africa's largest wetland systems—spanning about 3.25 million hectares and comprising a diverse array of habitats, including permanent and seasonal swamps, lakes, floodplains, and rivers that support the livelihoods of over 200,000 people and exceptional biodiversity. These wetlands cover over 30% of Lake Tanganyika's transboundary catchment area, playing a critical role in maintaining water quality, supporting fisheries, and sustaining livelihoods. The Greater Malagarasi-Moyowosi Ramsar Landscape is located within the Eastern Afromontane global biodiversity hotspot and has been identified as a Key Biodiversity Area. The Greater Malagarasi-Muyovozi Ramsar Landscape faces some of the greatest population growth and resource use pressures in the country (including high encroachment and degradation rates due to deforestation and agricultural encroachment) while providing a host of irreplaceable ecosystem services to not only the people living there but also to Lake Tanganyika. The Ramsar-designated wetland ecosystem is nourished by five main rivers: the Malagarasi, Muyovozi, Kigosi, Gombe, and Ugalla, which are of significant ecological, economic, and social importance but face multiple threats that jeopardize their sustainability. The project will prioritise key sub-catchment areas in Kigoma, Tabora and Shinyanga due to their ecological importance, high biodiversity, and vulnerability to environmental pressures such as land-use changes, unsustainable agriculture and alterations in hydrology. The increasing demand for socio-economic development in the region now requires a comprehensive environmental flow assessment that accounts for sedimentation and the growing abstraction of water resources that may impact both the globally significant wetlands and Lake Tanganyika.

The global environmental problem and root causes

Freshwater ecosystems are the world's life support systems, providing water, food and livelihoods, while supporting biodiversity within and around them and buffering people against climate change-related impacts.

However, rivers and wetlands have experienced the worst declines of all ecosystems globally. Since 1970, some 22.40% of all natural wetlands have been lost – an annual average global rate of -0.52% (GWO 2025), only one-third of large rivers flow freely from source to sea, and freshwater species populations have fallen by 85% (WWF 2024).

Although freshwater ecosystems cover less than 1% of the Earth's surface, humans are treating them as if they were a limitless resource. Surface water and groundwater resource use for growing

populations, food production, industry, energy and economic development is increasing and already exceeding sustainable limits in many parts of the world. Direct conversion of freshwater ecosystems to other uses is also a major threat – wetlands are drained for more “productive” uses and streams are channelized in an effort to control water flows and levels. Freshwater ecosystems are further threatened by land use practices that cause erosion and runoff of toxic chemicals and nutrients, poorly planned infrastructure that changes flow regimes and causes fragmentation, industrial and domestic use and discharge that impacts water quality. Human-caused changes to wetlands that result in anomalous water regimes usually trigger a cascade of ecological effects, including species losses and invasions and altered biogeochemical cycles. These, in turn, often cause a loss in ecosystem services. Increased population growth and economic development within a region invariably creates multiple drivers of wetland degradation (e.g., see Galatowitsch S.M. 2018).

Furthermore, climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of water-related natural disasters, namely droughts and floods. Natural disasters across the world, including those exacerbated by climate change, are overwhelmingly water-related (90%). 2024 alone has seen a number of record storms and temperature extremes. Nearly two-thirds of the global population (i.e. 4 billion people) already experience severe water scarcity at least one month of the year (GCEW (2024)). By 2050, five times as much land is likely to face “extreme drought”, 5.7 billion people are likely to live in water-scarce areas (UNCCD 2022), and the number of people at risk from floods is projected to rise to around 1.6 billion (UNESCO 2020). Water-scarce regions could see their economic growth rates decline by as much as 6% of GDP by 2050 due to water-related impacts on agriculture, health, and incomes (WEF 2015).

While healthy rivers and wetlands are key to the response to the climate and nature crisis, and are recognized in important international development frameworks, freshwater ecosystems are largely undervalued, underfunded and overlooked in national policies, plans and investment strategies. Most of the economic value of freshwater ecosystems (US$50 trillion annually) is taken for granted because their ecosystem services are provided mostly in the form of indirect benefits– the natural processes of water purification, sediment delivery, biodiversity support and protection from extreme events (WWF 2023). These are also overlooked when investments are made in built infrastructure for water management. This negatively influences the provision of funding for freshwater ecosystem protection and maintenance.

Freshwater ecosystems are also overlooked because they are cross-cutting– interacting with food, energy and water systems that each tend to focus narrowly on volume and quality with less attention to the rivers and wetlands providing the services. The interdependence of sustainable groundwater use and protection also receives limited attention. Although freshwater ecosystems are receiving increased attention as “nature-based solutions” to climate change, there are few examples of freshwater-related adaptation solutions implemented at scale. Altogether, this is leading to the rapid loss of freshwater ecosystem services and biodiversity, which is undermining any hard-won development, climate resilience and conservation gains.

Barriers

This project will tackle the key barriers to investment in, and implementation of, freshwater ecosystem restoration and protection at country level:

- Lack of standard indicators and easy, transparent tracking to report on country commitments for freshwater ecosystems, aligned with indicator frameworks utilized by multilateral and bilateral institutions and the private sector.
- Insufficient policy coherence and prioritization of freshwater ecosystem targets in key water dependent sector policies, plans, and regulations.

- Lack of technical knowledge and information on freshwater ecosystems (including their functioning, as well as their historical, current, and anticipated future status), and how to design, implement, regulate and monitor freshwater ecosystem interventions - across government ministries and agencies.
- Lack of awareness of the key role that freshwater ecosystems play and the value of freshwater ecosystem services in achieving diverse biodiversity, climate resilience, economic, and international development objectives.

Future Scenario Narratives
The global environmental problem identifies climate change as a key driver of water scarcity across many regions, while increasing the frequency and intensity of water-related natural disasters, namely droughts and floods. Socio-economic development under increasing population pressure is the main underlying cause of multiple anthropogenic drivers of wetland degradation. The following future scenario narratives describe how the future could unfold for freshwater resources under each of the IPPC's Shared Socioeconomic Pathways (SSPs) (IPCC 2021), developed to explore possible futures of global socioeconomic development:

SSP1: Sustainability ('Taking the Green Road')
In a future shaped by SSP1, freshwater resources are sustainably managed through widespread adoption of water-saving technologies, strong environmental policies, and global cooperation on shared water basins. Governments prioritize ecosystem restoration, ensuring healthy watersheds and robust aquifers. Urban areas boast advanced water recycling systems, while agriculture shifts to precision irrigation methods, drastically reducing water waste. Public awareness campaigns foster conservation behaviors, and equitable governance ensures access to clean water for all, creating a resilient and balanced freshwater future.

SSP2: 'Middle of the Road'
Under SSP2, freshwater management sees moderate improvements, but progress is uneven across regions. Some countries invest in upgraded water infrastructure and pollution control, while others struggle with inefficiencies and outdated systems. Population growth and climate change strain water supplies in vulnerable areas, leading to periodic shortages and local conflicts. While technological advancements help mitigate some challenges, limited global coordination and inconsistent policy implementation leave many regions grappling with water stress.

SSP3: Regional Rivalry ('A Rocky Road')
In the fragmented world of SSP3, competition for scarce freshwater resources intensifies as countries prioritize self-reliance over collaboration. Over-extraction and mismanagement lead to the degradation of rivers, lakes, and aquifers, while pollution from unchecked industrial and agricultural activities further diminishes water quality. Poor regions face severe shortages, exacerbating public health crises and migration pressures. Without international cooperation, disputes over shared water basins become more frequent, heightening geopolitical tensions.

SSP4: Inequality ('A Road Divided')
In SSP4, freshwater access becomes a marker of inequality, with wealthy regions leveraging advanced technologies like desalination and efficient irrigation systems, while poorer areas face growing water scarcity. Industrial water use and pollution disproportionately affect marginalized communities, as environmental regulations are lax in less developed areas. Urban elites enjoy uninterrupted water supplies, but rural populations struggle with droughts, contaminated sources, and limited infrastructure. This disparity in access fuels social unrest and exacerbates inequalities in health and economic opportunities.

SSP5: Fossil-fueled Development ('Taking the Highway')
In the high-energy world of SSP5, economic growth enables large-scale engineering projects like dams and desalination plants to secure freshwater supplies in the short term. However, the continued reliance on fossil fuels exacerbates climate change, leading to more frequent droughts and extreme weather events that disrupt water availability. Intensive industrial and agricultural water use results in significant over-extraction and pollution, compromising ecosystems and long-term sustainability. While affluent regions mitigate some challenges through technology, poorer areas bear the brunt of water insecurity.

Conclusion
Under each of those scenarios, the project strategy is still relevant, although varied in its likely levels of impact. By enabling more effective tracking of freshwater resource status, more effective prioritization of freshwater resources in national policies and plans, increased capacity for tackling technical, institutional and regulatory issues, and strengthened communication of global freshwater issues, the project should contribute towards more effective and resilient governance of freshwater resources across all scenarios through the growing Freshwater Challenge partnership.

Reference:
IPCC, 2021: Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. doi:10.1017/9781009157896.001.
https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM_Stand_Alone.pdf

2. Baseline

Global: The project will complement ongoing investments and actions aligned with numerous global frameworks and agreements, in particular the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) through the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), the CBD-Ramsar Convention on Wetlands joint work plan, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification's (UNCCD) goal for Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Water Climate Pathway under the Marrakesh Partnership, the UNFCCC Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Minamata Convention on Mercury, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. This includes investments through MDBs, bilaterals and other development partners, and other financial mechanisms of UNFCCC, the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund.

The Freshwater Challenge (FWC) was launched at the UN Water Conference in New York in March 2023 by the governments of Colombia, DR Congo, Ecuador, Gabon, Mexico and Zambia. The creation of the Freshwater Challenge was inspired by the Call for Action to reverse the loss of freshwater biodiversity by the Ministers of Colombia, The Netherlands, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mexico and Gabon at the fifteenth Conference of the Parties (COP15) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held in Montreal in December 2022. In December 2023, the Freshwater Challenge was chosen as one of the Water Outcomes of UNFCCC COP28 Presidency in the United Arab Emirates – providing an ideal platform for governments to join the Challenge. Thirty-eight countries seized the opportunity to join the challenge at a Ministerial Roundtable on Protection and Restoration of Freshwater Ecosystems in Dubai, hosted by the COP28 Presidency.

With many countries in the process of revising their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs) to incorporate the GBF targets under the CBD, the FWC seeks to incorporate or

strengthen freshwater ecosystem restoration and conservation targets in NBSAPs, as well as in national implementation plans for the UNFCCC, UNCCD, SDGs, and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

The Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the UNCCD, and UNEP are Core Partners of the FWC and participate in monthly meetings for the overall governance and strategic direction of the FWC initiative. The Core Partners will serve as the Global Project Steering Committee (PSC) and will be the highest decision-making authority for the project. Conversely, IUCN, WWF and Wetlands International are International Organization Partners (IOPs) of the Ramsar Convention and participate regularly as observers in all meetings of the Conference of the Parties, the Standing Committee, and the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP). Background and context on the Freshwater Challenge project has also been shared with the GEF Scientific and Technical Advisor Panel Member for International Waters for visibility and awareness on plans for a GEF project to support this global initiative.

In addition, UN FAO, Birdlife International, International Water Management Institute (IWMI), and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust are Global Supporting Partners of the FWC (i.e. non-state actors recognized as organisations supporting the implementation of the FWC objectives in one or more countries or globally). Supporting Partners are engaged regularly through quarterly Freshwater Challenge (FWC) calls with countries and through working group meetings. FAO participates actively in both the FWC Technical Assistance Working Group and the FWC Policy and Advocacy Working Group.

Since COP28, the FWC has been featured across global conventions. At COP29, it was highlighted in the Baku Declaration on Water for Climate Action. The Freshwater Challenge was featured during the One Water Summit, organized on the margins of the UNCCD COP 16 in Saudia Arabia (Dec 2024). In addition, at UNCCD COP16 the Riyadh Action Agenda was launched and the FWC is highlighted as a flagship initiative. UNCCD has contributed funding designed to catalyze large-scale Freshwater Challenge finance. WWF has been invited by UNCCD to co-organize Water Day at COP 17 in Mongolia (August 2026), which will be an important opportunity to highlight and drive progress on the FWC.

Ramsar COP15 in Zimbabwe (July 2025) hosted a side event on the FWC, and COP15 Resolution 25.15 on freshwater ecosystem restoration, was adopted at Ramsar COP15, which calls on Ramsar Contracting Parties, the Secretariat and STRP to engage and collaborate with the FWC. The Freshwater Challenge is included in the UN Water 2023 Action Agenda and is working with the co-hosts of UN Water 2026 to ensure that the FWC is included in the Dialogues of the conference and the outcomes of the Action Agenda. Through UNEP's support, the Freshwater Challenge will be included in a UNEA event in Nairobi (December 2025), showcasing synergies across national plans.

It will also complement transboundary actions under the two global water conventions, the 1997 UN Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses and the 1992 UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes. The project will build off action by stakeholders at the global level, such as the UN Water Action Agenda, the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership, the Mangrove Breakthrough, the Global Peatlands Initiative, the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation (AGWA), and the CEO Water Mandate's Water Resilience Coalition. The project will also coordinate with and learn from the experiences and tools of the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, an intergovernmental group of 120 countries working to achieve 30x30 commitments, particularly around land and

oceans. The FWC will look for opportunities to liaise and coordinate with the HAC, especially in the context of the CBD.

The process for selection of FWC Member Countries to participate in project demonstration activities in Component 2 was as follows. In consultation with all FWC Core Partners and selected Member Countries, WWF US (the Agency) followed the steps outlined below to arrive at a proposed shortlist of FWC Member Countries to be selected for participation in Component 2 of the project. WWF-US implemented the selection criteria as outlined in the PIF, following a sequential approach, which is described in detail in **Annex 7.**

First, the following Filter Criteria were applied sequentially: 1) The Country is a FWC Member Country; and 2) The Country is GEF-eligible. This produced **a list of 37 Countries** that could be eligible for selection. These 37 Countries were then divided into 3 categories: 1) LDCs, 2) SIDs, and 3) Other. Going forward, these categories were treated separately, e.g. the shortlisting Criteria below were applied to each category, from which the following number of countries was selected: LDCs: 2-3 Countries; SIDs:1 Country; and Other: 1-2 Countries.

Next, the following 'Shortlisting Criteria' were applied in a weighted manner to arrive at a ranked, shortlist of countries, with the objective of choosing a regionally diverse set of up to four countries, that meet at least two of the three categories: Is 1) an LDC; or 2) a SID; and 3) Has some degree of representation/active engagement with the youth parliament. In addition to the above criteria for shortlisting, feasibility and impact potential were key. The application of the above criteria resulted in a **shortlist of 19 countries** which were then **grouped by region**.

The Agency then checked for the following criteria: Where relevant, evidence of commitment to transboundary collaboration (i.e., part of a transboundary River Basin Organization, a signatory of one of the two global water conventions, or has a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) in place).

Out of the remaining countries, **there were 6** that aligned with at least 4 of the following criteria: a) Eligible to receive GEF funding; b) Is an LDC or SIDS; c) Has actively engaged with the FWC initiative; d) Has Youth Parliament Engagement: and e) Is engaged with the IP on Restoration.

A final shortlist of 6 countries that represented LAC, Asia, Africa, Pacific, LDCs and SIDS was arrived at.

A maximum of 2 countries per region then needed to be selected, with the aim of having at least 3 regions represented. A *maximum* of 3 countries are already supported under the GEF's ERIP, so this project does not directly overlap all countries.

The final selection based on the criteria and readiness to join the project was: Brazil, Tanzania and Cambodia.

The country selection process was completed in May 2025, after which an introductory briefing call was held with the agreed FWC Core Partner country office to lead the project in each country – Wetlands International

in Brazil, Conservation International in Cambodia and The Nature Conservancy in Tanzania – together with representatives of the lead government agencies for the demonstration activities (see the Stakeholder Engagement Plan for contact details). A template was then shared with each FWC Core Partner country office to complete for their proposed activities for inclusion in Component 2. A project workshop was then convened during Ramsar COP15 in Zimbabwe on 28th July at which the project design was presented in detail and each country was invited to present its proposal for review and discussion, including available Ramsar Focal Points and FWC Focal Points for each country. The final completed forms were then requested by early August, and underwent iterative review, revision and integration into the CEO ER package before submission to GEF by 7th September.

Consequently, the project will leverage a number of existing and planned initiatives from national governments in the selected countries - Brazil, Cambodia and Tanzania (see **Annex 8)**.

In Brazil, current freshwater conservation efforts and the status of freshwater conservation are as follows (see Annex 8A for further information):

Brazil has a strong and comprehensive legal and institutional framework for the environmental protection of freshwater ecosystems, though implementation across its vast territory remains uneven. The cornerstone legislation is Law No. 9,433 of 1997, which established the *National Water Resources Policy* and the *National Water Resources Management System (SINGREH)*. This law introduced key principles such as the recognition of water as a public good, decentralized and participatory basin management, and the integration of water use with environmental protection. It designates river basins as the fundamental management units and promotes both water quality and quantity conservation. The federal agency Agência Nacional de Águas e Saneamento Básico (ANA) is responsible for regulating and monitoring water use, managing water rights, and coordinating inter-state basin management. Complementary laws—such as the National Environmental Policy (Law No. 6,938/1981) and the Forest Code (Law No. 12,651/2012)—reinforce watershed and riparian ecosystem protection through environmental licensing, restoration requirements, and the creation of protected areas. While these frameworks demonstrate Brazil's leadership in integrated water resources management, continued investment in enforcement, monitoring, and basin-level coordination is essential to secure lasting protection of freshwater ecosystems. The project-supported approach seeks to contribute towards addressing policy incoherence related to demand for water resources, including the energy sector (hydroelectric power), agriculture sector (irrigation water needs), urban supply needs, as well as meeting environmental flows and connectivity requirements, and the distribution of water-related revenues. This will be advanced through promoting an integrated approach involving river basin and sub-basin committees that should now be supported by the federal government—both through the regionalized application of appropriate public policies and through the implementation of international technical cooperation projects.

Brazil and its regional partners are advancing several large-scale water management initiatives. The Water for All Program (2023 to 2026), executed under Brazil's *New Growth Acceleration Program (Novo PAC)*, is investing BRL 30.8 billion to expand rural water access through cisterns, desalination systems, and watershed revitalization (Government of Brazil, 2023). The São Francisco River Integration Project (PISF), implemented by the Brazilian government with support from the National Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES), is the country's largest water infrastructure project, ensuring water security for more than 12 million people across four drought prone northeastern states (BNDES, 2024). Regionally, the Amazonas Project, coordinated by Brazil's National Water and Basic Sanitation Agency (ANA) with the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO), brings together eight Amazon Basin countries to standardize water monitoring, strengthen cooperation, and expand hydrological networks through 2025 (ACTO, 2024). In Rio Grande do Norte, the Oiticica Complex, led by the Ministry of Regional Development under Novo PAC, expands reservoir capacity nearly tenfold, benefiting about 294,000 residents across 22 municipalities (Government of Brazil, 2024). Finally, the SACRE Project

(Integrated Water Solutions for Resilient Cities), spearheaded by Ricardo Hirata at the University of São Paulo, is advancing research on river and aquifer interactions to design integrated solutions for urban water resilience (SACRE, 2025).

In Cambodia, the current freshwater conservation activities under implementation and the status of freshwater conservation are as follows (see Annex 8B for further information);

The policy and regulatory framework in Cambodia provide a foundation for the environmental protection of freshwater ecosystems, though their practical impact could be further strengthened. The **2007 Law on Water Resources Management** and the **2008 Law on Environmental Protection and Natural Resource Management** form the core legal framework, empowering the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MOWRAM) to regulate basin management, control pollution, and protect surface and groundwater resources. These laws recognize the importance of maintaining ecological balance within river basins and wetlands to sustain biodiversity and ecosystem services. The **2023 Code on Environment and Natural Resources** further advances this framework by integrating water resource protection within broader environmental governance, aiming to strengthen coordination and sustainable management across sectors. While these policies collectively signal Cambodia's commitment to conserving its freshwater ecosystems, their full effectiveness will depend on improved implementation, enforcement, and stakeholder participation at national and local levels.

Protected Wetland Areas Management

Cambodia is strengthening the management of its protected wetland areas, with particular emphasis on Boeung Prek Lapouv Protected Landscape and Anlung Pring Protected Landscape. At Boeung Prek Lapouv, efforts include water management trials to adapt to changing hydrology, habitat restoration in areas affected by water scarcity, and collaboration with local communities on sustainable resource use, while also protecting rare migratory bird species such as the black headed ibis, glossy ibis, and painted stork (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, 2023). The site is also being developed for designation as a new Ramsar site of international importance (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, 2023). At Anlung Pring, conservation measures focus on safeguarding the endangered Sarus Crane through community led ecotourism initiatives and the promotion of alternative livelihoods, including crane friendly rice production, which links biodiversity protection with local economic benefits (BirdLife International, 2024).

During project consultation meetings with line ministries and key NGO partners, participants widely acknowledged the need for stronger linkages between cross-sectoral policies and legal frameworks in Cambodia. A recurring concern was the current baseline scenario of siloed nature of planning processes, where ministries operate independently based on their specific mandates and investment priorities, often resulting in fragmented and uncoordinated development efforts.

Several examples illustrate these policy inconsistencies:

- Hydropower Development: Projects are primarily driven by national electricity targets outlined in the Power Development Strategy. However, these initiatives often lack comprehensive assessments of long-term socio-economic and environmental impacts, particularly on freshwater ecosystems and community livelihoods.
- Rice Export Policy: While designed to enhance agricultural productivity and climate resilience through expanded irrigation and reservoir infrastructure, the policy risks undermining freshwater ecosystem connectivity and sustainability if not harmonized with environmental safeguards.

- Sand Mining Activities: Intended to deepen riverbeds along the Mekong River, Tonle Sap, and coastal rivers, these operations have led to severe erosion, riverbank collapse, and disruption of local communities and cultural heritage. See also (here): How sand mining is eroding rivers, livelihoods, and cultures.
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These inconsistencies underscore the importance of integrating cross-sectoral policy coherence into the design of FWC pilot activities. CI Cambodia will use these insights to inform pilot interventions that promote upstream-downstream connectivity, ecosystem integrity, and inclusive planning. Furthermore, CI will facilitate inter-ministerial dialogues and policy coordination efforts to address these gaps and ensure that future investment pipelines are both environmentally sustainable and socially equitable.

In Tanzania, current freshwater conservation activities under implementation and the status of freshwater conservation is as follows (see Annex 8C for further information);

Tanzania has an established legal and policy framework to guide the management and protection of freshwater ecosystems, though practical enforcement and coordination remain ongoing challenges. The Water Resources Management Act of 2009 serves as the cornerstone for sustainable management of surface and groundwater, emphasizing water allocation, pollution control, catchment protection, and stakeholder participation to safeguard ecological integrity. The Water Resources Management (Amendment) Act of 2022 further strengthens institutional arrangements for basin-level management and monitoring of environmental flows. The National Water Policy of 2002 provides overarching direction for integrated water resources management, recognizing the ecological value of wetlands, rivers, and lakes, and calling for the conservation of aquatic biodiversity and maintenance of ecosystem functions. Together, these frameworks provide a solid legal foundation for freshwater ecosystem protection, though their effectiveness depends on continued investment in implementation, data collection, and cross-sectoral coordination.

To date, environmental flow assessments have been conducted on only six Tanzanian rivers: Pangani, Wami, Ruaha, Mara, Ruvu, and Rufiji. The Ministry of Water has undertaken these assessments with support from both national and international partners (for example, see: Ruaha River flows assessment https://riomagdalena.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/wwf_2010_greatruahariver_efa_finalreport.pdf), water allocation plan for the transboundary Mara River (https://nilebasin.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/Water%20Allocation%20Plan%20WAP_Mara%20River_%203-29-2020.p) and establishment of 'Mara River Day' celebrated every year on 15th September, now under the East African Community (EAC) (see: https://www.wwf.or.tz/?45802/Tanzania-and-Kenya-Signs-the-12-Resolutions-for-the-Mara-River).

However, the proposal for TANESCO to construct a hydropower plant at Igamba Falls on the Malagarasi River led to an environmental flow and environmental impact assessment in 2017. The proposed Malagarasi Hydropower Plant Stage III was recommended following the abandonment of Malagarasi Stage II due to ecological concerns. The increasing demand for socio-economic development in the region now requires a comprehensive environmental flow assessment that accounts for sedimentation and the growing abstraction of water resources.

There has been a significant ongoing programme of collaboration between the Ministry of Water and NGOs such as WWF, IUCN, WI and TNC in Tanzania, such as WWF's collaboration on the Lake Victoria Basin, Pangani Basin, and the Internal Drainage Basin, which fall under the transboundary SOKNOT landscape, where efforts have centred on improving water governance for shared water resources between Kenya and Tanzania — specifically Lake Chala, Lake Jipe, and the Umba River. WWF's collaboration with the Ministry

has included technical support in developing the Water Allocation Plan for the Mara River Basin, the National Water Allocation Plan, and in implementing Catchment Conservation Plans (CCPs). During discussions, it was agreed that the Freshwater Challenge Targets for Tanzania should be derived from these existing CCPs.

The Ministry of Water convened a national workshop in September 2025 that brought together freshwater focal persons from all nine basins, along with Catchment Multisectoral Teams, to discuss and establish national freshwater targets. Given the national scope of this activity — while WWF support under SOKNOT initially covered only three basins — the Ministry has also engaged with other organizations working in freshwater conservation, including IUCN, Wetlands International and TNC. The draft workshop report proposes draft Freshwater Challenge Targets based on multi-criteria analysis. These include 27 rivers from all basins covering a total length of approximately 6,000 km while wetlands cover an area of 450,000 ha and wellfields/groundwater potential area covering about 370,000 ha. The Malagarasi River and Malagarasi-Muyovosi wetlands groundwater potential area are included in the identified national priority areas. However, setting national freshwater targets requires a more comprehensive process — including field assessments, threat mapping, stakeholder engagement, and validation — which have not yet been completed. Therefore, the workshop effectively laid the foundation for Tanzania's process of developing national freshwater targets. The proposed project will build on this groundwork to progress the intended objectives.

Also in Tanzania, community-based water source conservation efforts are linking livelihood support with environmental protection. **Community Conservation Banks (COCOBA)** provide microloans for conservation friendly enterprises, while **Village Game Scouts** help reduce human wildlife conflict and raise awareness. Local tree planting initiatives safeguard water sources, complemented by education and outreach campaigns that promote sustainable water use within communities.

The project will also leverage learnings and technical experience from other FWC member countries to support global recommendations and peer exchange.

Tanzania has some policy inconsistencies related to this proposed project including the hydropower, irrigation/rice production, and sand mining sectors:

- Hydropower: Guided by the National Water Policy (2002) and Water Resources Management Act (2009), projects support national electricity goals but often lack strong assessment of long-term ecological and livelihood impacts, particularly on river flow and fisheries.
- Rice/Irrigation: The National Rice Development Strategy and National Irrigation Policy (2019) promote irrigation and storage expansion for productivity and export, but risk undermining freshwater ecosystem connectivity if not balanced with environmental safeguards.
- Sand Mining: Governed under the Environmental Management Act (2004) and related guidelines, sand extraction is widespread yet could use stronger regulation, leading to erosion, riverbank collapse, and damage to communities and habitats.

Overall, Tanzania's legal and policy frameworks are well established but need stronger enforcement due to fragmented institutional mandates and insufficient staffing and financial resources at the local level. In addition, data management and ecological monitoring systems are underdeveloped, making it difficult to assess the effectiveness of freshwater conservation interventions or to adjust them adaptively. These challenges are compounded by overlapping mandates among government agencies, a lack of harmonised legal definitions, and limited capacity in village councils and Beach Management Units for community-based management efforts. A notable regulatory gap is the absence of formal statutory provisions for Community

Fish Reserves (CFRs), resulting in limited enforceability and recognition of community-managed conservation areas.

Private Sector: The project will leverage the growing group of business supporters of the FWC. These supporters are aligning to the FWC because they recognize the risks posed to their basins of operation, their supply chains and the surrounding communities from not addressing water related risks, like floods and droughts. In some countries, they also recognise regulatory shifts are likely which means they need to be continuously improving their own water management performance, in particular around water quality impacts. Multinational companies and consulting groups have demonstrated their interest in engaging in the FWC through providing co-finance for global events that have served to shape private sector involvement in the FWC. Others have provided in-kind support, and/or worked with the Supporting Coalition to define the systemic changes that will be needed in specific sectors, together with charting an influencing and financing strategy to drive these shifts. This included coordinating with the Supporting Coalition on two private sector engagement events during Stockholm Water Week in August 2024 and the UN General Assembly in September 2024. These events engaged over 60 companies and were instrumental in the development of the "Business Supporter Program" with the objective of increasing private sector support for and engagement in the FWC. The Business Supporter Program builds on the well-established ACT-D (Assess, Commit, Transform, Disclose) framework and aims to align with existing private sector asks, while still accelerating private sector investment in freshwater ecosystem restoration and conservation and increasing public accountability. With the Business Supporter Program launched in Q2 2025, the group of businesses supporting and championing the FWC continues to grow - Reckitt, GSK, and EDEKA were the first companies to join the BSP, followed closely by IKEA and with other companies in the pipeline to join in the coming months. Additionally, the Supporting Coalition has engaged various private sector platforms - such as the CEO Water Mandate, WEF, the Water Resilience Coalition (WRC), the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS), Business for Nature, and the UN High Level Climate Champions - to identify future alignment and collaboration opportunities for the FWC.

Companies are increasingly recognizing the value of both freshwater biodiversity and ecosystems and the importance of safeguarding and restoring these to secure the freshwater-related services they depend on for their operations and supply chains. Therefore, the FWC emerges as a relevant and timely initiative with clear goals and a tailored mechanism to integrating business contributions. Initiatives such as the UN Global Compact's Water Resilience Coalition encourage members to contribute to basin resilience, which often integrates freshwater habitat restoration actions, making the Freshwater Challenge critical to align with. For instance, Reckitt and GSK are both members of the WRC and the FWC Business Supporter Program due to their perceived complementarity.

The business supporters of the FWC will be important allies in raising the profile of the FWC across sectors and companies and play a complementary role to countries in terms of driving restoration action on the ground. Beyond their ability to influence, business supporters can contribute to the development of practical and robust indicators for measuring business contributions, build the body of evidence and knowledge through case study development, and contribute to future country-level co-financing, implementation, and monitoring activities of interventions that contribute to national FWC commitments.

FWC Supporting Coalition of Global Organizations: This project will also build on the freshwater conservation work by the supporting coalition of the FWC. This coalition has come together to contribute resources and insights to help the FWC during its co-creation based on a shared dedication to the goals of the FWC and to supporting countries to be able to meet their commitments. In particular, the project will be carried out by the FWC Core Partners: WWF (GEF Agency), IUCN (Lead Executing Agency), Conservation International (CI), TNC, and Wetlands

International, in coordination with UNEP and the Secretariats of the Ramsar Convention and UNCCD. The supporting coalition brings leading expertise and experience from their current work to support FWC member countries. Each organization offers expertise, working together to provide coordination, capacity building, financial support, and leadership to turn ambition into action. Strategic coordination aligns efforts for maximum impact, while global communications amplify the urgent need for freshwater restoration and protection to garner widespread support. The supporting coalition is committed to assisting countries to effectively implement the Freshwater Challenge by delivering on country-requested support for facilitation and coordination, capacity building, communications and engagement, resource mobilization for national implementation, global thought leadership and advocacy. In addition, FWC Global Supporting Partners (non-state actors, which are supporting the achievement of Freshwater Challenge objectives in Member countries or globally) include BirdLife International, FAO, International Water Management Institute, UN Water and Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust.

WWF has a portfolio of work focused on freshwater-related nature-based solutions (NBS) and restoration for climate resilience and biodiversity benefits, including large projects such as the US$77 million Green Climate Fund's Recharge Pakistan Project approved in 2024. WWF has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the European Investment Bank in October 2024 at CBD COP16 for a water-related NBS project incubator. The coalition partners of the FWC also have relevant on-going projects globally and within FWC member countries. This includes a Global Wetlands Mapping for policy makers and investors led by Wetlands International and IUCN's global efforts to promote good water governance and implement nature-based solutions. TNC has led on the development of new guidance for protecting and conserving inland waters and is supporting several FWC members as they undertake the NBSAP/NDC update process, and developing general guidance on the design of national targets for freshwater ecosystems protection and restoration. Additionally, CI's work on estimating the potential carbon, freshwater, and biodiversity gains that could come from restoration of degraded high value freshwater ecosystems globally can support the FWC knowledge base and messaging.

The project will also coordinate with a remote real-time sensing of freshwater ecosystem change led by the UNEP DHI Partnership (https://unepdhi.org/sdg-6-6-1-freshwater-ecosystems-explorer/) and freshwater restoration reporting under the Framework for Ecosystem Restoration Monitoring (FERM) registry led by FAO (https://ferm.fao.org/). Additionally, the project will support and coordinate with the Action Platform on Source-to-Sea Management currently hosted by IUCN (https://waterandnature.org/all-initiatives/source-to-sea-platform/) with involvement from several FWC supporting coalition partners, as well as the GEF.

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[1] https://geobon.org/wpcontent/uploads/2022/12/InlandWaters_Brief.pdfhttps://geobon.org/wpcontent/uploads/2022/12/InlandWaters_Brief.pdfhttps://worldwildlifefund.sharepoint.com/sites/WWFGEFAgency/WWF%20GEF%20Projects/G0072%20-%20Freshwater%20Challenge/CEO%20ER%20Development/Submission%20materials/WWF%20FWC%20-%20Draft%20CEO%20ER.docx - _ftnref2

[2] The Supporting Coalition developed a 'Business Supporter Program' aimed to increase private sector support for and engagement in the FWC. The Business Supporter Program builds on the well-established ACT-D (Assess, Commit, Transform, Disclose) framework and aims to align with existing private sector asks, while still accelerating private sector investment in freshwater ecosystem restoration and conservation and increasing public accountability. It will foster public-private collaboration and help to effectively leverage existing private sector efforts through better alignment with national strategies and plans. The program launched in Q2 2025, with an initial set of business supporters such as Reckitt and EDEKA. The latest on business supporters can be found here: https://www.freshwaterchallenge.org/joining

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B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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

AThe aim of this four-year project is to support country-led actions that build towards the achievement of the 2030 Freshwater Challenge goal and generate global environmental benefits and enhance resilience. It will support, integrate and accelerate the restoration of 300,000 km of degraded rivers and 350 million hectares of degraded wetlands by 2030, as well as conserve freshwater ecosystems in line with the "30x30" commitments in the GBF.

The specific project objective is to support country-led target setting and prioritization of specific places in policies and plans, learning, and communications that strengthen their freshwater ecosystem interventions and accelerate progress towards the achievement of their 2030 FWC commitments. In doing so, the project will also contribute towards countries' international commitments on climate adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity, land degradation, DRR, the SDGs, and relevant transboundary basin management plans or agreements. The project will support demonstration activities in a group of three countries (Brazil, Cambodia and Tanzania) that were selected during the project development phase, based on criteria described in **Annex 7.**

Theory of Change

The theory of change presents the interconnected pathways this project will take to achieve its objective. Each component captures the enabling conditions that will support countries to prioritize, invest in, and effectively implement freshwater restoration and conservation interventions that support several global environmental goals.

By developing and piloting indicator frameworks (Component 1) that are standardized, well understood and accessible, the project can encourage their use by countries and bilateral and multilateral development agencies as they prioritize their strategic focus and investment strategies. Moreover, a streamlined approach to reporting on the benefits of freshwater ecosystem conservation and restoration will aid development agencies and countries in communicating the value of these approaches, and to understand where there are gaps in investments or potential duplications of effort. The indicator framework and tracking approach will be drafted by WWF US in Component 1 with inputs from the FWC Technical Assistance WG and other experts and then piloted through Output 1.3 in the three countries. The pilot results will then be fed back to WWF US/FWC for review and refinement before the indicator framework is made available to the wider FWC membership for roll out. Component 2 will also feed into this, especially by target setting and identification of indicators for the selected demonstration areas, which can then feed up to inform national level efforts. This indicator and monitoring work (Component 1) will directly feed into support to selected FWC member countries to operationalize and prioritize FWC commitments in their policies, plans, and regulations (Component 2). Component 1 will provide a “common language” for evaluating freshwater protection and restoration and their impacts that enables its use by multiple sectors and MEAs. This will support Component 2 efforts on policy coherence and prioritization within FWC member countries. In particular, it will support understanding of why and how to integrate freshwater ecosystem interventions across sectors, from source to sea, and from local to national or transboundary level for conservation, climate, and social and economic development benefits. Supporting an inclusive all-of-society approach will be one of the ways to ensure the cross-sectoral benefits and impacts of freshwater resources are planned and prioritized coherently and misaligned plans and investments are reduced.

A group of three countries: Brazil, Cambodia and Tanzania, have been selected as the main stakeholders for Component 2, based on criteria (see Annex 7) that were developed and applied during project preparation, including: GEF eligibility; regional balance; inclusion of LDCs and SIDS; evidence of active commitment to FWC operationalization (readiness) in their country; potential to generate future global environmental benefits and enhance resilience; and commitment to transboundary basin collaboration. Further, it considered which countries are already supported under the GEF’s ERIP (10 countries in both FWC and ERIP), to take advantage of potential complementarities. In coordination with the lead FWC Core Partners for each of the selected countries, the country offices (Wetlands International Brazil, CI Cambodia and TNC Tanzania) will be responsible for delivering the outputs under Outcomes 2.1 and 2.2.

The project will also help FWC member countries to strengthen their in-country technical expertise so they can design and implement effective freshwater restoration and conservation interventions now and into the future (Component 3). This part of the project will focus on facilitating peer-to-peer exchanges, so that country officials can work together on real-time challenges and have a network of peers they can return to over time. Further, the project will generate a knowledge hub that will provide key resources that countries can continue to use into the future as they develop integrated plans, as they implement interventions, or as they monitor impacts over time.

The above components will all be strengthened as general awareness of freshwater ecosystem threats and solutions improves (Component 4). The project will communicate with public and private decision makers and the general public on the challenges facing freshwater ecosystems, the risks of not acting to restore and conserve intact ecosystems, the multiple benefits (including economic benefits) of freshwater ecosystems, and the role of the FWC in supporting transformational change. Raising awareness among decision makers across sectors and levels of government, as well as in the private sector, will be particularly important for translating opportunities into interventions that are prioritized and invested in. The messages and engagement of decision makers can be particularly powerful when coming from their own communities, particularly from under-represented voices. The project will focus on inclusion and promotion of diverse voices, particularly messaging developed by youth, to influence decision makers at regional and global levels to accelerate action. Additionally, the project will engage the public through traditional and social media channels, to generate more awareness of the value and spark interest in freshwater ecosystems and an urgency to act to conserve and restore them.

Together, the outputs of this project will enable a transformational shift in the importance of freshwater ecosystems in FWC member countries, accelerating more substantial interventions in the near future that will lead to long-term global environmental benefits for freshwater ecosystems, the biodiversity they support, and the resilience benefits they provide to people. This will directly contribute to 30x30 commitments in the GBF, as well as the Ramsar Convention's Strategic Plan, NDCs under UNFCCC and LDN targets under UNCCD.

The project's theory of change is also adaptive to the potential scenarios of the future narrative scenarios (see Rationale section). The project will consider both current and projected climate and economic/agricultural expansion scenarios in the participating countries. Indicator frameworks will help track climate change and economic impacts on freshwater ecosystems, while planning frameworks and policy assistance will be tailored to anticipate and mitigate any impacts of increased economic growth and intensified climate change, and address the threat of competing government priorities in the face of extreme climate events.

The Theory of Change narrative for the project can be summarized as follows:

IF:

- Improved guidance is provided to countries on indicators and tracking approaches for freshwater ecosystems;

- There is increased operationalization of FWC objectives in national and sub-national plans and resourcing, through actions that are co-led with selected FWC member countries and country-based stakeholders;

- Improved integration of Source to Sea targets and actions in country plans is demonstrated in selected FWC member countries;

- There is improved availability of knowledge and learning resources that supports effective integration, program design, and monitoring of FWC objectives by countries;

- Improved knowledge among FWC member countries supports effective FWC-related planning and implementation;

- Increased awareness of freshwater ecosystem threats and solutions is generated among the general public and decision makers; and

- Strengthened engagement of diverse stakeholders is achieved through FWC messaging and objectives;

AND ASSUMING:

- Participating countries remain committed to the Freshwater Challenge throughout the course of the project;

- Sufficient data are available at the global or national levels for FWC member countries to be able to report on indicators for their freshwater ecosystems;

- Timing of updates to national plans and targets coincide with the timeline of the project;

Additional learning and knowledge will be used effectively by FWC member countries; and

- FWC member countries are able to access sufficient funding to support the protection, conservation and restoration commitments that the project enables;

THEN:

Country-led target setting and prioritization of specific freshwater ecosystems in policies and plans, learning and communications will strengthen country-level freshwater ecosystem restoration and conservation interventions, leading to concrete conservation outcomes, and thus accelerate progress towards their 2030 FWC commitments, which in turn will contribute towards the FWC goal "*to generate global environmental benefits and enhance resilience- supporting, integrating and accelerating the restoration of 300,000 km of degraded rivers and 350 million hectares of degraded wetlands by 2030, as well as conserving freshwater ecosystems in line with "30x30" commitments in the GBF."*

Global environmental benefits include the strengthened country-level freshwater ecosystem restoration and conservation interventions arising from support to the 51 countries and EU that are currently members of the FWC, as well as the targeted interventions in the selected countries (Brazil, Cambodia and Tanzania) that will contribute towards the protection, improved management and restoration of wetland habitats, improved management of important landscapes for biodiversity and sustainable land management in production systems for catchment areas, floodplains, lake systems, large wetland complexes and river basins, and shared water ecosystems under new or improved cooperative management and governance through national/local reforms and active participation of Inter-Ministerial Committees. While the project demonstration activities will result in certain direct impacts on the ground, the project's main contributions are through building capacity, incorporating freshwater priorities into national planning, policies, institutional mechanisms and enabling resource mobilization that will enable longer term benefits to be realized.

Sustainable Development Goals: the project is expected to contribute directly towards SDG 15 Life on Land, as well as 5 Clean Water & Sanitation, and 13 Climate Action, with indirect contributions to other SDGs.

Global Biodiversity Framework Targets: expected contributions to targets: 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 20, 21, 22 and 23 (see table in the Policy Alignment section).

In addition, with its focus on the advancement of freshwater wetland conservation and restoration, the project will contribute significantly towards implementation of the **Strategic Plan of the Convention on Wetlands 2025-2034**, approved at COP15 in July 2025, through both global actions for the FWC and national demonstration activities in selected countries. The project will also leverage support for UNCCD and UNFCCC implementation through including freshwater targets in national action plans including those for biodiversity (NBSAPs), land degradation neutrality (LDN), drought resilience, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).

Socioeconomic benefits will be delivered at local, national and transboundary levels through sustained and improved delivery of freshwater wetland ecosystem services including water supply, water purification, flood mitigation, fisheries, other wetland produce including fodder and thatching materials, tourism and recreation, etc. While certain demonstration activities (e.g. in Cambodia) will result in direct immediate benefits to local populations, the local benefits of such activities in the other countries will focus on leveraging longer term benefits through transformative changes in subnational and national stakeholder engagement mechanisms, programmes, policies and communications. The socio-economic benefits are elaborated below in **Section E - Other Requirements**.

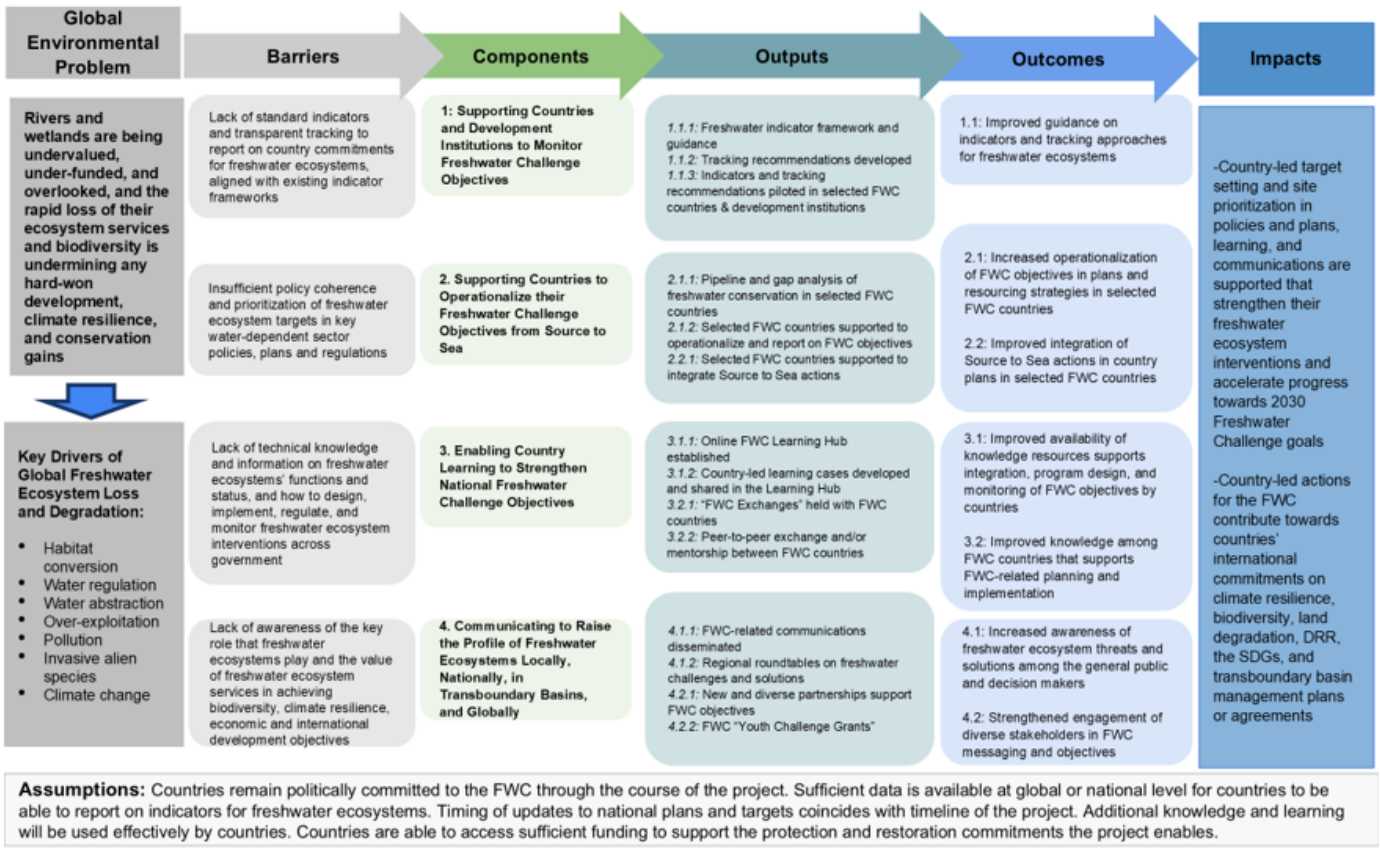


Figure 1. Theory of Change diagram for the project

Component 1: Supporting Countries and Development Institutions to Monitor Freshwater Challenge Objectives

To encourage more focus and prioritization of freshwater ecosystems in national plans and bilateral and multilateral development institution strategies, together with the private sector, the project will develop recommendations for a FWC-related indicator framework. Additionally, to encourage monitoring of these indicators by countries and development institutions, enabling a better understanding of progress towards the FWC 2030 targets, aligned with 30x30 goals, and climate resilience targets, the project will also develop a tracking approach. The indicator framework and tracking recommendations will build on existing frameworks in order to 1) avoid additional burden for countries and development institutions, and 2) ensure indicators and tracking approaches are practical and easy to use for reporting on commitments and understanding the freshwater ecosystem outcomes and impacts from national, donor, and private sector investments.

The indicator framework and tracking approach will be piloted with a subset of FWC member country stakeholders and discussed with private sector platforms/initiatives. Opportunities to coordinate with bilateral agencies in FWC member countries, multilateral institutions on their indicators and monitoring frameworks will also be explored. This work will provide a "common language" for evaluating freshwater protection and restoration and their impacts among countries and development institutions, helping to take freshwater restoration and conservation beyond the domain of any single convention and/or sector and making it easier to translate needs into well-designed interventions and resourced investments across institutions and sectors.

In terms of wider stakeholder engagement, youth organisations will be encouraged to nominate representatives to join the FWC Technical Assistance Working Group or sub-groups. In-country piloting of indicators, data collection, and indicator application must be relevant and meaningful to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), especially when data are collected on their lands and territories. Their perspectives and consent will be key to ensuring legitimacy and effectiveness. The Country Partner Organisation, together with the national implementing partners will seek Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) as necessary. For women, recommendations, guidance, and indicators will be reviewed for gender sensitivity and gender inclusiveness, as well as inclusion of other marginalized groups; and the project will ensure women's and other marginalized groups' organizations and government agency's involvement in the development and piloting of indicator tracking (see the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Gender Action Plan for further information).

Outcome 1.1: Improved guidance on indicators and tracking approaches for freshwater ecosystems

Output 1.1.1: Recommended freshwater indicator framework and guidance document developed and shared

Lead: WWF US

The project will review result and process indicators and sub-indicators (including for policy enabling conditions) already in use or under development for freshwater ecosystems. This review will include indicators under relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), sustainable development frameworks such as the SDGs, MDB standard monitoring frameworks, indicator frameworks from bilateral agencies in countries supporting the FWC, the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration*, the FAO/UNEP FERMS Framework for Ecosystem Restoration Monitoring, and approaches and datasets being used by FWC members. It will place an emphasis on impact indicators, i.e. the benefits that freshwater ecosystem protection and restoration provide to climate change adaptation and mitigation, flood and drought risk reduction, water quality regulation, biodiversity and social inclusion. The framework will be informed by existing global and regional assessments that will

guide the development of pilots in Output 1.1.3 and shape content for Output 4.1.1 to increase awareness of the value of freshwater ecosystems for decision making frameworks that cover different sectoral water needs and impacts, national economic decision making and investment options. WWF's Freshwater Challenge focal points who have been working on this will continue to deliver this output during project implementation. TNC will have specific inputs on a protection coverage indicator that would integrate the framework.

The indicator framework and tracking approach will be drafted to respond to the needs of the three project countries working to identify and/or achieve their targets during implementation of the proposed project. Country achievements and lessons learned during implementation will feed back into the draft indicator framework and inform how these indicators could be tracked. WWF-US will be responsible for collating inputs and feedback and will incorporate inputs from the FWC TA WG and then pilot these indicators through Output 1.3 in the three target countries. In addition to learning from the three target countries during implementation, the project will consult with a cross-section of influential government agencies in the three pilot countries, to gain insight into how FWC indicators could be connected to their objectives. Target sectors include (if not included within the remit of the countries' OFPs): Agriculture, Climate Change, Development, Energy & Mining, Finance, Planning, and Public Works. This will help to identify a limited set of indicators that can serve a broad set of national actors and will allow for additional dialogue with sectors that are traditionally viewed as outside of the Water & Environment sector.

**Note: FAO is convening an Expert Working Group on Freshwater Restoration to design a methodology for reporting on areas under restoration and initiate thinking on related indicators, which includes FWC partners.*

The indicator recommendations will be broad to address country stakeholder, development partner, private sector and public information needs. It will also seek to be aligned with those endorsed in other global policy processes (e.g., the GBF, NBSAPs, Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), NDCs, LDN, and SDGs) and with relevant national plans. The recommendations will be designed in line with the *Evaluation of the GEF's Approach and Interventions in Water Security (2023)*, which recommends that explicit language on freshwater resources that "are key to each GEF focal area are represented in the results measurement framework and project and program design."(GEF IEO, 2023).

The project will particularly coordinate with the FAO Expert Working Group on Ecosystem Restoration, the GEF ERIP, the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas and relevant multilateral development institutions on alignment of existing indicator methodologies and frameworks with FWC recommendations. This includes identifying entry points for alignment of the indicator recommendations in MEAs, to raise the importance of freshwater and the ability of member countries to make the case for freshwater investments. Where possible, the project will engage with bilateral agencies in countries supporting the FWC (e.g., Sweden, Germany, UK, France, and the European Commission) to identify entry points for freshwater ecosystems in bilateral development frameworks and priorities. This may support more opportunities to resource freshwater ecosystem interventions and monitor their effectiveness in countries that partner with these bilateral agencies.

Engagement of the private sector on alignment and use of the recommended indicator framework will also be an important project element and will enable tracking of private sector contributions to the Challenge. For example, freshwater ecosystem restoration and protection are recognized as 'responses' (in Step 4: act) to deliver on corporate Science Based Targets Network (SBTN) freshwater targets (both quality and quantity), and have the ability to address material impacts, risks and dependencies related to freshwater through e.g. the Taskforce for Nature-related Financial

Disclosures (TNFD) or the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). As such, reporting on the impacts and (co-)benefits of freshwater ecosystem restoration and conservation using standardized and appropriate indicators will increasingly become important to the private sector.

The project will engage with private sector platforms/initiatives at different levels - including SBTN, TNFD, CSRD, AWS and the CEO Water Mandate - and their members around harmonizing private sector results, impacts, and lessons learned including their disclosures on freshwater ecosystem-relevant contributions using recommended indicators from the indicator framework discussed above. Where indicators deviate from existing requirements in these most commonly used frameworks, the project will discuss opportunities for alignment with the recommended indicators. Beyond 'disclosure', the project will engage the platforms around a high degree of alignment holistically, across target setting processes. For example, actions to safeguard and restore freshwater ecosystems and related interventions at sub-national level that can be considered when asking companies to assess their impacts, risks and dependencies across the scope of their 'value chain' as part of SBTN Steps 1 and 2 guidance. Working across these processes will also create opportunities to connect national governments and the private sector on opportunities for co-investment, cofinance, and/or private sector-led interventions that can be captured in country-level monitoring (linked to Output 1.1.2). The project will also actively engage with other platforms/initiatives, such as the Water Resilience Coalition (WRC) and Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS), to explore synergies with the FWC objectives and opportunities for adoption of shared metrics or indicators, e.g. as part of Net Positive Water Impact (NPWI), the Water Action Hub, the AWS Collective Action Accelerator, and AWS Standard, among others.

Activities:

- Review existing indicators for freshwater ecosystem protection, restoration, and management, prioritizing recent meta-reviews in academic literature as well as guidance from contemporary efforts (e.g., FAO-led work on GBF Target 2), TNC-led work on GBF Target 3).
- Learn from how the government and executing partner in each of the three target project countries set -or aim to achieve- freshwater targets and implement related policies and plans.
- Hold consultations with country representatives to understand the gaps overlaps and data opportunities of documenting and tracking the identified targets.
- Based on these observations and consultations, prepare a framework (set of indicators) with basic definitions, rationale, metadata and links to more information
- Review recommendations, guidance and indicators for gender sensitivity and gender inclusiveness, as well as inclusion of other marginalized groups.
- Share the framework and guidance document via a public webinar to identify opportunities for alignment and to validate the feasibility and appropriateness of proposed indicators with country representatives, peer organizations, multilaterals, private sector, etc.

Expected Deliverables

- The main result will be a gender-responsive indicator framework (essentially a table) accompanied by a short (<20pp) document that summarizes why the indicators are being proposed and how they respond to the needs identified by the pilot for FWC Member Countries, ways to measure, how each aligns with relevant conventions, and where users can find more information.
- A public webinar will be organized when the framework and guidance are ready for sharing; potentially, this could be organized in conjunction with GEF IW:Learn.

Output 1.1.2: A recommended approach to tracking is developed and shared
Lead: WWF US
The project will work with FWC member countries to streamline their reporting on progress against the indicators recommended in Output 1.1.1, which will also support overall monitoring of the FWC 2030 targets. To reduce the burden on countries, the project will explore ways to extract needed information from national reports to relevant global conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention), and the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention). This information will then be collated and made accessible, e.g., as a regularly updated table on the FWC website. Development will include consultation with multilateral institutions and bilateral agencies so that indicator tracking can be easily accessed and used by them and their project partners. The project will engage the GEF ERIP for alignment, as well as relevant private sector platforms/initiatives and current private sector supporters of the FWC to align on ways companies can monitor and disclose their contributions. WWF's Freshwater Challenge focal points who have been working on this will continue to deliver this output during project implementation.

Activities

- Hold consultations with country representatives, bilateral agencies and multilateral institutions to discuss data requirements, monitoring frequency, and overlapping reporting requirements and schedules, to determine realistic requests for reporting on FWC indicators under Output 1.1.1.
- Encourage women's and other marginalized groups' organizations and their related government agencies involvement in the development of indicator tracking.
- Review existing monitoring methods for freshwater ecosystem protection, restoration, and management, prioritizing recent meta-reviews in academic literature.
- Develop a mechanism for more streamlined reporting (for countries), noting information requirements, frequency, and overlaps with other reporting conventions. The exact mechanism (e.g., an online form or periodic survey) will be discussed and finalized with Member countries
- Prepare a brief (<20pp) document summarizing recommended monitoring methods for FWC indicators targeted at different stakeholder groups, including private sector.
- Design an easy-to-update template for the FWC website to host tracking information, such as in tabular format.
- Based on guidance developed in 1.1.1 and 1.1.2, WWF US will provide online knowledge sharing in the application of the FWC indicator framework and tracking approach for each of the selected countries and other participating FWC member countries with a demonstrated interest in this topic

Deliverables
The main deliverable would be the guidance document on measurement, though internally a template would be provided for FWC partner orgs to "track" progress. The aim is to provide outputs that are fit for purpose and not overly elaborate.

Output 1.1.3: Indicators and tracking recommendations piloted with a subset of the project countries and development institutions
Lead: IUCN in collaboration with FWC core partners (WI-Brazil, CI-Cambodia and TNC-Tanzania)
The recommended indicator framework and tracking approach will be piloted through co-design with partners from a subset of the project's countries (i.e. the three selected countries and any others with a demonstrated interest in this topic via the FWC's Technical Assistance Working Group) and their key bilateral development agency and multilateral institution partners and adapted based on

the learnings and feedback. The FWC core partner leading country implementation will lead implementation of the activities under this output (WI-Brazil, CI-Cambodia and TNC-Tanzania). The final guidance on rollout will be informed by the review and consideration of indicators in existing global and regional assessments. The guidance will be included in the Learning Hub and shared with all FWC member countries, as well as any other interested countries. It will also be shared with other key stakeholders, like MDBs and private sector platforms.

Activities

- FWC country partners work with government and development partners to pilot the indicator framework and tracking approach at national or subnational level
- Results of pilot studies documented according to a standard template format and shared with the FWC Technical Assistance Working Group for review
- Pilot study results made available on the FWC Learning Hub and documented as case studies and lessons learned
- FWC indicator framework and tracking approach reviewed and refined considering results of the pilot studies, and made available for the wider FWC membership through the FWC Learning Hub

Deliverables

- FWC indicator framework and tracking approach piloted in three selected FWC member countries and other participating FWC member countries with a demonstrated interest in this topic
- Case studies on the results of the pilots made available through the FWC Learning Hub (Output 3.1.1)
- FWC indicator framework and tracking approach refined and made available globally through the FWC Learning Hub

Component 2. Supporting Countries to Operationalize their Freshwater Challenge Objectives from Source to Sea

The project will support a selected group of FWC member countries to 1) operationalize and prioritize FWC objectives in water-dependent plans and investment strategies (such as agriculture, forestry, energy, and wastewater), including for climate resilience and 2) support integration of source to sea actions. This focus on policy coherence across sectors, from source-to-sea (longitudinally and laterally), locally to nationally, and across government departments will be one of the more effective ways to ensure freshwater's cross-sectoral benefits and impacts are planned and prioritized coherently and misaligned plans and investments are reduced. Improved policy coherence and prioritization of freshwater conservation and restoration in national and subnational plans and investments will result in some immediate, but mostly longer-term benefits to IPLCs, women, men, youth and marginalized groups in the selected FWC member countries through improved sustainability and improved delivery of freshwater wetland ecosystem services including water supply, water purification, flood mitigation, fisheries, other wetland produce including fodder and thatching materials, tourism and recreation opportunities, and buffering of local communities against extreme weather events.

With this support, and standard indicators developed in Component 1, the project also encourages water-dependent sectors to identify how freshwater ecosystem restoration and conservation benefits them and how sustainability in their sector supports freshwater and climate change targets for the country when planned in an integrated data-driven way. This support model aligns with the needs of some FWC member countries captured during supporting partner discussions.

As part of the country pipeline and gap analysis in Output 2.1.1, a stakeholder analysis will be undertaken by the respective Country Partner Organisation together with the key government partners. This analysis will verify inputs received from countries during the PPG phase (see Annex 8 National Demonstration Activity Proposals). Youth, IPLCs, women and marginalized groups will be included in the analysis. The resulting country stakeholder analyses will be used to inform all activities under this component. All activities under Component 2 will be carried out in a youth and gender-responsive and participatory manner, informed by the in-country stakeholder analysis. All activities under Component 2 will provide for the meaningful inclusion of IPLCs including preliminary stakeholder engagement and incorporation of consultations throughout project implementation. For further details please refer to the Stakeholder Engagement Plan Annex found as part of Annex F. Each country will develop a Gender Action Plan under the broader framework of the project-level Gender Action Plan (see Annexes) to guide gender equality and the empowerment of women as an integral part of the project demonstration activities.

Public-private partnership initiatives and policy instruments will be integrated into the policy gaps and pipeline assessments of Output 2.1.1 and 2.1.2. In Cambodia, those include water-based enterprises, such as hydropower and agriculture reservoir projects, water governance systems and policies, and sand mining along main rivers and key tributaries of the Tonle Sap Lake and Mekong River. In Brazil, the fees charged for freshwater use permits are defined by the basin or sub-basin community itself and the funds collected are reinvested in the same territory where they are generated. For this financial reinvestment to be effectively implemented, it is essential that the basin have active official projects or institutions capable of demonstrating tangible results from such projects. The basin / sub-basin committees in the demonstration can provide a good model for sharing nationally and internationally, as has been done in the context of economic compensation for freshwater withdrawals and water-use permits as important elements for achieving national and subnational voluntary LDN targets. The project will also work with sanitation and energy companies operating in the São Francisco Basin, such as: AEGEA, COPASA, CEMIG, EMBASA, Eletrobrás, CHESF and FURNAS. In Tanzania, the recent national workshop on FWC priorities recommended blended financing such that co-financing and Public-Private Partnership opportunities need to be negotiated where possible in the context of Basin Water Board investments. The private sector is seen as a vital collaborator for sustainability and scalability of initiatives beyond individual awards. TNC engages all levels of the private sector, from smallholder farmers to eco-tourism agencies to multi-national organisations. TNC has multi-year partnerships with local businesses in the proposed Western Tanzania landscape, such as Upendo Honey and EBN Hunting Safaris Limited—creating pathways for increasing market access, especially for women; improving sustainable value chains; and in many cases, increasing stability and value of household income.

Outcome 2.1: Increased operationalization of FWC objectives in national and sub-national plans and resourcing strategies in selected FWC member countries

Output 2.1.1: Pipeline and gap analysis of freshwater restoration and protection interventions and resourcing in selected FWC member countries
Lead: IUCN in collaboration with FWC Core Partners (CI-Cambodia, WI-Brazil and TNC-Tanzania)
The project will begin with a 'state of play' pipeline analysis in the selected FWC member countries of current and planned country resourcing and interventions for freshwater restoration and/or protection across water-dependent sectors and within international commitments, by applying a replicable methodology supported by technical assistance from the lead FWC country partner organizations. The pipeline analysis will include projects, programmes and initiatives supported by national and sub-national government bodies, civil society organizations, private sector and international donors. This will include a gap analysis of what will be needed (e.g., in terms of science, institutional capacity, policy coherence, cross-sectoral policies, plans, and regulations) to set and meet existing or planned national FWC objectives, as well as identification and spatial mapping of

priority locations (eg river basins, catchments, wetland sites) for action, and accompanied by a stakeholder analysis and consideration of gender, IPLC rights and participation pathways. This will be informed by the indicator framework development in Output 1.1.1 and the project will also leverage the data from GEF ERIP's prioritization of rivers and wetlands for restoration actions.

The pipeline and gap analysis will provide recommendations on: a) where investment is needed to advance FWC objectives, through new financing, identifying potential partners and donors, etc; b) strengthening national strategies for implementation of MEAs including NBSAPs, NAPs, NDCs and LDNs; c) strengthening the national policy framework and policy coherence, including the removal of perverse incentives that negatively impact freshwater resources. The methodology development will be led by IUCN in collaboration with other FWC core partners, while in-country pipeline and gap analyses will be led by the FWC lead country partner in collaboration with key government partners and engaging diverse stakeholders.

Activities

- Develop a replicable methodology for pipeline and gap analysis that will be tested in the selected countries, refined and made available for use in other FWC member countries through the FWC learning hub.
- Apply the methodology for pipeline and gap analysis through an inclusive and gender responsive multi-stakeholder consultation process in each selected country that includes consideration of IPLC rights and participation pathways. This will desktop review of current and planned resourcing and interventions for freshwater conservation, legal, cross-sector policy coherence and institutional capacity analyses, country-level stakeholder consultation workshops, identification of priority locations for intervention, and preparation of technical reports with recommendations to address identified gaps in order to achieve national FWC priorities.
- Provide training and mentorship to build the capacity of lead national government partners for FWC on the mechanisms to address gap analysis recommendations focusing on resource mobilization (e.g. by development of proposals; linking policy recommendations to scaling up of existing projects and/or pipelines).
- Apply The Water Resilience Tracker for National Climate Planning* as part of the gap analysis for Cambodia and Tanzania; and incorporate baseline Water Resilience Tracker Report findings** into the gap analysis in Brazil.
- Review application of the FWC indicator framework and tracking approach (Component 1) in national planning and reporting processes
- Provide training and mentorship to build the capacity of lead national government partners for FWC on the mechanisms to address gap analysis recommendations focusing on resource mobilization (e.g. by development of proposals, linking policy recommendations to scaling up of existing projects and/or pipelines).

https://www.alliance4water.org/water-resilience-tracker-for-national-climate-planning

** *https://www.alliance4water.org/s/Brazil-Report-English-version.pdf*

Deliverables

- A replicable methodology for national pipeline and gap analysis for freshwater resources made available globally through the FWC learning hub
- Completed national pipeline and gap analyses for the selected countries including cross-sector policy coherence, identification of priority locations for intervention and recommendations for action
- Completed Water Resilience Tracker Reports for Cambodia and Tanzania, and consideration of Brazil's Water Resilience Tracker Report findings in national planning

- Increased capacity of key national government partners for FWC in resource mobilization to address pipeline gaps

Brazil:

The intervention in Brazil will contribute towards a proposal for the development of a *National Programme on the Conservation, Protection and Restoration of Freshwater Ecosystem*

The proposal will be structured based on systematic landscape planning, considering key ecological attributes that ensure the integrity and functionality of aquatic ecosystems, namely: biotic composition, with a focus on area-based protection and restoration of native aquatic communities; habitat, through the protection and reconnection of floodplain lakes, riparian forests, and wetlands; connectivity, ensuring ecological flows between rivers, their flood zones, lakes, and recharge areas, as well as the conservation of free-flowing rivers identified as priorities; water quality, with actions aimed at pollution control, nature-based solutions, and the recovery of ecosystem functions; and the hydrological regime, promoting flow and infiltration management to increase climate resilience.

This programme will serve as a strategic platform to drive and integrate different public policies and environmental and territorial management instruments, such as Planaveg, the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, the National Strategy for Threatened Aquatic Species (EPAMB), the National and Basin Water Resources Plans, among others. By articulating these initiatives, the programme enhances multiple benefits for water security, biodiversity conservation, productive inclusion — especially in artisanal fishing, nature tourism, and sustainable agriculture — public health, and climate change adaptation.

With multi-sector governance based on collective action and a hybrid financing model, the programme can be replicated regionally (i.e. within the same basin – focusing on the Sao Francisco Basin and Velhas Sub-Basin under this project) and scaled nationally, becoming a structuring instrument for freshwater conservation and associated biodiversity in Brazil. Aligned with global biodiversity, climate, and sustainable development goals, the Programme will contribute to fulfilling international commitments such as the Paris Agreement and the targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework by 2030, while strengthening the socioecological resilience of territories and promoting water, environmental, and social resilience, valuing the role of traditional communities, Indigenous peoples, and riverside communities.

The development of the Brazilian Freshwater Conservation, Protection and Restoration Programme includes:

- Establishment of an Advisory Committee for the development of the Brazilian Freshwater Conservation, Protection and Restoration Programme;
- Identification of priority areas
- GAP Analysis - analysis of institutional, legal, policy, financial, technical capacity gaps and opportunities , contributing to the global FWC database
- Consideration of Brazil's Water Resilience Tracker Report findings in national planning;
- Proposal for an action plan for the protection and restoration of priority freshwater ecosystems and associated biodiversity, with phased implementation and including a financial sustainability strategy.

Relevant activities include:

- Diagnosis of freshwater ecosystem degradation, including an analysis of connectivity;
- Diagnosis of native ichthyofauna, including migratory fish species, and of migratory bird fauna;

- Identification of freshwater ecosystems for inclusion in the national protected areas system, including free-flowing rivers and peatlands;
- Geospatial mapping and multi-criteria analysis; and
- Engagement with River Basin Committees, Traditional Peoples and Communities (PCTs), youth organisations and academic institutions.

The overall activities from all outputs in Component 2 in Brazil will be feeding into the development of the Action Plan and Programme. An Advisory Committee to support the Ministry of the Environment will be established to provide support and participation in the creation of a Freshwater Ecosystem Conservation, Protection and Restoration Programme, within the scope of the Freshwater Challenge. This will be a strategic, technical, multi-sector forum, bringing together representatives from non-governmental organizations, academia, the private sector, and governments to guide, monitor, and strengthen the programme's implementation. Institutions such as TNC, Wetlands International, and WWF-Brazil will be part of this Committee, as well as youth and relevant indigenous peoples' organisations and research institutions to be invited, including UNICAMP, UFRGS, UFMG, ANA, and MIDR. The Advisory Committee is necessary given the great size and diversity of Brazil's biomes and landscapes, meaning that one restoration and conservation approach isn't enough to fit the whole and an adaptive outlook is necessary, while maintaining core issues.

The Advisory Committee will work on defining key ecological criteria (biotic composition, habitat, connectivity, water quality, and hydrological regime), guiding the selection of priority areas and aquatic species in river basins and biomes, as well as contributing to the articulation of national and international public policies. It will also be responsible for supporting the proposal of public-private financing mechanisms and ensuring transparency and social participation in the Programme to be created.

The Committee could also promote or suggest the development of applied research, monitoring, legislative or policy reforms, and institutional innovation that help generate and expand social, economic, and ecological benefits.

Cambodia:

CI-Cambodia will provide technical assistance to the Government of Cambodia on implementing the pipeline and gap analysis. While this will be conducted at the national level, it will place strong emphasis on FWC priority setting for the Tonle Sap Basin as the country's largest freshwater resource, which will be addressed at a more granular level through demonstration activities in Output 2.1.2 and 2.1.1.

CI will continue to closely work with key Government, UN agencies (e.g. UNDP, FAO, UN-Habitat, UNEP, World Bank), NGO and community partners to align the FWC policy recommendations in newly designed project pipelines and government investment priorities. Currently, through UNDP and MOE, CI has been leading the ERIP program in Cambodia, scaling up the one for largest ecosystem restoration in the Siem River Watershed and the Tonle Sap floodplain. CI also support the Government of Cambodia to develop a newly designed country packages program, aiming to incorporate freshwater framework indicators into this new investment programming.

CI has embedded a rights-based approach to conservation across all revised activities and has fully implemented its institutional Safeguards System in all programs, including this project. In alignment with GEF requirements, a Cambodia-specific stakeholder engagement plan will be developed to

ensure inclusive and meaningful participation, particularly from Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) who may be affected by project interventions. This process will support the review of existing policies and national program priorities.

The Safeguards team will provide targeted inputs on IPLC and gender considerations, which will be integrated into the policy review and embedded within the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the consultancy. Gender equality and social inclusion will be mainstreamed throughout policy briefs and recommendations to relevant line ministries, with the aim of translating these into actionable reforms or future investment pipelines. These efforts are consistent with GEF's Environmental and Social Safeguards Policy and its emphasis on stakeholder engagement, gender responsiveness, and respect for the rights of IPLCs.

Activities

Conduct pipeline and gap analysis in freshwater management in Cambodia by applying a replicable methodology developed by IUCN through an inclusive and gender responsive multi-stakeholder consultation process in each selected country that includes consideration of IPLC rights and participation pathways.

Apply The Water Resilience Tracker for National Climate Planning* as part of the gap analysis.

Conduct policy alignment in compliance with FWC indicators framework and tracking approach (Component 1) and provide recommendations for national planning and reporting processes (e.g. River basin planning; forest ecosystem restoration; integrated watershed management or wetland planning, etc.)

Provide training and mentorship to build the capacity of national government partners for FWC on the mechanisms to address gap analysis recommendations focusing on resource mobilization (e.g. linking policy recommendations to scaling up of existing projects and/or pipelines).

**https://www.alliance4water.org/water-resilience-tracker-for-national-climate-planning*

Deliverables

- Completed national pipeline and gap analysis following a replicable methodology developed by IUCN, including policy incoherence issues, identification of priority locations for intervention and recommendations for action;
- FWC indicators framework and tracking approach included in recommendations for policy alignment and national planning and reporting processes;
- Completed Water Resilience Tracker Report for Cambodia;
- Increased capacity of key national government partners for FWC in resource mobilization to address pipeline gaps;

Duration/timing: 16 months
Lead responsibilities: CI Cambodia

Tanzania:

Tanzania was one of the first Freshwater Challenge (FWC) initiative member countries. This initiative aligns with the recently launched National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan (NBSAP 2025 – 2030), which sets ambitious targets for restoration and protection: Target 2: By 2030, at least 30% of areas of degraded ecosystems are under effective restoration; and Target 3: By 2030, areas

important for biodiversity and associated ecosystem services are conserved. Similarly, it aligns with Tanzania's updated NDC which embraces restoration, protection and sustainable management of the freshwater ecosystem. These activities aim to collaboratively assess and strengthen freshwater restoration and protection efforts in Tanzania's wetlands. Co-led with national stakeholders and building on Core Partner GEF international waters work in the country, the project will map existing interventions and identify gaps in coverage, capacity, and financing, and develop a prioritized pipeline of impactful projects.

The analysis will begin with stakeholder engagement to define the scope and gather data on current initiatives. Using spatial and thematic mapping, it will evaluate alignment with biodiversity, climate, and community goals. Gaps will be identified in geographic reach, thematic focus, and resource availability.

Activities:

Support a national level pipeline and gap analysis following a standard methodology developed by IUCN and building on IUCN and other core partner work on freshwater ecosystem conservation and restoration work (inc. Through GEF International Waters programmes). This will include analysis of cross-sectoral policy coherence and gaps in water resources information and learning product dissemination;

Apply The Water Resilience Tracker for National Climate Planning* as part of the gap analysis for Tanzania;

Review application of the FWC indicator framework and tracking approach (Component 1) in national planning and reporting processes;

- Provide training, write-shop and mentorship to build the capacity of lead national government partners for FWC on the mechanisms to address gap analysis recommendations focusing on resource mobilization (e.g. by development of proposals; linking policy recommendations to scaling up of existing projects and/or pipelines). In Tanzania: Capacity building training will be provided for staff from the Ministry of Water (MoW), the Vice President's Office (VPO) and the Lake Tanganyika Basin Water Board (LTBWB) and local NGOs on preparing concept notes and project proposals that include S2S considerations.

*https://www.alliance4water.org/water-resilience-tracker-for-national-climate-planninghttps://www.alliance4water.org/water-resilience-tracker-for-national-climate-planning

Deliverables

A replicable methodology for national pipeline and gap analysis for freshwater resources applied and made available globally through the FWC learning hub;

Completed national pipeline and gap analyses for the selected countries including policy incoherence issues, identification of priority locations for intervention and recommendations for action;

Completed Water Resilience Tracker Report for Tanzania;

Increased capacity of key national government partners and local NGOs for FWC in resource mobilization to address pipeline gaps.

Output 2.1.2: Selected FWC member countries supported with technical assistance to operationalize and report on FWC objectives

Lead: CI-Cambodia, WI-Brazil and TNC-Tanzania

The project will provide tailored support to selected FWC member countries to make their existing and planned freshwater ecosystem-related objectives operational and a higher priority within

existing water-dependent sector plans and country investment strategies, paving the way for implementation. This includes developing quantifiable sub-targets within the framework of existing plans where targets have been generally set. Based on the June 2024 member country survey, completed by 23 respondents, this may include: support for objective and target setting within existing water-dependent sector plans (policy coherence), supporting prioritization of indicators and interventions, benchmarking, baseline assessments of ecosystem status in support of climate resilience and/or biodiversity intervention planning, or identification of monitoring tools and approaches. For some countries it may include matching and/or development of financial mechanisms for already identified freshwater ecosystem interventions. Additionally, learnings from the indicator framework pilots (under Component 1) can feed into country support as they look to quantify protection and restoration targets and strengthen their indicators and reporting on climate, biodiversity, and in water-dependent sectors.

Demonstration activities in the selected FWC member countries are summarized as follows (see **Annex 8** for further details):

Brazil:

Indicator framework and decentralized governance models for the Development of the Brazilian Freshwater Conservation and Protection Programme

The main deliverable of this output in Brazil is the establishment of a framework of technical and social indicators connecting river basin water plans and FWC (aiming to connect governance levels, from global to local). The project will also contribute to institutionalizing the FWC in the governance mechanisms of Basin and Sub-Basin Committees (CBHs). It will develop a proposal for a monitoring methodology and support reporting on national FWC progress; and develop a proposal for a data platform to track results in biodiversity, water security, and climate adaptation. The demonstration activities will contribute towards GEF Core Indicator 7.3 through local and national institutional reforms.

Activities include:

- Development of ecological and hydrological indicators, in liaison with the lead of Output 1.1.1;
- Production of technical reports and open data policy; and
- Testing of decentralized governance models through CBHs, focused on watershed ecosystem conservation and restoration.

Cambodia:

Tonle Sap is the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia, covering over 1.6 million hectares, while the Tonle Sap Basin extends over 80,000 square kilometres, accounting for 44% of Cambodia's total land area and around 32% of its population. The lake's freshwater not only provides habitat for fisheries and other aquatic resources but also serves as a vital source of food for many Cambodians. During the monsoon, the Tonle Sap River, fed by flood waters from the transboundary Mekong River system, reverses flow, and the lake level rises by up to eight meters, inundating a vast area of floodplain including the unique flooded forest biome. The lake's productivity and ecological integrity hinges on this seasonal flood pulse.

The proposed intervention aims to provide policy recommendations to the government to ensure policy measures, such as the flooded forest restoration guideline, are in place to address freshwater

challenges in the Tonle Sap Lake (TSL). It aligns with government policy on enhancing scientific research for the management of the Tonle Sap freshwater ecosystem and on providing policy recommendations to the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) for its sustainable management. Assessment will be carried out in partnership with key actors who support the improved management of wetlands. The intervention will also engage with the relevant line departments in Cambodia and the Mekong River through water diplomacy or existing platforms, where possible. In Cambodia, CI will explore existing mechanisms such as the National Technical Work Group on Fisheries or the Fishery Coordination Team (at the sub-national level) to assert the freshwater-related issues and interventions to seek the cross-sectoral support for closing implementation gaps and alignment of priorities, contributing towards GEF Core Indicator 7.3.

y activities include:

Conduct an assessment on the current situation of TSL inundation [topography] and its duration and propose policy measures, including a Tonle Sap S2S Policy Note, to restore its function to support freshwater fishery conservation and flooded forest restoration. The assessment will also employ an inclusive and gender responsive multi-stakeholder consultation and data collection to ensure meaningful engagement of all stakeholders, particularly women and other vulnerable groups.

Conduct water diplomacy, such as water dialogue, with relevant national and sub-national authorities through existing mechanisms by taking into account the policy recommendations to ensure sufficient seasonal inundation through maintaining seasonal flows in the tributaries of Tonle Sap and Mekong River (in line with Source-to-Sea considerations). The dialogue also maintains a regular platform in providing guidance and support on how to mobilise funding to fulfil the policy recommendations.

Conduct consultations with key actors for documenting best practices on fire management in support of Fisheries Administration Prakas* development.

Enhance resources and promote knowledge-sharing on national Flooded Forest Restoration by supporting the Fisheries Administration (FiA) in finalizing and publishing the official guidelines on the FiA website.

**Prakas is a legal or administrative document that outlines rules, regulations, or decisions made by a government ministry, department, or other relevant entity.*

Deliverables

Assessment report on the current situation of TSL inundation [topography] and its duration, including documentation of stakeholder consultations;

Proposed policy measures, including a Tonle Sap S2S Policy Note, to restore its function to support freshwater fishery conservation and flooded forest restoration;

Documentation of water diplomacy with relevant national and sub-national authorities through existing mechanisms to ensure sufficient seasonal inundation through maintaining seasonal flows in the tributaries of Tonle Sap and Mekong River (in line with Source-to-Sea considerations);

Documented best practices on fire management in support of Fisheries Administration Prakas* development;

- Official guidelines on flooded forest restoration published by FiA.

Duration/timing: 36 months
Lead responsibilities: CI Cambodia

Tanzania:
The demonstration activities under this Output will contribute to the larger FWC initiative by supporting the process to set FWC targets and priority actions including related national policy and strategy reforms and identifying potential investments that will focus on Tanzania's largest wetland complex - the Malagarasi and Muyovozi wetlands. In so doing, the demonstration activities will engage with relevant sectors and stakeholders in the process to identify the core problems and threats as well as valuing and communicating the opportunities that will arise from maintaining the wetland ecosystem services to local people and the wider economy.

The Malagarasi–Muyovozi wetlands represent the largest and one of the most ecologically important wetland systems in Tanzania. Designated as a Ramsar Site in 2000, this complex of wetlands is a vital component of the Lake Tanganyika Basin, encompassing a mosaic of permanent and seasonal swamps, floodplains, oxbow lakes, and rivers. It is fed by five major rivers: the Malagarasi, Moyowosi, Ugalla, Wembere and Gombe, which collectively make up one of the largest freshwater systems in East Africa. The Malagarasi-Muyovozi wetlands are a haven for various endangered species, including the Shoebill stork and Wattled Cranes. The wetlands are home to a diverse range of plant and animal life, including endemic fish species, and play a vital role in maintaining regional biodiversity. Their ecological integrity is critical not only to the health of Lake Tanganyika, but also to regional water security, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience across Tanzania and its riparian neighbours. However, despite their value, these wetlands are facing an escalating array of threats, including invasive species, particularly water hyacinth Eichhornia crassipes disrupting aquatic ecosystems and impeding both fishing and navigation; agricultural encroachment into wetlands and deforestation for charcoal production are rapidly degrading vegetation cover and altering hydrological processes; unsustainable fishing practices have led to declining fish populations and loss of biodiversity; and overgrazing has further strained wetland vegetation. These challenges are compounded by weak enforcement of environmental laws, insufficient dissemination of research findings to local communities, and a lack of coordinated land-use planning.

By demonstrating an organic priority-setting approach through a consultation process with both local and national stakeholders, establishing appropriate stakeholder institutional frameworks and mechanisms for linking priorities for the Malagarasi - Muyovozi wetlands with wider Lake Tanganyika basin management and national freshwater resource management planning and policy development, this Output will show how technical assistance provided through the Freshwater Challenge can strengthen national management of freshwater resources in line with global targets. The demonstration activities will contribute towards GEF Core Indicator 7.3 through the organization and operation of a multi-sectoral forum for stakeholders in the Malagarasi and Muyovosi wetlands.

Activities include:

Conduct a spatial analysis of potential areas for restoration in the Malagarasi and Muyovosi wetland ecosystems; and

Organize and convene a multi-sectoral forum with a focus on the Malagarasi and Muyovosi wetlands, which will be representative of the stakeholders in the landscape.

)etermine how the proposed FWC indicator framework and tracking approach may be applied to the Malagarasi and Muyovozi wetlands and the related river systems;

Review the existing policy and planning framework to identify gaps, conflicts and inconsistencies that are reflected in prevailing threats impacting these wetlands;

dentify priorities for capacity development, strategic planning, river/lake basin management and policy development/reform to address key challenges and threats facing the Malagarasi and Muyovozi wetlands;

Develop at least three concept proposals to mobilize resources in support of priority actions for the Malagarasi and Muyovozi wetlands;

Develop communications materials to raise awareness among key local and national stakeholders regarding priority actions for the Malagarasi and Muyovozi wetlands (linking to Component 4);

- Identify local stakeholders to participate in project-supported learning and communications activities (Components 3 & 4), including youth, women, indigenous peoples and disadvantaged groups

Deliverables

- Potential areas identified for restoration in the Malagarasi and Muyovosi wetlands;
- Multi-sectoral forum with a focus on the Malagarasi and Muyovosi wetlands established and operational;
- Report on how the proposed FWC indicator framework and tracking approach may be applied to the Malagarasi and Muyovozi wetlands;
- Report on analysis of existing policy and planning framework to identify gaps, conflicts and inconsistencies affecting the Malagarasi and Muyovozi wetlands and priorities for capacity development, strategic planning, river/lake basin management and policy development/reform;
- Three concept proposals to mobilize resources in support of priority actions for the Malagarasi and Muyovozi wetlands;
- Communications materials on priority actions for the Malagarasi and Muyovozi wetlands;

- Local stakeholders from the Malagarasi and Muyovozi wetlands participate in project-supported learning and communications activities.

Outcome 2.2: Improved integration of Source to Sea actions in country plans in selected FWC member countries

Output 2.2.1: Selected FWC member countries supported to integrate Source to Sea actions
Lead: CI-Cambodia, WI-Brazil and TNC-Tanzania
As part of operationalization support, the project will support countries to recognize and include actions that use a Source to Sea framing at the river basin level and improve Source to Sea actions at a more localized level, for example through zoning river basins. This is important because it helps strengthen policy coherence, design of effective and scalable interventions, and reduces maladaptation by looking at hydrological and sedimentation dynamics longitudinally (down river systems) and laterally (across riparian areas and floodplains). This includes identifying climate, environmental, and societal risks, opportunities, and indicators at a basin scale, while showing municipalities and local governments how their development across sectors works with or harms

the system through assessment of issues such as watershed degradation, siltation, pollution and fragmentation of river corridors and floodplains, and development of corresponding action plans.

The project will also support the Action Platform on Source to Sea (S2S) in mobilizing its wider partnership (currently 52 partners) to support the integration of targets in their ongoing activities and mobilising public and private stakeholders to include S2S activities in their programming and investments. This will be supported through inviting S2S members to regional roundtables as technical experts (Output 4.1.2), and by linking the S2S Open Course* to the FWC Learning Hub (Output 3.1.1) in order to provide a training resource for building national capacity, and in turn enable the S2S approach to be incorporated into relevant national policies, plans and programmes. The future UNECE Source to Sea Guidance document for UNECE Member States, and the programmed GEF IW:LEARN Source to Sea Guidance document will also be included as key resources for countries to utilise and learn from examples.

The project will provide minimal support for the hosting of the platform which will guide the strategic framing of the Platform and development of the knowledge base of source to sea materials, linking in additional experience, case studies, new actors working in S2S, private sector actions, and building from learning surveys from the S2S partners. The Platform will work to mature the S2S methodology and approach and support countries in implementing S2S activities. It will also support regional convening on S2S through FWC events and integrate protection and restoration (as the goals of the Freshwater Challenge) into the S2S approach, driving demonstration of FWC activities as key contributions to S2S basin wide outcomes.

*See: https://cap-net.org/s2s/#:~:text=Objective,strategic%20partners%20and%20overall%20strategy.

Demonstration activities in the selected FWC member countries are summarized as follows (see **Annex 8** for further details):

Brazil:

Given the limited resources available for significant restoration efforts, this project aims to develop a conceptual model consisting of three protocols to guide the recovery and conservation of marginal lagoons and wetlands, one of which is specifically focused on applying a Source to Sea approach, ensuring that river basin committees in the whole country consider the proposed Action Plan and National Programme as an integrated system, connecting headwaters, wetlands, floodplains, reservoirs, and estuaries. Therefore, at this time, there will be no interventions in the territory, but rather a significant effort to coordinate and dialogue with key stakeholders to develop these protocols. Among them, the river basin and sub-basin committees, which implement their water resource plans in the territory and rely on resources from water usage charges and hydroelectric royalties, stand out. Another key stakeholder is the hydroelectric plant operators, who determine the amount of water released from the reservoirs and currently compromise the health of the lagoons and marginal wetlands. This strategy aims to use the country's legally valid water governance as a recipient of concrete actions to address the Freshwater Challenge, improving this governance and leaving a legacy of public policy. Moreover, by embedding S2S thinking into Brazil's legally recognized water governance framework, the project aims to leave a legacy of improved policy and practice that strengthens both ecological integrity and water security.

The central idea is that, after developing the protocols, the River Basin and Sub-Basin Committees (RBCs), through resources raised through water usage charges, royalties from hydroelectric reservoirs, and private contributions, incorporate the measures and guidelines resulting from these

projects into their action plans. However, the financial resources available to these RBCs are limited, and their investment is legally conditioned. Therefore, the integration of governance levels—from international to local—also aims to secure and leverage international funding to accelerate the implementation of these actions, which, in practice, promote the objectives of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the National Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity (NBSAPs), and the National Water Resources Plan (PNA-RH).

Demonstration activities in Brazil will focus on the Lagoon Systems of the Rio das Velhas Sub-basin—one of the several sub-basins that make up the São Francisco Basin. This larger and strategically important basin covers approximately 7.5% of Brazil's territory and extends from source to sea, representing a unique opportunity to operationalize the S2S approach. The results achieved and lessons learned from the Rio das Velhas Sub-basin are expected to facilitate replication in other sub-basins within the São Francisco Basin.

There are six large water and energy reservoirs (dams) directly linked to water control and regulation in the São Francisco Basin as a whole, in addition to approximately 200 smaller reservoirs for local supply or irrigation. Although these reservoirs provide water for the country's multiple uses, their operating rules influence water conservation in lagoon systems and marginal wetlands, requiring dialogue and collective development in favor of continental aquatic environments. This basin is located within Brazilian territory, from source to sea, which also represents an opportunity to practice this approach within the protocols. The territory also benefits from the São Francisco River Basin Committee (CBHSF) and the Velhas River Basin Committee (CBHVelhas), considered landmarks in participatory water management in Brazil. They are recognized for their capacity for social mobilization, historical dimension, and for establishing themselves as a democratic and innovative space for water governance in Brazil. In this sense, this Basin, with its sub-basins, is ideal for promoting debates to develop protocols for environmental management of river basins, water security, landscape conservation and native biodiversity.
Three protocols will be developed for consideration by the government: a "Collaborative Mapping Protocol", a "Fish Monitoring protocol" and a 'Source to Sea Protocol', for incorporation into an Action Plan and National Programme for the conservation, protection and recovery of freshwater resources. In addition, freshwater ecological corridors will be identified; a menu of actions will be provided that focuses on pollution control, sediment retention, biodiversity conservation and restoration, regulation of the hydrological cycle and its flows; and the development of "Source-to-Sea" conservation and restoration models that can be replicated for other River Basin Committees and other basins, including transboundary ones.

Three protocols will be developed for government consideration: a 'Collaborative Mapping Protocol,' a 'Fisheries Monitoring Protocol,' and a 'Source-to-Sea Protocol,' for incorporation into a National Action Plan and Program for the conservation, protection, and restoration of water resources. Furthermore, freshwater ecological corridors will be identified; a set of actions will be provided focusing on pollution control; sediment retention; biodiversity conservation and restoration; rehabilitation of lagoon systems and associated wetlands, with better regulation of the hydrological cycle and its flows; and the development of 'Source-to-Sea' conservation and restoration models that can be replicated in other river basin and sub-basin Committees, including transboundary ones.

Activities include:

- Develop a "Collaborative Mapping Protocol" - the identification, mapping, conservation, and restoration of lagoon systems and adjacent wetlands, including a Participatory mapping of floodplain lakes;
- Develop a "Fish Monitoring protocol" - monitoring the ichthyofauna (fish communities) in these in these lagoon systems and associated wetlands, as they serve as nurseries.

- Develop a 'Source to Sea Protocol' - mapping and prioritization of floodplain lakes integrated with hydrological connectivity; to improve reservoir operation rules, aiming to maintain minimum flow rates and flow pulses to preserve and restore these landscapes and their native biodiversity.
- Identify freshwater ecological corridors, such as free-flowing rivers, between headwaters, lakes, wetlands, and estuaries;
- Design a menu of actions to reconnect fragmented aquatic and terrestrial habitats and regulate the hydrological cycle at the basin or sub-basin level; and
- Integrate activities under the current project with initiatives on plastic pollution, invasive species, and sediment management.

Deliverables

An Action Plan and National Programme for the conservation, protection and recovery of freshwater, including the three protocols (to be used together or independently) for the conservation and restoration of marginal lagoons and wetlands, which can be replicated for other basins.

Freshwater ecological corridors identified and menu of actions for reconnection of fragmented habitats at the basin or sub-basin level

The interventions in Brazil are expected to benefit 239 river basin committees, (including 9 interstate and 230 state committees), at least 3,500 people.

Cambodia:

As Southeast Asia's largest freshwater lake, the Tonle Sap Lake discharges water to the lower Mekong River and eventually the sea. Sustainably managing the Tonle Sap Lake will thus contribute significantly to the freshwater sustainability of the Mekong Delta. The Tonle Sap system is hydrologically coupled to upstream Mekong flows and drives downstream water security into the delta. To operationalize the Freshwater Challenge (FWC) in Cambodia under Outcome 2.2 (Improved integration of S2S actions in country plans), this sub-output focuses on sharing of knowledge and experiences between local stakeholders across the upper Mekong, Tonle Sap River, lower floodplain and Tonle Sap shores in order to strengthen understanding of upstream – downstream interdependence of freshwater habitats, wildlife, fisheries and communities and to build the local constituency for strengthened recognition of S2S in policies and plans for Tonle Sap and the Mekong River.

Activities

Develop Khmer/English story suite (short videos) linking upstream timing/levels to downstream social-ecological conditions (upper Mekong, Tonle Sap River, lower floodplain, Tonle Sap shores), elevating youth and women's voices.

Exchange visits (youth/women/Indigenous reps) between upstream and downstream communities to build shared understanding of S2S interdependencies.

Apply youth citizen science: Simple protocols for recording water levels/flows, turbidity, bank condition, and community observations; datasets feed the FWC Learning Hub and national dashboards.

Organize sharing sessions with communities, local authorities, and relevant stakeholders on riverine wildlife tagging (e.g. river dolphins, waterbirds, fish, aquatic animals).

Deliverables

Khmer/English story suite (short videos) linking upstream timing/levels to downstream social-ecological conditions;
Report/communications materials documenting exchange visits (for youth/women/Indigenous reps) between upstream and downstream communities to build shared understanding of S2S inter-dependencies;
Youth citizen science protocols developed for recording water levels/flows, turbidity, bank condition, and community observations; acquired datasets fed to the FWC Learning Hub and national dashboards.
Documentation of sharing sessions with communities, local authorities, and relevant stakeholders on riverine wildlife tagging (e.g. river dolphins, waterbirds, fish, aquatic animals) for inclusion in the FWC Learning Hub and national platforms.

Duration/timing: 36 months
Lead responsibilities: CI Cambodia

Tanzania:
The pilot project will focus on key sub-catchments within the Malagarasi–Muyovozi wetlands, prioritising regions in Kigoma, Tabora, and Shinyanga due to their ecological importance, high biodiversity, and vulnerability to environmental pressures such as land-use changes, unsustainable agriculture, and alterations in hydrology. Interventions will target Ramsar-designated wetlands, particularly the Malagarasi–Muyovozi Ramsar Site, which features a complex mosaic of permanent and seasonal swamps, lakes, floodplains, and rivers. These wetlands cover over 30% of Lake Tanganyika's catchment area, playing a critical role in maintaining water quality, supporting fisheries, and sustaining livelihoods. By focusing on these priority areas, the project aims to maximize the impact of conservation efforts while safeguarding essential ecosystem services and biodiversity that are dependent on the connectivity of the river systems in the sub-catchment areas of these great wetland complexes.

Under the National Water Policy (2002, Rev 2025), to promote good management of water resources in the country, nine Basin Water Boards (BWBs) were established, including Lake Tanganyika, as the institutions responsible for overseeing the implementation of basin plans. The BWBs develop and manage water resources through the Integrated Water Resource Management and Development (IWRMD) and Catchment Conservation Plans (CCPs) to promote coordinated management and sustainable development of water resources. IWRMD plans were prepared by the BWBs in collaboration with other water-related sectors and stakeholders, with implementation plans involving all parties. Functional areas of WRM include water resources data and information systems, assessment and planning, water allocation and demand management, water sources conservation and pollution control, dam development and management, and transboundary water resources management. In line with the Water Sector Development Programme Phase Three (WSDP III) 2022/3 – 2025/6 strategies for transboundary water resources, the demonstration activities will contribute towards water resources assessment and monitoring for trans-boundary water resources; promoting technical collaboration on data collection and information dissemination; raising public awareness on effective use and conservation of transboundary water resources; and capacity building for WUAs and government staff. In addition, the demonstration activities will contribute to implementing key policies guiding the management of the Lake Tanganyika Basin, shared by Tanzania, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Zambia.

To enhance conservation efforts in the priority sub-catchments of the Malagarasi–Muyovozi wetlands, specifically in Kigoma, Tabora, and Shinyanga, the project will implement a series of targeted activities that will embody the Source-to-Sea approach (within the context of an inland Malagarasi River catchment that flows into Lake Tanganyika).

These Activities include:

- Carry out an assessment of optimum water resources monitoring network requirement in Malagarasi River catchment, framed as part of the wider Lake Tanganyika Basin monitoring network;
- Develop a media engagement strategy to educate and inform local stakeholders in Malagarasi – Moyovozi wetland about freshwater conservation and restoration in the S2S context of Lake Tanganyika Basin;
- Conduct performance assessments of Water User Associations (WUAs) in the targeted sub-catchment areas and share lessons learned to improve governance in the Malagarasi Muyovozi sub-catchment and wider Lake Tanganyika basin;
- Carry out environmental flows assessment (EFA) in one key tributary river of Malagarasi River to ensure the sustainable management of water resources in support of the ecological integrity of the Malagarasi–Muyovozi wetlands.
- Coordinate with the Lake Tanganyika Authority / Lake Tanganyika Biodiversity Conservation Project (2025-2030) through cross-sharing of plans, results, lessons learned and communications materials to place demonstration activities in the sub-catchments of the Malagarasi–Muyovozi wetlands within the wider Lake Tanganyika Basin context and emphasize S2S connectivity.

Deliverables

Media engagement strategy for Kigoma, Tabora, and Shinyanga sub-catchment areas including S2S considerations that relate to the wider Lake Tanganyika Basin;

Reports on WUA performance assessments for the targeted sub-catchment areas including lessons learned;

Reports on assessments of the water monitoring network requirements and environmental flows in key tributaries of the Malagarasi River, as contributions to the Lake Tanganyika Basin; and

Joint document prepared with the Lake Tanganyika Authority / Lake Tanganyika Biodiversity Conservation Project (2025-2030) describing how S2S contributions from the project demonstration activities relate to the wider Lake Tanganyika Basin.

All three selected countries:
At least 10 government staff with roles relevant to the FWC in each country will receive training on the S2S approach through the S2S Open Course on the FWC Learning Hub, including at least 50% women and 20% youth (below 24 years of age).

Component 3. Enabling Country Learning to Strengthen National Freshwater Challenge Objectives

Responding to the requests of FWC member country stakeholders made during consultations and a member country survey in June 2024, the project will support learning and knowledge exchange that supports coherence across water-dependent sector plans and design of programs and interventions. In particular, the project will: 1) support a global hub that curates existing guidance and expertise for FWC member countries, in cooperation with IW:LEARN and GEF ERIP, and 2) facilitate peer-to-peer learning among FWC member countries.

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan Annex outlines examples of how different stakeholder groups will be involved in country learning by stakeholder group. This includes a strong focus on youth, who will be engaged through focal points of global youth organisations as well as national-level youth networks to provide input on learning, communications, and mentoring needs. Case studies that feature youth engagement will be prioritised to highlight youth-led contributions and innovations. Learning exchanges between youth-led organisations will be ensured through participation of youth representatives in "Freshwater Challenge Exchanges" (Output 3.2.1). Youth will be encouraged to participate in the peer-to-peer exchanges (Output 3.2.2) either as expert contributors (e.g., PhD students) and/or as youth champions focused on learning. Through identified local and country IPLC organizations, IPLCs will be engaged to decide whether and how they wish to co-design and implement every activity in this component particularly the country-to-country exchanges and peer-learning activities. Learning case studies on IPLC engagement are encouraged and should be developed with relevant stakeholders, in line with FPIC principles. Women's government agencies and/or women's or other marginalized groups' organizations will be involved in the challenge and peer-to-peer exchanges.

Outcome 3.1: Improved availability of knowledge and learning resources that supports effective integration, program design, and monitoring of FWC objectives by countries

Output 3.1.1: Online FWC Learning Hub with curated content established
Lead: Wetlands International
The project will provide funding to the FWC Core Partner Wetlands International, as host of the FWC online content, to develop a FWC Learning Hub as an easy-to-use tool to find existing resources related to policy, planning, program design, and management of freshwater ecosystem restoration and protection interventions in support of freshwater, climate resilience, and biodiversity targets. Wetlands International currently has capacity for managing and developing web tools. The FWC website will be updated and the Learning Hub included. Website redesign will allow for seamless integration of the Learning Hub and an improved user experience and visual design across the board, to convey a compelling vision, storyline, and value proposition, in line with the objective of attracting large and diverse donors and partners, and to represent the ongoing expansion of the FWC country members. A redesign and refresh of the existing freshwaterchallenge.org website will improve user experience by prioritizing improved and simplified navigation and evolving design trends, as well as increase search engine optimization to match current algorithms and mobile compatibility challenges. Additional website needs will include continued maintenance and updates based on Freshwater Challenge progress and new partners, as well as providing expanded resources for countries and companies who have joined the challenge. Resources will be curated and site design will be based on the needs expressed in the survey results conducted by the supporting partners with the FWC member countries in June 2024 and through continuing discussions to ensure content and form will respond to country needs and remain fresh and useful. Sustainability of the tool will be paramount, and the project will explore plans for financial support after the project ends. The FWC member countries particularly expressed an interest to have guidance materials relevant to freshwater ecosystems curated around: inclusive and integrated planning processes (including on (i) setting objectives for restoration outcomes that link to strategic development priorities, and (ii) prioritization of ecosystem restoration options), innovative financing, technical assessments to prioritize protection and restoration with quantification of co-benefits, restoration project design, indicator selection, and efficient, cost-effective, and innovative monitoring. The hub will also include case studies developed with countries. This work will be closely coordinated with IW:LEARN (e.g. through data sharing and linkage to resources on the IW:LEARN platform such as the Website Toolkit https://iwlearn.net/learning/toolkits) and GEF ERIP, contributing towards GEF Core Indicator 7.4.

Activities

- Redesign the FWC website
- Design the FWC Learning Hub and integrate it with the FWC Website, ensuring linkage and synergy with the IW:LEARN and GEF ERIP platforms;
- Develop and train an Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool for the FWC Learning Hub to support users in locating and accessing learning materials relevant to their queries
- Populate the Learning Hub with materials from other project Components, including indicator framework guidance (Component 1), pipeline and gap analysis methodology and reports (Output 2.1.1), guidance manuals and training tools, Source to Sea Open Course (Output 2.2.1), case studies (Output 3.1.2), templates for webinars and training events, external links from the Learning Hub to YouTube for webinars and videos, MEA policy recommendations, and other relevant materials
- Develop a Sustainability Plan for institutional, financial and technical support for the FWC Learning Hub post-project

Deliverables

- FWC Learning Hub integrated into the redesigned FWC Website and fully populated with materials including case studies from the project activities
- Usage of the FWC Learning Hub supports FWC member countries in accessing knowledge resources to addressing freshwater issues as indicated by number and geographical distribution of hits and downloads
- Sustainability Plan that assures continued institutional, financial and technical support for the FWC Learning Hub post-project

Output 3.1.2: *Country-led learning cases developed and shared in the Learning Hub*
Lead: IUCN

The project will facilitate the FWC member countries involved in the project and the wider membership to develop case studies of their learning and challenges from their interventions and use of restoration guidance, such as through interviews and videos. The FWC Partner Countries will receive resources to produce case studies on thematic areas such as technical interventions (e.g. on piloting the FWC indicator framework application in Output 1.1.3), policy, financing, stakeholder/youth engagement, gender mainstreaming and training needs related to their demonstration activities under the project. In addition, other FWC member countries may contribute existing or new case study materials to diversify the content available. The project will work to achieve gender balance in the interviewees and have at least one youth case study per country. When appropriate, the Hub will also develop case studies with corporate partners on how they contribute to the FWC in FWC member countries. The content will also be coordinated with IW:LEARN, GEF ERIP, initiatives by FWC supporting coalition partners, and with youth engagement groups in country and globally as supporting partners such as Youth Engaged in Wetlands, or the World Youth Parliament for Water, Yand Global Youth Biodiversity Network.

Activities

- Develop templates for country-led learning case studies that identify learning objectives, audiences and content, in consultation with IW:LEARN, GEF ERIP and other initiatives;
- Each selected country to prepare one learning case study each on thematic areas such as: technical interventions, policy, financing, stakeholder/youth engagement, gender mainstreaming and training needs;
- Translate learning case studies into local languages and make available in locally-appropriate formats for media such as radio programmes or social media, to promote local uptake of case study results;

- Upload case study materials on the FWC Learning Hub for global access including linkage to IW:LEARN with sharing of materials for the IW:LEARN newsletter and make them available through FWC partner-led events including the regional round table dialogues (Output 4.1.2).

Deliverables

- A suite of at least six case studies from each of the selected FWC member countries and wider FWC membership made available for global use on the FWC Learning Hub and linked to IW: LEARN;
- National case study materials made available in local languages and locally appropriate formats for dissemination in-country

Outcome 3.2: Improved knowledge among FWC member countries that supports effective FWC-related planning and implementation

Output 3.2.1: In person and/or virtual group "Freshwater Challenge Exchanges" held with FWC member countries
Lead: IUCN
Based on country capacity development action plans using the gap analysis in Output 2.1.1, the project will organize tailored "Freshwater Challenge Exchanges" that support country-to-country learning and exchange starting with the selected countries and bringing in other eligible FWC member countries where clear benefits can be leveraged. The Exchanges will be organized with a group of countries that are facing or have faced a similar challenge, have hydro-ecological similarities, and/or share a transboundary basin. The exchanges would be similar to study tours, with a relatively broad participation and providing an introduction for a larger set of countries. The aim would be to engage with political, financial as well technical issues, for which senior managers or technical managers as well as donors would be targeted to inform and shape national and regional policy and programmatic solutions and leverage financing for their implementation. By demonstrating the approach, this Output also aims to enable country-to-country collaboration on freshwater conservation and restoration. The project plans to achieve 50-50 gender balance in participants and will coordinate with GEF ERIP on restoration exchanges. In addition, there is potential for synergy with IW:LEARN5 (2022-2026), which will fund a series of iterative twinning exchanges that involve two visits between the same projects and their identified partners, to promote stronger partnerships between IW projects (https://iwlearn.net/learning/twinning). Case studies from the project's demonstration activities will provide learning opportunities for the exchanges. While all exchanges will include representatives from relevant national youth organisations the exchanges may also include dedicated sessions with youth (linking to those engaged in Output 4.2.2) and vulnerable groups to encourage wider learning and collaboration. This output will be organized and led by IUCN with resources provided to FWC country partners for participation in the exchanges.

Activities
- Prepare detailed implementation plans for at least 6 Freshwater Challenge Exchanges involving the selected FWC member countries and other eligible FWC member countries, including learning objectives, key subjects, potential destinations and hosting organizations, participants and logistical arrangements;

- Coordinate implementation of the exchanges with relevant partners and hosting organizations;
- Participants to prepare debriefing reports and complete questionnaires for each exchange to evaluate achievement of learning objectives, suitability of destinations and lessons learned
- Organize post-exchange knowledge sharing events to share learning from exchanges

Deliverables

- At least 6 Freshwater Challenge Exchanges conducted involving the selected FWC member countries and other eligible FWC member countries
- Achievement of intended learning objectives for each exchange

Output 3.2.2: In person and/or virtual peer-to-peer exchange and/or mentorship facilitated between FWC member countries
Lead: IUCN
Participating countries will be brought together virtually and/or in person with additional experts to work on the identified challenge and barriers to restoring freshwater ecosystems at scale, focusing on the selected countries in Component 2 and including other relevant countries (South-South cooperation) and drawing on other initiatives such as the MedWet Initiative and IUCN capacity building for the Wise Use of Caribbean Wetlands* in order to broaden knowledge exchange opportunities on issues such as stakeholder engagement mechanisms, monitoring and governance of wetlands. The project will encourage youth participation and 50-50 gender balance in participants from the countries. External experts such as FWC member organization experts, Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel members and technical experts such as members of the GEF STAP, UNCCD Committee on Science and Technology would be invited to participate. The relevant Ramsar Regional Initiatives would also be engaged in order to provide two-way learning opportunities for regional countries. In addition, there is potential for synergy with IW:LEARN5 (2022-2026), which will fund a series of iterative twinning exchanges between IW projects, as well as access to IW experts, training opportunities and participation in IW events. The approach of this Output particularly responds to the requests from FWC member countries to learn from their peers and solve similar challenges. Country-to-country mentorship and/or direct technical exchange visits will also be explored that allow in-depth learning. This output will be led by IUCN with resources provided to FWC country partners for involvement in the below activities.

Activities

- Develop capacity development action plans for freshwater conservation and restoration for the selected countries based on the Pipeline and Gap Analysis in Output 2.1.1 to identify needs that the project will seek to address, and opportunities offered through IW:LEARN, GEF ERIP, Ramsar Regional Initiatives and others;
- Develop detailed implementation plans for the proposed peer-to-peer, mentorship and technical advisory visits and online meetings including learning objectives, key subjects, sources of relevant expertise, participants and logistical arrangements;
- Convene a series of regular online meetings (“technical clinics”) to allow participating FWC countries to pose technical requests and obtain guidance from international experts and other countries;
- Coordinate in-country technical advisory meetings including field study visits involving international experts (eg Ramsar STRP members) and experts including PhD students from other countries to provide technical advice in solving specific challenges on freshwater issues;

- Coordinate country-to-country mentorship arrangements for at least 6 key participants through concerned government agencies and supporting organizations (eg water institutes, NGO partners)
- Participants to prepare questionnaires and debriefing reports for each exchange to evaluate achievement of learning objectives, suitability of destinations and lessons learned
- Evaluate the lessons learned from this Output and develop a post-project sustainability plan for continuation of such guidance to FWC member countries based on the experiences gained

Deliverables

- Series of regular online technical clinics provides FWC member countries with guidance to address specific challenges
- At least 6 key participants from FWC member countries undergo mentorship placements / exchanges and fulfil planned learning objectives
- At least 3 technical advisory missions by international experts and experts from other FWC member countries assist in resolving specific technical challenges
- Lessons learned documented and post project sustainability plan for continuation of technical guidance to FWC member countries

**"Wise Use of Caribbean Wetlands for Climate Change Mitigation and Conservation of their Ecosystem Services" - led by IUCN, the project is being implemented across the Caribbean and involves 11 countries.*

Component 4. Communicating to Raise the Profile of Freshwater Ecosystems Locally, Nationally, in Transboundary Basins, and Globally and engagement with IW:LEARN

The project will elevate global and in-country awareness of the role of freshwater ecosystems in meeting biodiversity, climate resilience, and development objectives through new partnerships that generate momentum for the FWC. In addition, communications surrounding FWC target setting and tracking via agreed indicators can provide valuable information on the value of freshwater ecosystems towards achieving national, regional and global development goals and leveraging policy actions and investments in line with the overall ambition of the FWC (300,000 km of rivers and 350 million ha of wetlands restored by 2030).

Communications activities and messaging will be co-developed and coordinated with youth and other marginalized stakeholder group representatives (with at least 50% representation of women and girls), targeting decision-makers from the public and private sector through in-person events and through media channels with clear messaging on the urgency and benefits freshwater ecosystems bring. It will also build on private sector networks and ongoing policy engagement activities, such as Business For Nature, Science based Targets Network, UN High-Level Climate Champions, and others. Raising awareness among decision makers across sectors and levels of government, as well as in the private sector, will be particularly important for translating opportunities into interventions that are invested in. The messages and engagement of decision makers can be particularly powerful when coming from their own communities, particularly from underrepresented voices. Additional messaging will be co-developed to target the general public through traditional and social media channels from national to global level, to raise awareness on the benefits of freshwater ecosystems including biodiversity, climate change adaptation and mitigation and , as well as an urgency to engage their decision makers to act now on restoration and conservation.

In terms of stakeholder engagement, the regional roundtables will serve as stakeholder engagement platforms with particular focus on youth participation and mentorship. The Youth Grants will be designed in consultation with the pilot countries and will include a capacity-building component to

support applications from interested youth organizations and individuals. Youth engagement will take place through networks of young people already involved in national or international youth initiatives, and national youth networks will be identified during the pilot country stakeholder analysis. This component will also prioritise gender responsive actions including by encouraging meaningful participation of women in the regional round tables and enabling the role of women in driving freshwater ecosystem restoration and showcasing women's leadership. Under Output 4.2.1, The project will proactively explore and build partnerships to enable and expand storytelling by diverse voices, youth organizations and national organizations supporting grassroots initiatives, IPLCs, and the Women for Water Partnership. Activities will include activating women, youth, IPLCs and other marginalized groups to engage with their national governments and at global events.

The project will be allocating at least 1% of the GEF grant to actively participate in IW:LEARN activities, such as an International Waters Conference, regional and topical relevant meetings during project implementation, produce news stories for the IW:LEARN newsletter and create an IW:LEARN webpage which will be integrated on the FWC website to enable widespread dissemination of projects results and lessons learned, contributing towards GEF Core Indicator 7.4. The efforts to coordinate and engage with IW:LEARN will be led by IUCN project staff, including a part-time communications role, with participation and inputs from the global partners of the Freshwater Challenge Initiative as well as the FWC country partners involved and youth partners in implementation for each of the selected countries.

Outcome 4.1: Increased awareness of freshwater ecosystem threats and solutions among the general public and decision makers

Output 4.1.1: FWC-related communications disseminated through multiple media channels
Lead: IUCN
The project will communicate on the threats facing freshwater ecosystems, the risks of not acting to restore and conserve intact ecosystems, the opportunities and solutions, and the role of the FWC. The overall project approach will be presented in a communications strategy targeted at different audiences including public and private decision makers, that will also be tailored at the country level, linking to national media and providing training for national journalists for effective communication of environmental issues and stories. The project will use storytelling at different levels and through diverse voices and platforms. This will include communication activities through national and international mainstream media, social media, private sector supporters and platforms, and national and global events. The project will explore multi-media communications approaches to promote awareness of the multiple values and benefits of freshwater systems to diverse stakeholders with a particular focus on youth. It will also be coordinated with other platforms, like the Action Platform for Source-to-Sea Management (S2S Platform) and the opportunity to partner with Circle of Blue (also currently focusing on youth/media) and environmental journalism organizations such as *The Water Diplomat* (a free monthly news and intelligence magazine resource initiated by the Geneva Water Hub in partnership with OOSKAnews) which is working together with UNDP Cap Net and the Global Water Partnership to conduct regional trainings of journalists on water issues, with the aim of building a global platform of journalists providing constant high quality reporting on water issues. Communications will be targeting different audiences - including youth, decision makers, and the private sector - and around different conventions and development challenges. Delivery of global communications activities below will be led by IUCN project staff including a part-time communications role, in consultation with FWC global partners, while activities in the three selected countries will be led by the respective FWC Country Partner Organizations leading implementation in each of the selected countries.

Activities

- Develop and implement a communications strategy for the project, tailored to different audiences and aimed at country level for participating countries, and identifying strategic partnerships with communications organizations;
- Provide training for national journalists to facilitate effective communication of environmental issues and stories including field visits to relevant freshwater sites, explanation of technical terminology and interpretation and presentation of complex issues for public understanding;
- Facilitate national media coverage of country demonstration activities and related issues of relevance to the FWC;
- Share national and regional stories via the FWC website, IW:LEARN Newsletter, social media and other methods such as radio and theatre; and
- Utilize the knowledge generated through the project (from, for example, studies being carried out, planning processes, awareness and communication materials and firsthand narratives) to develop materials to share during the regional and international meetings and fora - promoting the work related to gender equality and women's empowerment and youth engagement to be showcased, as well as demonstrating private sector contributions to FWC goals; and
- Advocate for incorporation of communications plans and lessons learned into national government programmes for increased impact and sustainability.

Deliverables

- Communications Strategy for the overall project, and national communications strategies for Brazil, Cambodia and Tanzania
- Stories based on project activities reported in the media in FWC member countries and shared globally;
- Training of journalists in FWC member countries;
- Communications materials to share during regional and international meetings and fora.

Output 4.1.2: Regional roundtables on freshwater challenges and solutions held
Lead: IUCN

The project will hold regional roundtable dialogues where countries can discuss freshwater threats and solutions, particularly as linked to climate and nature resilience. The purpose of the regional round table dialogues will be to share lessons and best practices, demonstrating FWC benefits to countries, review resources mobilized for freshwater wetland restoration and to promote expansion of the FWC membership and national and regional roll out of the Business Supporter Program. The dialogues will mainly address technical themes recognized as priorities by FWC members in the region that are aligned with the project objectives, and the programmes and participation tailored accordingly. The roundtable dialogues would be organized around IWC or other global/regional events (e.g., UN Water Conference, MEA COPs, World Water Forum, meetings of ASEAN, ACTO, etc), and designed to efficiently take advantage of opportunities where countries are gathering and as a chance to elevate freshwater ecosystems in those broader events and fora. They would specifically include the opportunity for inputs from the activities in the selected countries in Component 2 and presentation of relevant case studies (Output 3.1.2) and results of piloting the FWC indicator framework and tracking approach (Output 1.1.3).

These events will be used to engage both members and non-members of the FWC, as well as the private sector, with champions from FWC countries promoting their learnings and members of the Action Platform on Source to Sea (see Output 2.2.1) invited to strengthen knowledge exchange on this subject. The relevant Ramsar Regional Initiatives would also be engaged in order to provide two-way learning opportunities. Regional events will also be a forum for youth representatives (linking to youth partners engaged through Output 4.2.2) to engage with decision makers on freshwater challenges and solutions. To maximize the value of youth participation, youth participants will be invited to join at least one mentorship call with a relevant FWC partner before and after the event. From these events, the project aims to encourage wider integration of freshwater restoration and protection into national and regional commitments, even among countries that have not signed up to the FWC.

Activities

- Convene three regional round table dialogues on regionally-significant themes on the sidelines of related global or regional events in the Africa, Asia - Pacific and Latin America - Caribbean regions;
- Invite youth partners engaged through Output 4.2.2 to participate in the dialogues and ensure mentorship is provided before during and after the event by a Freshwater Challenge partner.
- Organize media coverage of the dialogues and make video coverage available through the FWC Learning Hub for global access
- Facilitate the sharing of project-related content relevant to the themes of each dialogue including case studies and technical results
- Support representatives to attend and actively participate in IW: LEARN regional or global meetings.

Deliverables

· Three regional round table dialogues convened on key themes and video coverage made available of each on the FWC Learning Hub

· At least 10 youth from the host region participate in each of the round table events and take part in at least one call before and after the event with selected FWC partners.

· Increased understanding of FWC objectives and expansion of FWC membership in regions hosting the dialogues

Outcome 4.2: Strengthened engagement of diverse stakeholders in FWC messaging and objectives

Output 4.2.1: New and diverse partnerships built in support of FWC objectives
Lead: IUCN
The project will explore and build partnerships to enable and expand storytelling by diverse voices, towards the wider goal of creating a groundswell of support for freshwater ecosystem conservation in member countries. This may include the Earth Journalism Network, Circle of Blue, The Water Diplomat, World Youth Parliament for Water, Youth Engaged in Wetlands, Global Youth Biodiversity Network, UNCCD Youth Caucus, and national organizations supporting grassroots organizations, IPs and LCs, and the Women for Water Partnership. Activities will include activating women, youth, IPs, and LCs and the marginalized groups (with at least 50% representation of women and girls) to

engage with their national governments and at global events. Through these activities, the project will aim to reach a large audience, while also specifically targeting decision-makers, and make use of diverse media including radio and theatre at the local level.

Activities

- Build on existing relationships and leads of the FWC core partners at global level to identify and engage with global partners that can contribute to communications for freshwater conservation advocacy and awareness raising campaigns
- FWC country partners to identify national and local partners that can proactively engage with women, youth and IPLCs to bring diverse voices and perspectives to freshwater advocacy and awareness raising efforts

- Support participation of identified partners in relevant global, regional and national events to enable their contributions to discourses on freshwater conservation and restoration, including the participation of representatives in at least one GEF International Waters Conference.

Deliverables

- At least 10 new communications-related partners engaged by the project at global level and participating in at least 4 global/regional events including 50% women and 20% youth
- At least 10 new communications-related partners engaged by the project in each of the selected countries at national and local levels and participating in at least 4 national events and 4 local events including 50% women and 20% youth and engaging IPLC members

Output 4.2.2: Youth partners engagement in the FWC strengthened through "Youth Challenge Grants"
Lead: IUCN
Youth are essential stakeholders in freshwater ecosystem management, who play an important role especially in civil society initiatives and in building community support for local action. IUCN will lead the project in collaborating with youth partners to strengthen the voices of young people across genders in the FWC globally and in national and sub-national processes. Starting with the selected countries, youth organisations will be identified and informed about youth grants. The project will provide small grants to enable the participation of youth (with at least 50% young women) in project activities, including, but not limited to, contribution to source to sea actions in pilot countries (Output 2.2.1), co-design and complementation of global and national communications and messaging (Output 4.1.1, Output 4.2.1) design of engagement approaches and workshop sessions during regional round tables (Output 4.1.2), and co-facilitation and participation in country "Challenge Exchanges" (Output 3.2.1) and peer-to-peer learning (Output 3.2.2). The grant making mechanism will include a capacity development component to support design and implementation of youth-led wetland conservation and restoration actions as part of the above-mentioned outcomes. Youth receiving grants will benefit from mentoring opportunities which will be designed as part of the grant implementation plan. Learnings from other youth initiatives and programmes such as the Youth for Water Climate Initiative, the Valuing Water Youth Journey, Youth Engaged in Wetlands and the Global Youth Movement for Water will be consulted during grant design.

Activities

- Develop an implementation plan guided by examples from existing youth initiatives for the issuance of small grants for youth activities in selected FWC member countries, including a capacity building component, eligibility criteria, scope of activities to be supported, grant issuance mechanism, publicity, grant amount and expected deliverables (eg activity and financial reports from recipients) and delivery of mentorship activities.
- Administer Small Grants for Youth activities in the selected FWC member countries, issued from IUCN HQ via website and managed in coordination with country partners;
- Work with FWC core partners and their country partners to publicise the results of supported youth activities in national media and include in the FWC Learning Hub;
- Coordinate "Challenge Exchanges" (Output 3.2.1) and peer to peer learning (Output 3.2.2) opportunities for at least 6 youth on communications and messaging at national and global levels, including FWC member organizations
- Support participation of youth involved in above activities in regional round table dialogues (Output 4.1.2)

Deliverables

- Small Grants issued for Youth Activities in at least the selected FWC member countries in support of FWC objectives
- Results of FWC supported Youth Activities are publicised nationally and globally
- At least 6 youth from selected FWC member countries benefit from project-supported peer-to-peer learning.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The project Monitoring & Evaluation System will be delivered by the project management unit in IUCN, led by the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, working closely with the in-country and FWC Partner stakeholders, and is composed of the following elements:

Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) – Towards the end of each project year, The PMU in coordination with the executing partners, will work with project partners to develop a detailed AWPB that includes targets for key activities to achieve the outputs. When possible, the development of the annual work plan should consider suggestions for adaptive management and lessons learned, and attention to gender responsive activities and gender disaggregated targets will be made.

Project Results Framework (PRF) - The Project Results Framework (**Annex C**) includes core and additional indicators at the objective and outcome level along with a methodology for data collection and analysis. It defines responsible parties and frequency of data collection, provides baseline information, outlines yearly and end of project targets, and addresses key assumptions or related risks that should be monitored or mitigated. Importantly, the monitoring and reporting framework also includes specific provisions for monitoring the gender dimensions of the project. Throughout the project's duration, the data collected on these indicators will be analyzed to determine if the project strategies are working towards achieving its expected results including gender-related outcomes. Progress against the indicator targets, including gender-related ones, will be reported on at the end of each project year.

Project Progress Reports (PPRs) – The PMU, in coordination with the executing partners, will complete a PPR after 6 months and 12 months of each project year. The PPR will report on the progress against the AWPB and the PRF. PPRs will also monitor achievements on the Gender Action

Plan and the Stakeholder Engagement Plan. The 12-month PPR will include the project results delivered, tracked under the AWPB and the PRF.

Terminal Evaluation Report - An independent Terminal Evaluation will take place at project within six months of project completion, providing an external evaluation of the overall project effectiveness and efficiency. The Terms of Reference for the terminal evaluation will be drafted by the WWF-GEF Agency and the PMU in accordance with GEF requirements and the consultant will be contracted by the WWF-GEF Agency. The funding for the evaluation will come from the project budget but will be held by the WWF-GEF Agency.

Integration of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) – The recommendations of the GAP have been and will be incorporated into the above M&E elements. Development of the AWPB each year will be coordinated with the PMU, participating country executing partners and FWC partners to facilitate gender responsiveness across the planned project activities, and to include gender targets. The Project Results Framework includes specific gender indicators, and also indicators with targets disaggregated by gender. These will be tracked throughout the project implementation, and reported on as part of monitoring and evaluation. The six month and 12 month project progress reports will include subsections on implementation of the gender action plan, reporting on gender inclusion, and reporting against the specific gender indicators. TORs for the terminal evaluation will include specific provisions for evaluation of progress and results regarding gender inclusion in implementation of the project. Overall, the monitoring of the gender action plan has been accounted for through integration into the overall project and integration into the project's M&E systems and budget.

Private Sector Engagement

The private sector has been consulted on the Freshwater Challenge, particularly on how they can be involved and support the FWC commitments in countries and at global level (through the recently launched "Business Supporter Program"), which aligns with the private sector activities described in this project. The FWC Supporting Coalition has had ongoing conversations with a number of initial private sector supporters, such as the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), AB InBev, and IKEA, throughout 2023 and 2024. BCG has coordinated closely with the Supporting Coalition on the global strategy and networking. AB InBev and IKEA were - among with about 10 other companies from a variety of sectors - mostly recently consulted August 2024 through March 2025 on the private sector's role in the FWC, particularly around member country and non-FWC country reporting and aligned metrics, harmonization of reporting, and private sector-led contributions and commitments. Various private sector platforms, such as the CEO Water Mandate, WEF, AWS, Business for Nature, UN High Level Climate Champions and others have also been consulted on the FWC to identify future alignment and collaboration that will help to progress and accelerate the activities described in this project. In addition, the Supporting Coalition has held two private sector engagement events during Stockholm Water Week in August 2024 and the UN General Assembly in September 2024. These events engaged over 60 companies and gathered important inputs that have contributed to project design, including the need for a better understanding of the value and benefits of freshwater ecosystems and conservation, and the need to make a clearer and stronger link between freshwater, biodiversity, and climate for companies, the need for alignment between countries and private sector, and the need for clear indicators for reporting on FWC contributions. More focused discussions with private sector supporters and platforms/initiatives have continued during the project preparation phase, as the Business Supporter Program was launched in Q2 2025, with a first group of companies signing up to this program, and roll-out continuing over the course of 2025. Bilateral conversations with these initial business supporters - Reckitt, GSK, and EDEKA were the first companies to join the BSP - have centered around the role private sector can play in the FWC and this project, also touching upon reporting frameworks and indicators (relevant to

component 1), awareness raising and influencing (relevant to component 4) as well as policy engagement opportunities (relevant to component 2), among other things. Country level activities will build on private sector engagement opportunities, for instance in Brazil, sanitation and energy companies operating in the São Francisco basin will also be involved, such as: AEGEA, COPASA, CEMIG, EMBASA, Eletrobrás - with interest in water and soil conservation projects, as well as CHESF and FURNAS (see Annex 9A). In Tanzania, private sector partners will be mainly MSMEs and financial institutes for micro-lending and granting – these will be project partners under component 3, engaged in PPPs.

References

Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF, (June 2023), "Evaluation of the GEF's Approach and Interventions in Water Security," 64th GEF Council Meeting, June 26-30, 2023, Basilia, Brazil.

Institutional Arrangement and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

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

Global level

The Global Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be the highest decision-making authority for the project. The Project Steering Committee will consist of representatives of the Freshwater Challenge global core partner organizations (see Annex 4), providing continuity with the development process of the overall FWC initiatives and the conception of the project proposal. This representation maintains consistency with the FWC structure overall and will ensure that all core partners remain involved, invested, and enable opportunities for organizational alignment and leveraging of additional cofinance in order to deliver the intended GEF project outcomes. Thus, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy and Wetlands International will continue their roles as core partners of the FWC initiative, while also being represented on the PSC. Their roles in global level implementation are briefly described in the next section. In addition, a senior representative of the key national government partner agency associated with project demonstration activities in Brazil, Cambodia and Tanzania will be included in the PSC. One selected representative from a FWC supporting partner youth organisation will also be included, and the GEF Secretariat will participate as an observer.

The PSC will provide high-level oversight and strategic guidance for the project, including reviewing and approving the annual work plans. It will facilitate smooth project execution, adaptive management and adherence to social and environmental safeguard requirements. The PSC will meet virtually on a quarterly basis with the IUCN Project Manager attending as an observer to provide PMU Secretariat support in terms of the draft agenda, minutes, supporting materials and coordinating inputs from members and other contributors. A representative of the WWF GEF Agency will also participate as an observer. The Global PSC Chair position will be filled by Global PSC members on an annual rotative basis.

Members of the PSC will include: at least one representative and one proxy member from WWF, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy, Wetlands International, the Ramsar Convention Secretariat, the UNCCD Secretariat, UNEP, a FWC partner youth organization (TBC), Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (Brazil), Ministry of Environment (Cambodia), Ministry

of Water (Tanzania), a private sector representative, GEF Secretariat (Observer) and IUCN (Observer/Secretary).

Execution and Implementation:

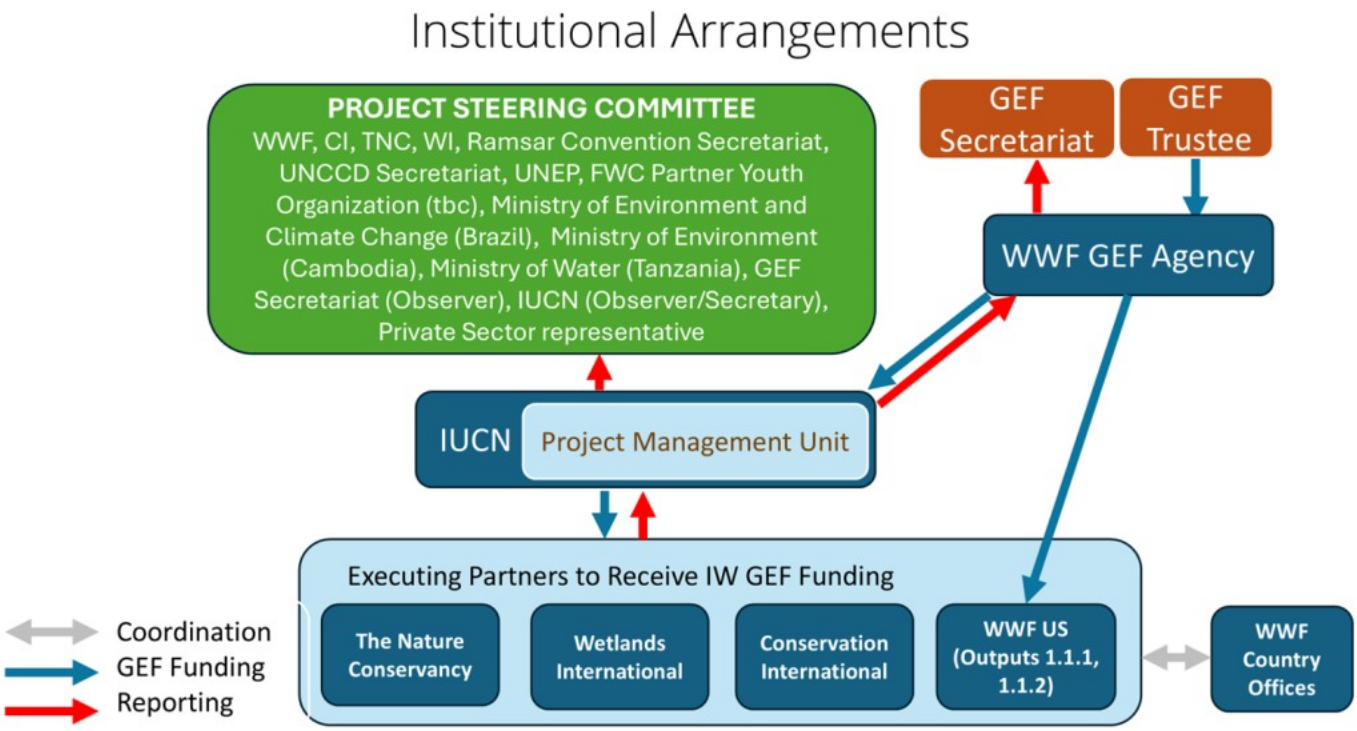
WWF is the GEF implementing Agency, while IUCN will serve as the Lead Executing Agency for the project, with the Project Management Unit hosted by IUCN HQ. The IUCN PMU will receive GEF funds from WWF GEF Agency and disburse them as sub-grants for execution of specific project outputs through agreements with the members of the FWC Supporting Coalition (including CI, TNC and WI) - based on their relevant country presence and relationships, demonstrated areas of experience and leadership, as well as strong experience executing GEF projects to ensure rapid project mobilization. This will include disbursement to the identified Country Partners to collaborate with their country-office counterparts in the selected FWC member countries: Brazil (WI), Cambodia (CI) and Tanzania (TNC) for delivery of the project Outputs at country level. The PMU staff will support the Country Partners in managing demonstration activities in the selected countries and engage with other FWC partners and member countries as needed. The project will also work with country governments and other key partners in-country and engage new partners for specific Outputs. The GEF fund flow and institutional arrangements for project implementation are illustrated in the two diagrams below.

At the global level, FWC Core Partners including CI, TNC, and WI will continue to participate actively in regular and ad hoc FWC partner meetings; support and participate in physical and online project workshops and events (e.g. the regional round tables); review project-produced materials; provide support to elevate project learnings and highlight national government and partner leadership in global and regional fora (such as UN Water Convention, CBD, UNCCD, Ramsar, UNFCCC COPs, etc); as well as other roles, as needed. Funding has been provided for the global-level participation in these projects.

Participation in events, workshops, consultations and delivery of project activities by WWF Country offices in Brazil, Cambodia, and Tanzania will be covered by co-financing from WWF and will be important to connect the Implementing Agency to ongoing in-country project work.

PMU staffing will include: the Project Manager (fulltime), M&E Officer (part-time), Safeguards and Gender Officer (part-time), Finance and Administration services (part-time), and Communications and Partnerships Officer (fulltime). Terms of Reference for these positions are provided in Annex 3.

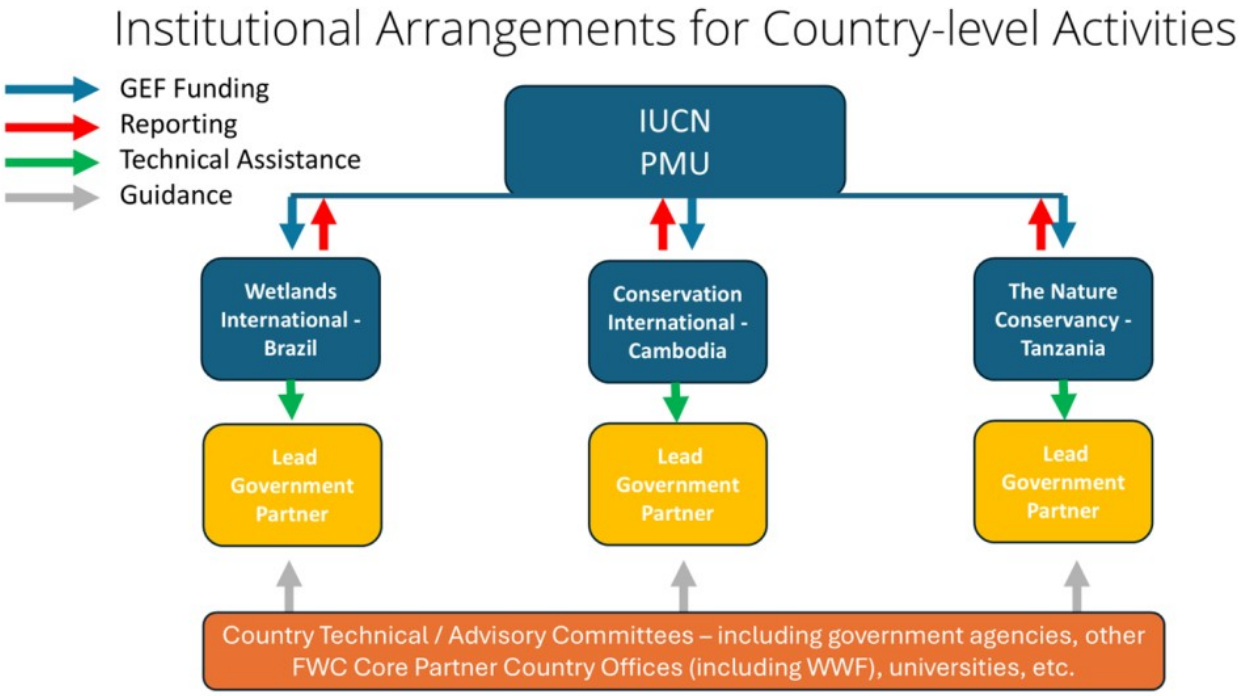
The PMU will requisition annual project audits to be conducted by an external auditing company in line with WWF GEF Agency requirements.



Country level implementation arrangements

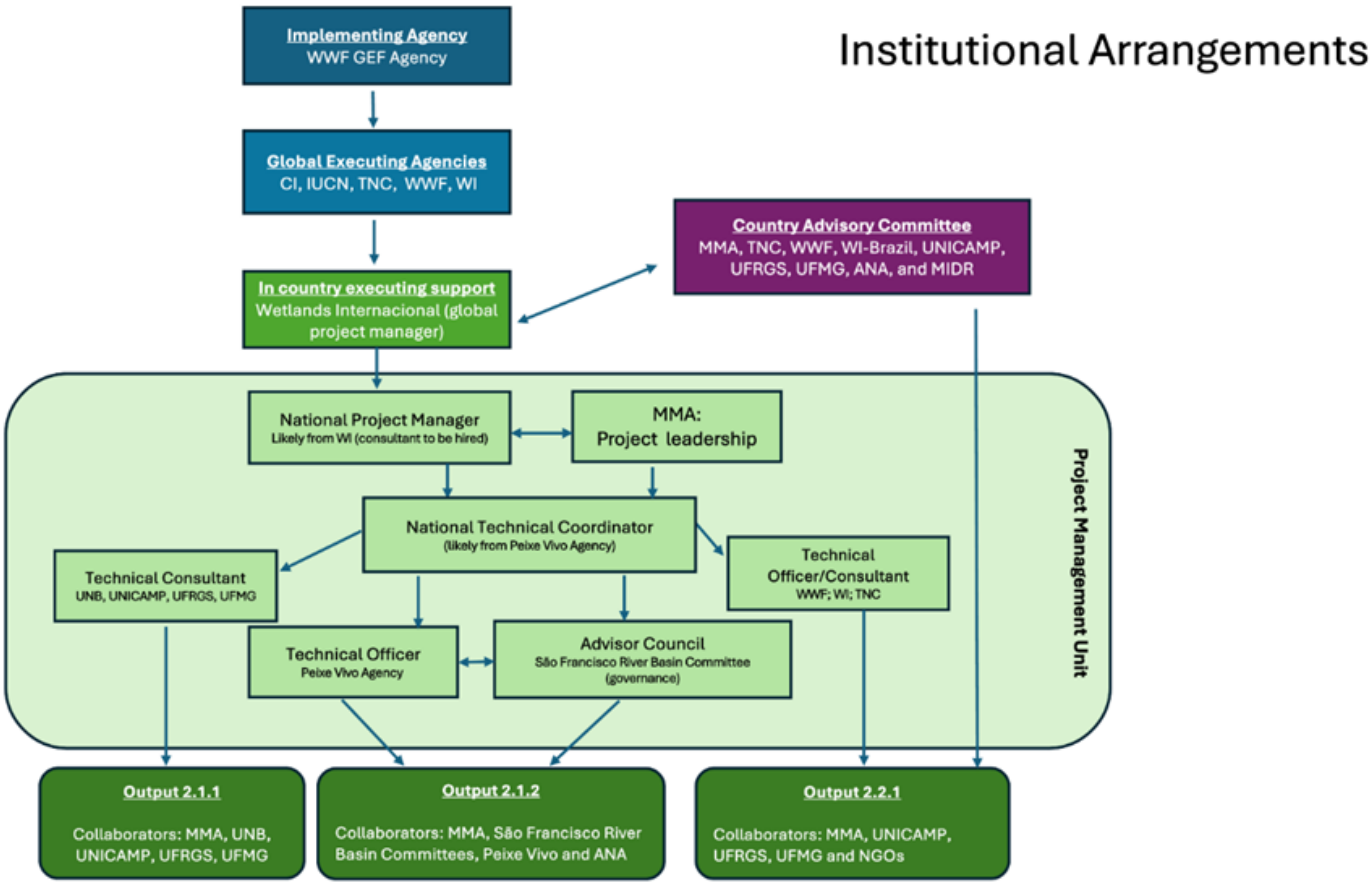
The FWC Core Partner organizations have existing programmes and staffing in each of the three pilot countries, which are reflected in the project management unit diagrams for each country below. In order to preserve resources and avoid duplication of roles, the project will be executed by making use of such existing FWC Core Partner staffing in each country, and any existing government structures such as the Country Technical Committee in Tanzania. WWF country offices in the three target countries will be invited to participate in on-the-ground workshops and activities but will fund this participation through co-financing. WWF Country Office staff will also be invited to sit on the country-level project advisory committees to observe the activities in-country.

A close linkage between project implementation at global- and country-levels, as well as with the broader Freshwater Challenge initiative, will be maintained through the regular engagement of the Global Executing Agencies in coordination with in-country colleagues. This engagement will include leadership for in-country work by global colleagues within CI, TNC, and WI.



Brazil:

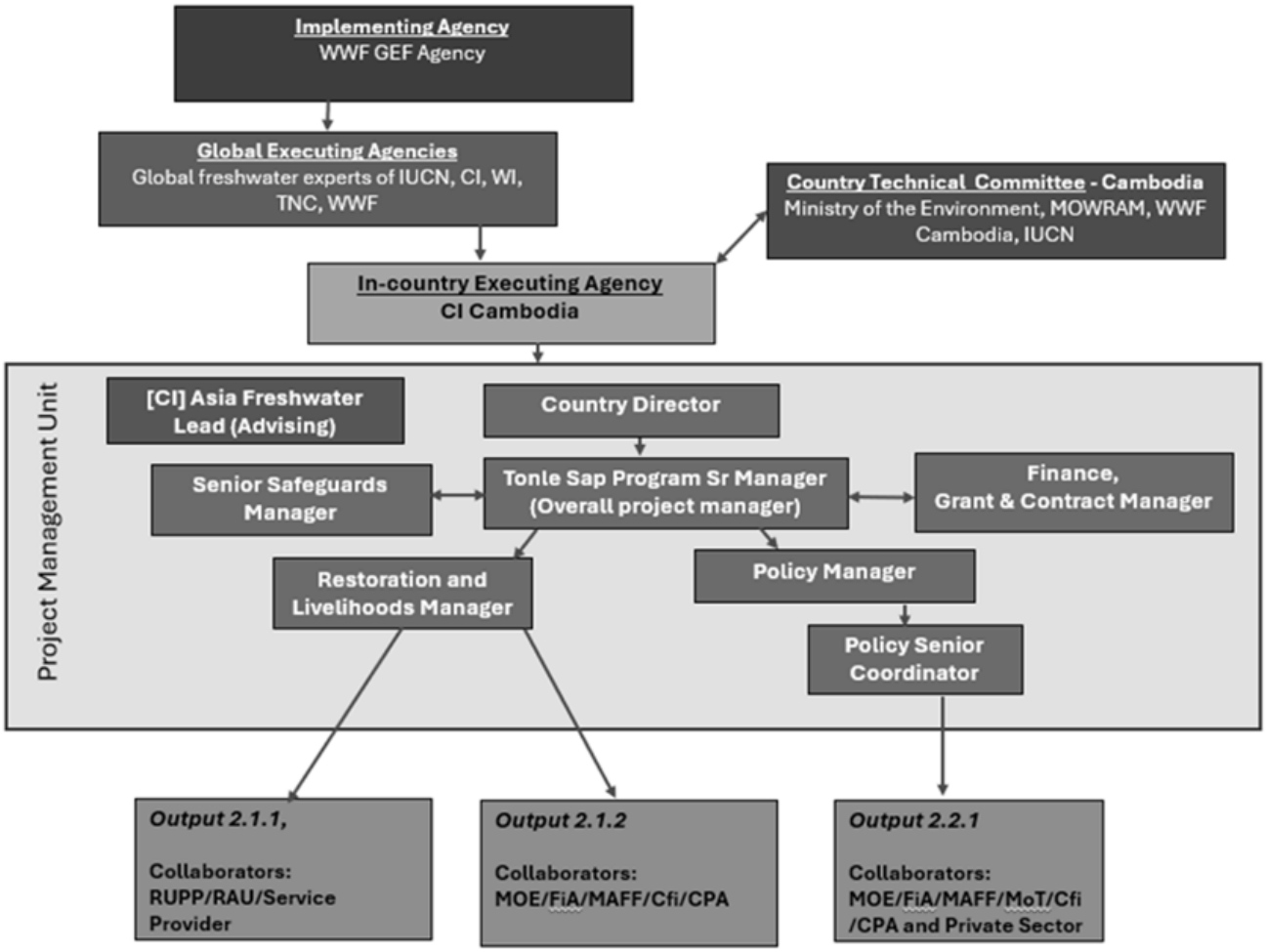
In Brazil, the country-level executing partner will be Wetlands International. which will liaise closely with government partners regarding the fund allocation for the project activities, including by hiring a project manager and a National Technical Coordinator. The government partners for the demonstration activities are the Ministry of Environment (MMA); Ministry of Integration and Regional Development (MIDR) and the National Water and Basic Sanitation Agency (ANA). In addition, the Peixe Vivo Agency, a private legal entity legally authorized to perform the functions of a Basin Agency for the Federal Committee of the São Francisco River Basin (CBHSF), will potentially play a key role as a technical implementing partner, working closely with all the other stakeholders, including the San Francisco Basin Committee, the government institutions and the NGOs such as WI, WWF-Brazil, and TNC, which will be part of the Advisory Committee as they do not operate in the project's demonstration area) and might potentially provide further specialized technical input as consultants. Universities such as UNB, UNICAPM, UFRGS and UFMG will also take part of the Advisory Committee, as well as potentially rendering some services for the deliverables via a Technical Consultant or other partnership format.



Cambodia:

FWC partner lead organisation: CI Cambodia
Government partners: GEF Operational Focal Point, Ministry of the Environment (MoE)
Implementation focal point: Fisheries Administration, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (MAFF)

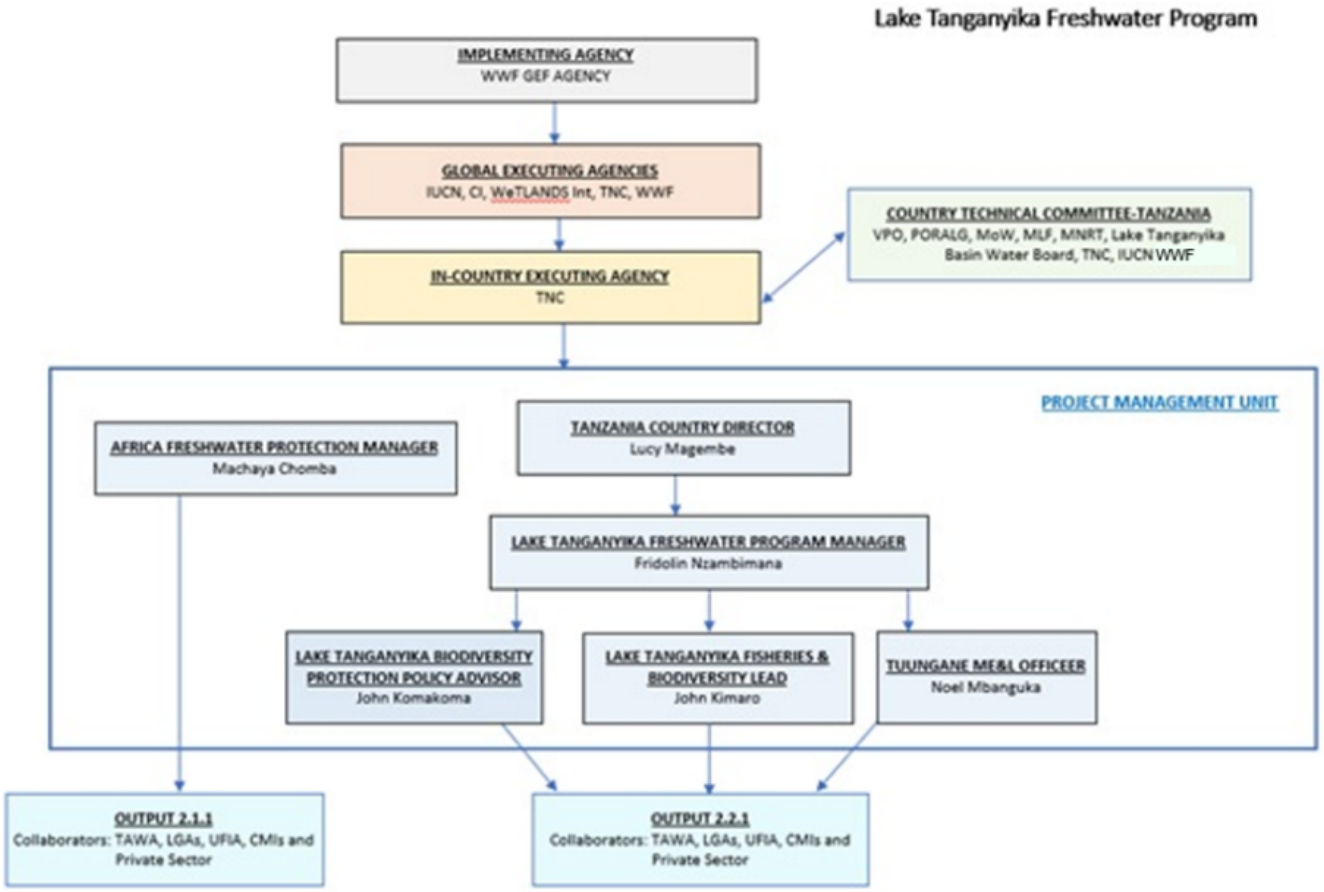
Other government partners: Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MOWRAM) - FWC focal point.
The Country Technical Committee includes MoE, MOWRAM, WWF Cambodia and IUCN



Tanzania:

FWC partner lead organization: The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

Government partners: Ministry of Water (MoW); Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT); Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries (MLF); Vice President's Office (VPO); and President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (PORALG).
The Country Technical Committee includes the VPO, PORALG, MoW, MLF, MNRT, Lake Tanganyika Basin Water Board, and TNC, IUCN and WWF country offices.



GEF Agency Oversight and Supervision

WWF-US, through its WWF GEF Agency will: (i) provide consistent and regular project oversight to ensure the achievement of project objectives; (ii) liaise between the project and the GEF Secretariat; (iii) report on project progress to GEF Secretariat (annual Project Implementation Report); (iv) ensure that both GEF and WWF policy requirements and standards are applied and met (i.e. reporting obligations, technical, fiduciary, M&E); (v) approve annual workplan and budget; (vi) approve budget revisions, certify fund availability and transfer funds; (vii) organize the terminal evaluation and review project audits; (viii) certify project operational and financial completion, and (ix) provide no-objection to key terms of reference for project management unit.

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

Yes

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

The justification for this exception is based on the policy amendment GEF/C.69/12, Annex III, paragraph 2 (h) (i), revised point iv, which allows exceptions for 'Global or regional coordination child projects for Programs, global or regional platforms for knowledge sharing and Umbrella Enabling Activities for a group of countries'

The proposal includes a self-execution function, which has been agreed with IUCN. The self-execution request is based on the existing governance structure and agreed technical capacities and roles of the FWC supporting coalition that was established in 2023. Roles within the Supporting Coalition are based on the expertise of each partner organization relevant to supporting the member countries. Therefore, the governance principles spread leadership of work streams across members, give members equal voice, and ensure high transparency in decision-making.

WWF's Freshwater Team Co-Chairs the FWC's Technical Assistance Working Group and has expertise, and the pre-established leading role, in indicator development, monitoring, and benefits assessment. For example, WWF US helped the GEF develop a guideline for basin management indicators, based on experience in implementing Basin Report Cards around the world: "Using Indicators for Improved Water Resources Management: Guide for basin managers and practitioners." WWF US is also developing guidance to standardize monitoring of water-related benefits for its Green Climate Fund projects, and this is designed to be adaptable to other large ecosystem restoration and resilience projects. Output 1.1.1 and Output 1.1.2 of this proposed GEF project focus on ongoing global work to estimate benefits (in terms of climate change mitigation, adaptation, biodiversity impacts, etc) and deliver guidance to countries on a systematic way to monitor and communicate these impacts (also providing early content for output 4.1.1). This work responds to expressed demand for this actionable information from FWC countries. Based on this expertise and the pre-established roles, and under the coordination of IUCN as the Lead Executing Agency, it is requested that WWF execute the delivery of Outputs 1.1.1 and 1.1.2. . The anticipated budget of the two outputs and costs for travel and workshop participation is approximately $280,000 (5% of the total project budget).

Additional costs related to the WWF GEF Agency assuming a dual role in the project execution will be covered by identified co-financing (see letter of co-financing from WWF-US) and the project Agency fee.

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

The project will coordinate with and contribute to the **GEF IW:LEARN Project**, which shares knowledge and innovations across GEF's International Waters portfolio. Additionally, the project will coordinate closely with the **GEF 8 Ecosystem Restoration Integrated Program (ERIP)**, led by CI. In particular, the project will coordinate around freshwater restoration knowledge, tools, and country support. As part of country selection, the project has considered ERIP countries (Brazil and Cambodia are participants) and other GEF projects in the country or supporting their transboundary basins, to build on successes while also ensuring there is no direct overlap. Opportunities to coordinate with the Amazon Sustainable Landscapes IP (ASL IP) will be explored.

The project will also coordinate with a remote real-time sensing of freshwater ecosystem change led by the UNEP DHI Partnership (https://unepdhi.org/sdg-6-6-1-freshwater-ecosystems-explorer/) and freshwater restoration reporting under the Framework for Ecosystem Restoration Monitoring (FERM) registry led by FAO (https://ferm.fao.org/). Additionally, the project will support and coordinate with the Action Platform on Source-to-Sea Management currently hosted by IUCN (https://waterandnature.org/all-initiatives/source-to-sea-platform/) with involvement from several FWC supporting coalition partners, as well as the GEF.

All supporting coalition partners that are part of this project are already actively engaged and coordinating on the FWC. Based on organizational expertise, partners support member countries through technical assistance and knowledge sharing, resourcing, and private sector engagement. The existing governance of the FWC supporting coalition, as mentioned above, will enable the project to share expertise and staff for delivery of the

outputs. The project will also be able to leverage the global thought leadership, data, science, approaches and tools developed by the supporting coalition partners.

For the country-led demonstration activities in Component 2 (see also **Annex 8**), the project will coordinate with the following other GEF Projects and Programs:

Brazil: Wetlands International, as a technical partner, will support the implementation of the GEF project under the leadership of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MMA). Complementary GEF International Waters projects focus on other basins but offer relevant experience, such as IADB/UNEP/GEF-8 #10554 on transboundary cooperation in the Pantanal and Upper Paraguay River Basin, UNEP/IADB/GEF-8 #11108 on the Amazon Aquifer Systems, and DBLA/GEF-8 #11053 on La Plata Basin SAP priorities. Relevant GEF-8 Biodiversity projects include WWF-US/GEF #11509 on Caatinga Protected Areas, BBF/GBFF Cotinga-Conecta #11565, BBF/GEF-8 #11508 on Indigenous Lands, FAO/GEF-8 #11167 on Amazon wetlands restoration, CI/GEF-8 #11124 Union for Restoration (GEF-PROVEG), and FAO/GEF #10706 on participatory natural resource management in Amazon wetlands. Coordination will be conducted through the MMA, in collaboration with institutional partners such as the Peixe Vivo Agency, and with the São Francisco River Basin Committee, WWF-Brazil, TNC-Brazil, CI-Brazil, Global Compact, and relevant sanitation and energy companies (e.g., AEGEA, COPASA, CEMIG, EMBASA, Eletrobrás, CHESF, FURNAS). Indigenous and traditional communities near restoration areas will be formally consulted and engaged during planning and implementation.

The choice of the “main territoriality” (demonstration area) for the project’s implementation - the São Francisco River basin; and the “secondary territoriality” - the Velhas River sub-basin; is based precisely on the strong socio-environmental organization developed within these territorial and sub-territorial areas in the project baseline.

As an example, the project highlights the River Basin Committees (CBH São Francisco and CBH Velhas), which are among the most well-organized and active in the country. They include participation from numerous social movements, NGOs, companies, industries, universities, technical schools, public authorities, and agencies, as well as frequent and representative participation from municipal, state, and federal authorities. The River Basin Committees (CBHs) are important, fundamental, and official spaces for public debate and shared decision-making — spaces that should be strengthened through public policies and financial support from national and international technical cooperation projects.

The project’s territorialization also involves the recognition that strengthening and developing the River Basin Committees (CBHs) as spaces for debate and shared decision-making on sustainable socio-environmental development within their respective basins is essential.

In this way, lessons learned from various GEF and other projects will be incorporated—particularly those with the greatest geographical, historical, and socio-environmental similarities to the selected territory. Thus, in this first phase, focused on the Velhas River, special attention will be given to projects carried out within the Atlantic Forest biome; projects implemented in the mountainous region of Minas Gerais; projects involving the rehabilitation of freshwater lagoon systems; and projects conducted within the São Francisco basin, in related biomes, and across its various and distinct sub-basins.

Cambodia:

Conservation International will coordinate with the Ministry of Environment, Fisheries Administration, MAFF, and MOWRAM, represented on a Technical Committee overseeing demonstration activities. CI will also coordinate closely with three GEF-8 projects in preparation: IUCN/GEF-8 #11304 on enhancing transboundary fisheries in the Lower Mekong Basin, UNDP/GEF-8 #11119 on restoring ecosystems in the Tonle Sap Basin and Siem Reap/Phnom Kulen landscape (Cambodia's ERIP country project), and UNDP/LDCF/GEF-8 #11332 on building resilient livelihoods through nature-based solutions in the Tonle Sap Basin. Coordination will also extend to FAO/GEF IW #10520 on the Transboundary Cambodia–Mekong River Delta Aquifer. Related non-GEF initiatives include the ADB Integrated Water Resources Management Project implemented by the Ministry of Environment, CI's Conserving Biodiversity and Building Community Resilience on the Tonle Sap (funded by MACP), Fundación Tierra Pura's Tonle Sap Flooded Forest Restoration, and Mastercard's Priceless Planet Coalition. Community Fisheries (CFi), Community Protected Areas (CPAs), producer groups, women's saving and producer groups, and fish marketing groups will also be engaged.

Additional technical projects to improve understanding and management of wetland hydrology in Cambodia are underway:

- Generating elevation maps and hydrological flow models for key wetland sites
- Developing water retention strategies to maintain wetland functions during dry periods
- Conducting vulnerability assessments to understand climate change impacts
- Assessing habitat responses to changing inundation patterns
- Evaluating the value and conservation status of remaining natural wetlands in the Cambodian Lower Mekong Delta

Additional Policy and Advocacy work:

Cambodia's Circular Strategy on Environment 2023-2028 emphasizes strengthening the policy framework for wetland conservation by integrating water security into regional development planning, supporting environmental impact assessments, assisting regional authorities in managing Ramsar sites, and developing national guidance for the sustainable management of freshwater wetlands (Ministry of Environment, 2023).

As listed in the co-financed sources, CI Cambodia will be aligning with other non-GEF initiatives such as Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies (MACP) support for CI's Fisheries and Families Resilience Building Model Project in Tonle Sap, Priceless Partnership Coalition and Franklinia Foundation in sharing and building a knowledge hub relating to community citizen sciences around the Tonle Sap Lake, and wetlands located in the upper and lower Mekong River. CI Cambodia is committed to engage with IUCN, WWF Cambodia and their sub-grantees working in the Freshwater Sector, as well as NGOs – WCS, WCS, WWT, FACT. CI Cambodia has been actively engaging with the GEF-8 Ecosystem Restoration Integrated Program through UNDP and the executive agency - the Ministry of Environment (MoE). The above strategies will contribute to the sharing session with Output 2.1.2 and 2.2.1.

Tanzania:

Tanzania and its neighbors are advancing major water and ecosystem initiatives with support from international partners. The Lake Tanganyika Biodiversity Conservation Project (2025 to 2030), a USD 14.5 million initiative jointly executed by Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, and Zambia, seeks to harmonize fishing practices, conserve protected areas, and regulate fishing to address transboundary

threats to biodiversity. The Resilient Natural Resource Management for Tourism and Growth (REGROW) Project, financed by the World Bank with USD 150 million, supported natural resource and water management through irrigation rehabilitation and the Madibira scheme, which improved productivity for 3,200 farmers and generated direct employment (World Bank, 2022).

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) will lead the demonstration activities, working closely with the Ministry of Water, MNRT, MLF, VPO, PORALG, TAWA, and TFS. Activities will complement other initiatives in the Malagarasi–Muyovozi wetlands, including UNEP/GEF-7 #10388 on Lake Tanganyika Basin conservation, the UNDP/GBFF #11769 project on integrated restoration of Malagarasi–Muyovozi, the DANIDA-supported SIMMORS project, Nature Tanzania's wetlands and bird conservation, and community education and awareness programs. The UNESCO–FAO Mount Kilimanjaro Water Management Project, financed by the GEF, will also provide complementary experience in water access, groundwater management, and forest restoration. Local communities will be key stakeholders and beneficiaries, participating in conservation and sustainable livelihood initiatives.

UNESCO–FAO Mount Kilimanjaro Water Management Project (2025–ongoing)

This USD 8 million GEF-funded initiative focuses on improving water security and ecosystem resilience on Mount Kilimanjaro. It aims to provide safe drinking water for 100,000 people, enhance groundwater storage for over 600,000 vulnerable individuals, and restore 400 km² of cloud forests to strengthen water retention. The project also promotes cross-border collaboration between Tanzanian and Kenyan researchers and supports local tree-planting campaigns to protect key water sources.

Lake Tanganyika Biodiversity Conservation Project (2025–2030)

A USD 14.5 million regional GEF-supported effort by Burundi, DRC, Tanzania, and Zambia, this project addresses threats to Lake Tanganyika's biodiversity. It promotes sustainable fishing practices, improves management of protected areas, and harmonizes transboundary regulations on fishing gear and quotas to safeguard shared fish stocks and aquatic ecosystems, including reserves within Tanzania's portion of the lake basin.

WWF–Ministry of Water Collaboration on Freshwater Governance

WWF and the Ministry of Water have long partnered to improve water governance in key basins such as the Great Ruaha, Mara, and Pangani. Joint work has included environmental flow assessments, development of water allocation plans, and multi-basin conservation planning under the transboundary SOKNOT landscape. This collaboration has fostered basin-level cooperation between Tanzania and Kenya and strengthened national water planning and catchment management capacity.

National Plans and Targets

Tanzania has set ambitious national goals for freshwater management, including developing a national water grid system to enhance inter-basin water transfer, achieving 85% rural and 95% urban water access by 2025 (supported by green water bonds), and continuing to identify, restore, and protect key water sources through enforcement and gazettement measures.

Coordination and collaboration with stakeholders: Achieving freshwater ecosystem restoration at scale by 2030 requires the engagement of governments, civil society, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women, youth, multilateral banks, and the private sector across sectors such as agriculture, energy, infrastructure, conservation, and urban planning. The project will support governments on monitoring and reporting (Component 1), pilot demonstration activities (Component 2), knowledge and capacity development (Component 3), and communications and awareness (Component 4). It will engage national and local NGOs, expand partnerships with women's and youth organizations, and mobilize private sector contributions through the FWC Business Supporter Program.

Only through combined efforts at multiple levels, from policy reform to community-led projects, will rivers and wetlands be restored for the resilience of people and nature. Detailed stakeholder engagement is outlined in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and country proposals (Annex 8).

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Core Indicators

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

Indicator 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)
0	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)

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)
0	0	0	0

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

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

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 7 Shared water ecosystems under new or improved cooperative management

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Shared water Ecosystem				
Count	1	1	0	0

Indicator 7.1 Level of Transboundary Diagonostic Analysis and Strategic Action Program (TDA/SAP) formulation and implementation (scale of 1 to 4; see Guidance)

Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)
	1			

Indicator 7.2 Level of Regional Legal Agreements and Regional management institution(s) (RMI) to support its implementation (scale of 1 to 4; see Guidance)

Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 7.3 Level of National/Local reforms and active participation of Inter-Ministeral Committees (IMC; scale 1 to 4; See Guidance)

Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)
		3		

Indicator 7.4 Level of engagement in IWLEARN throgh participation and delivery of key products(scale 1 to 4; see Guidance)

Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)
	4	4		

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	300	4,375		
Male	300	4,815		
Total	**600**	**9,190**	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)

CI#7: National/local reforms and IMCs (7.3) through enhanced institutional arrangements that strengthen cross-sectoral coordination and influence international basin management: Brazil: Advisory Committee for National Freshwater Conservation and Protection Programme; Cambodia: support for sub-national Fishery Coordination Team to assert freshwater issues and seek cross-sectoral support for closing implementation gaps and priorities alignment, escalating issues to national platforms such as TWGs and development partner forums (Target rating: 3); Tanzania: convene multi-sectoral forum on Malagarasi-Muyovosi wetlands; Increase engagement in IW:LEARN (7.4) to level 4 through contributions to IW:LEARN website, linkage of FWC website with IW:Learn, participation in IW training, twinning & conferences, and data sharing; knowledge products on country pilot activities from case studies in Output 3.1.2; CI#11: Beneficiaries: Component 2: Brazil – 3,500 (1,050 women) through engaging 239 river basin committees; Cambodia – 100 (30 women, 10 Indigenous reps) through exchange visits between upstream and downstream communities; Tanzania – 3,000 (2,000 women) through multi-stakeholder engagement including traditional and community platforms, Water User Association groups, and training for government staff; Component 3: 2,190 (1,095 women) through learning hub usage, FWC exchanges, peer-to-peer learning, online technical clinics); Component 4: 400 (200 women) through communications training, regional dialogues, communications events and youth grants.

Key Risks

	Rating	Explanation of risk and mitigation measures
CONTEXT		
Climate	Moderate	Climate change presents a risk to wetlands and river ecosystems (hydrological changes), while rivers and wetlands are also important for climate resilience. Climate change is not expected to impact project operations at global level, but addressing climate change is part of the project's solutions. Countries will be supported to integrate freshwater ecosystem interventions into plans and indicator frameworks for climate adaptation at the country level. Additionally, climate related disasters may cause a diversion of government resources and focus may be pulled away from project implementation.
Environmental and Social	Low	An environmental and social impact pre-screen has been completed, and resulted in a Category C (low) rating, and an additional screen was conducted during project development and based on the activities that will be undertaken in Cambodia, the project has been re-categorized as a "Category B" project. An Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) will need to be developed for the project region in Cambodia, as the proposed activities are expected to trigger safeguards under WWF GEF standards that fall beyond Category C (or 'low' risk) and will require mitigation plans to address the moderate level of risk. The ESMF will be completed during the project start up phase and finalized before any project activities commence on the ground in Cambodia, and the mitigation measures will be applied to manage potential

		environmental or social safeguards risks. WWF is committed to pursuing inclusive conservation in each of its projects, which is why the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has a subsection suggesting additional steps that can be taken to ensure equitable stakeholder participation during project execution.
Political and Governance	Moderate	There may be some risks around loss of commitment to the FWC due to government turnover during elections, unforeseen political instability or competing government priorities. At the global level this may slow down FWC progress, but it will not necessarily delay this project's activities. To mitigate, the project will work with member countries who have already signed on to the FWC and shown commitment to participate, however, even after this mitigation some residual risk remains. Specific country support has been determined through selection criteria (see Annex 7). Additionally, the Supporting Coalition's long-established relationships across multiple levels of government and with civil society help build strong consensus for the work. The project has taken this into account when developing the stakeholder engagement plan. In Brazil, in the project demonstration area of the Velhas River sub-basin, the regional society—through its own economic evolution and educational development—has taken the initiative to reverse the trajectory of socio-environmental degradation. This shift has been achieved precisely through the strong social and political organization of its River Basin Committees (CBHs), which should now be supported by the federal government through the regionalized application of appropriate public policies, and the implementation of international technical cooperation projects. In Tanzania, the project will collaborate with Basin Water Boards and local authorities to further strengthen participatory water governance, enhance environmental flow management, and support the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) to promote inclusive and accountable freshwater management.
INNOVATION		
Institutional and Policy	Low	The project intends to strengthen and build coherence across policies and strategies, so that freshwater ecosystem restoration and conservation are integrated across rather than working in a silo and have resources behind it. The project does not intend to create new policies or institutions or to reform existing institutions but to deliver institutional and policy support, including capacity building, cross-sectoral integration strategies and development of resourcing plans where needed.
Technological	Low	While technology will be important for capacity building through the learning hub and peer-to-peer exchange, as well as for communications activities, the proposed strategy does not include significant technological innovations, and as such this risk is rated low.
Financial and Business Model	Low	The project includes linkage to innovative financial or business models in the three pilot countries, especially through leverage of demonstration activity results that prioritize FWC objectives for incorporation into national investment plans and proposals for project support by FWC Core Partners and

		external donors. In Brazil, the fees charged for freshwater use permits are defined by the basin or sub-basin community itself and the funds collected are reinvested in the same territory where they are generated. For this financial reinvestment to be effectively implemented, it is essential that the basin have active official projects or institutions capable of demonstrating tangible results from such projects. The basin / sub-basin committees in the demonstration area are in such a situation and provide a good model for sharing nationally and internationally, as has been done in the context of economic compensation for freshwater withdrawals and water-use permits as important elements for achieving national and subnational voluntary LDN targets. In Cambodia, CI are supporting the Government to develop a newly designed country packages program, aiming to incorporate freshwater framework indicators into this new investment programming.
EXECUTION		
Capacity	Low	The project builds on strong technical and management capacities of the Supporting Coalition, in particular the GEF Agency (WWF) and Lead Executing Agency (IUCN). Both organizations bring years of experience managing GEF and freshwater projects at global and country level. The project will also build on the already established governance structure of the FWC supporting coalition. This will promote a strong partnership for execution. To mitigate at country level, as part of selection criteria for countries for technical assistance, capacity assessments will take place to ensure commitment, cofinance, and ability to continue work after the end of this project. Strong Implementing Agency oversight, a well designed monitoring plan, and adaptive management workshops during the project will also ensure the technical design is being implemented according to plan.
Fiduciary	Low	The project builds on strong financial management capacities of the GEF Agency (WWF) and Lead Executing Agency (IUCN). Both organizations bring years of experience managing GEF and medium and large size freshwater projects from bilateral and philanthropic donors. The additional Supporting Coalition partners that will execute also have strong capacity and experience in managing project finances against set deliverables. Each organization also follows sound financial management and procurement policies. A due-diligence process will also be undertaken during project development.
Stakeholder	Low	Stakeholder engagement is an important element that cross-cuts all components of the project. The project has been designed based on the survey results conducted by the supporting coalition with the FWC member countries in June 2024 and through continuing discussions as of November 2024. There will also be new stakeholders, like youth groups, women's groups, and IP and LC representatives that the Supporting Coalition plans to engage. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan ensures an inclusive, participatory, and effective strategy with stakeholders in the project. This has included project-specific consultations with FWC member countries and co-design of activities where possible, such as communication and influencing activities led by youth in

		Component 4. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be regularly reviewed and feedback from stakeholders sought during the project. At the local level in Cambodia, political and governance risks are shaped by a combination of limited decentralization, accountability mechanisms, and challenges in assuring the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs). The project will address these through: implementing the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) to promote social inclusivity and to advance the rights of IPLC; raising awareness of the existence of Grievance and Redress Mechanisms (GRM) and providing access to a GRM that is appropriate to the needs of the various stakeholders including the IPLC; and making use of the multi stakeholder platforms to advocate the duty bearers to address the political and governance challenges that may have a negative impact on the success of the project activities.
Other	Low	None identified.
Overall Risk Rating	Low	The overall risk rating is low, based on the majority of the above risks being rated low, with the ESS Category being rated Low. This project is technical assistance activities at the global and country levels.

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

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

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

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

The project aligns with the International Waters Focal Area (IW FA), that recognizes the pivotal role for development of FW ecosystems, their critical situation and the importance of overcoming barriers related to knowledge and management of FW in developing countries. The IW FA emphasizes the need for countries to step up national and regional actions to safeguard their marine and freshwater ecosystems to ensure continued growth, prosperity and unlock new economic opportunities. This MSP project will help participating countries advance towards this goal.

The FWC project will support achievement of the IW FA objective by facilitating a global cooperation initiative, across political borders and between sectors, that will deliver increased knowledge and joint action to implement freshwater ecosystems restoration and management objectives and to track progress against them, aligned to multilateral environmental agreements (MEA) commitments. To achieve this objective, the project will implement investments prioritized by IW FA Objective 3 (Enhance water security in shared freshwater ecosystems), related to, but not limited to, the improvement of policy formulation processes, the improvement of capacities to gather and synthesize scientific, local and people science and to mainstream it into decision making processes to further environmental and water security. The project will work on developing freshwater ecosystem recommended indicators and a tracking approach for countries to

track freshwater ecosystem status and progress towards achieving MEA commitments that could contribute to GEF-9 IW FA design.

Finally, the project will have a strong knowledge management component, to ensure that knowledge generated and captured by the project and participating countries is shared across the FWC member countries and partners and with the IW:LEARN community through specific IW:LEARN knowledge management products and activities. The lessons learned and experiences from the national and bi-national work will also support replication and scale in other FWC member countries, including through the integration of recommendations and learnings into future basin-wide SAPs.

There is alignment of the project strategy cutting across the GEF focal areas and programs in the GEF-8 Strategy (International Waters, Biodiversity, Land Degradation, Climate Change Mitigation, Climate Change Adaptation, Chemicals and Waste, the Ecosystem Restoration Integrated Program, among others). Specifically with GEF ERIP, the project will coordinate on knowledge sharing, learning exchanges, indicator and monitoring guidance, and sharing of lessons across projects. This project will also be able to collaborate and leverage new products through GEF ERIP like prioritizing rivers and wetlands for restoration action. Collaboration with the GEF-8 Plastics IP will also be explored. Additionally, early investment in effective planning and indicator-setting for the FWC can help countries lay the groundwork for strong, aligned restoration and conservation projects in GEF-9 and projects that support freshwater and terrestrial biodiversity reliant on freshwater ecosystems under the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF). The project can also support the GEF in defining and monitoring GEF programming targets and sub-targets to monitor progress on freshwater ecosystem restoration and protection in GEF-9, the GBFF, and beyond. The project is expected to contribute towards most GBF Targets through enhanced policy development, planning and monitoring, knowledge exchange and stakeholder engagement measures that enable both the wider FWC country membership as well as the selected countries to improve freshwater biodiversity conservation.

The project aligns with national development plans, national water resource management policies and national biodiversity strategies and action plans in the selected countries (see Annex 8) and has been endorsed by national authorities responsible for water resource management in each country (see Stakeholder Engagement Plan).

D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

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

Yes

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

Yes

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

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

Yes

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

Yes

Generating socio-economic benefits or services for women.

Yes

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

Yes

Stakeholder Engagement

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

Yes

Select what role civil society will play in the Project

Consulted only; Yes

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor;

Co-financier; Yes

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

Executor or co-executor; Yes

Other (Please explain)

Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

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

Yes

Environmental and Social Safeguards

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

Yes

Please provide overall Project/Program Risk Classification

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Low	Low		

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge management

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

Yes

Socio-economic Benefits

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

Socioeconomic benefits will be delivered at local, national and transboundary levels through sustained and improved delivery of freshwater wetland ecosystem services including water supply, water purification, flood mitigation, fisheries, other wetland produce including fodder and thatching materials, tourism and recreation opportunities, buffering of local communities against extreme weather events, etc. While certain demonstration activities (e.g. in Cambodia) will result in direct immediate benefits to local populations, the local benefits of such activities in the other three countries will focus on leveraging longer term benefits through transformative changes in subnational and national stakeholder engagement mechanisms, programmes, policies and communications.

In Brazil, the demonstration activities will assist the development of a National Program on the Conservation and Restoration of Freshwater Ecosystems that will result in multiple benefits for water security, biodiversity conservation, productive inclusion — especially in artisanal fishing, nature-based tourism, and sustainable agriculture — public health, and climate change adaptation.

In Cambodia, the demonstration activities will contribute to improved flooded forest management, enhanced fish habitat and promoted community-led monitoring and resource planning in Tonle Sap, as well as support for sustainable living through access to clean and safe drinking water and responsible fishing and production

that can attract ecotourism income protecting the unique ecosystem and biodiversity of the lake. CI will build on the previous work with women's self-help groups, such as savings and fish producing groups in Tonle Sap Lake, who will be trained to apply the required standardised fish processing in compliance with the contract they signed. Savings are treated as revolving funds to support and scale their enterprise activities when needed and to repay their high-interest loans.

In Tanzania, the demonstration activities will support strengthened catchment management for the Malagarasi - Muyovozi Ramsar Site, the largest wetland complex in Tanzania, located within the Lake Tanganyika Basin. A key geographic focus is the Malagarasi River, which flows through the Ramsar site before emptying into Lake Tanganyika. Improved catchment management through Water User Associations is expected to result in improved water quality, flow regime, wetland resources and wetland-dependent livelihoods for communities in this region.

ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

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

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	GEF Project Grant($)	Agency Fee($)	Total GEF Financing ($)
WWF-US	GET	Global	International Waters	International Waters: IW-3	Grant	4,400,000.00	396,000.00	4,796,000.00
Total GEF Resources ($)						**4,400,000.00**	**396,000.00**	**4,796,000.00**

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Was a Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount ($)

150000

PPG Agency Fee ($)

13500

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	PPG($)	Agency Fee($)	Total PPG Funding($)

WWF-US	GET	Global	International Waters	International Waters: IW-3	150,000.00	13,500.00	163,500.00
Total PPG Amount ($)					**150,000.00**	**13,500.00**	**163,500.00**

Please provide Justification

Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Sources of Funds	Total($)
Total GEF Resources					**0.00**

Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Co-financing($)
IW-3	GET	4,400,000.00	12081256
Total Project Cost		**4,400,000.00**	**12,081,256.00**

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

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

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount($)
Civil Society Organization	World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)-International	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	350000
Civil Society Organization	International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)	Grant	Investment mobilized	2080000
Civil Society Organization	Wetlands International	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	70000
Civil Society Organization	The Nature Conservancy (TNC)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	554000
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Brazil	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	22490
Others	UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)	Grant	Investment mobilized	5222700

GEF Agency	World Wildlife Fund US	Grant	Investment mobilized	1296320
GEF Agency	World Wildlife Fund US	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2005140
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Brazil	Grant	Investment mobilized	46869
GEF Agency	Conservation International	Grant	Investment mobilized	433737
Total Co-financing				**12,081,256.00**

Please describe the investment mobilized portion of the co-financing

nvestment mobilized co-finance:

IUCN:

The grant contributions of approximately USD 0.08 million includes funding to achieve components 3 and 4 of the project. This grant funding accounts for personal emoluments(salary), travel and subsistence, materials and supplies, operating costs, maintenance costs, training, public utilities, contracts and consultancy and rents and leases through IUCN. The following table details the co-financing provided by IUCN.

WWF US:

Grant co-financing includes private sector and philanthropic grants to WWF US that will contribute to the Freshwater Challenge objectives in Tanzania, Zambia, Colombia and Mexico. The following table details the co-financing provided by World Wildlife Fund Inc.

UK FCDO:

The grant contributions of approximately USD 5.22 million (£3.9 million) include

funding to achieve all components of the Freshwater Challenge project. This grant

funding accounts for contracts and consultancies through the FCDO towards the

Just Transitions for Water Security Programme, which is directly aligned with the

objectives of the Freshwater Challenge.

Brazil Ministry of Environment and Climate Change:

Grant financing will cover the participation and engagement of government in project execution.

Conservation International:

Grant financing was identified through evaluation of staff-time and administrative costs associated with the delivery of this project, including specifically, CI -Cambodia Officer activities.

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

GEF Agency(ies) Certification

GEF Agency Type	Date	Project Contact Person	Phone	Email
GEF Agency Coordinator	9/4/2025	Renae Stenhouse	12027669372	Renae.Stenhouse@wwfus.org
Project Coordinator	9/4/2025	Jacquelyn Beattie	12028306302	Jacquelyn.Beattie@wwfus.org

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

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

Name of GEF OFP	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
DANIELA RAMOS GUIMARÃES DE FARIA	Deputy General Coordinator for Sustainable Finance	MINISTÉRIO DA FAZENDA	7/7/2025
H.E. San Vanty	Permanent Secretary of State	Ministry of Environment	8/13/2025
Ms. Kemilembe Mutasa	Director of Environment	Vice President's Office	8/12/2025

ANNEX C: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

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

Results Framework
WWF Project ID: G0072; GEF ID: 11833
Title: The Freshwater Challenge: Accelerating Restoration and Conservation of Freshwater Ecosystems

Targets (annual, or mid-term and close)

Indicator (specifying units)	Definition (note if cumulative)	Method/ source	Responsible	Disaggregation	Baseline (YR0)	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR 4	Notes/ Assumptions
Objective: Support country-led target setting and prioritization of specific freshwater ecosystems in policies and plans, learning, and communications that strengthen country-level freshwater ecosystem restoration and conservation interventions and accelerate progress of the Freshwater Challenge										
GEF Core Indicator 7: Shared water ecosystems under new or improved cooperative management Sub-indicator 7.3: Level of National/Local reforms and active participation of Inter-Ministerial Committees	This indicator is based on a rating for the level of national or local reforms and participation in inter-ministerial committees (IMC). Projects provide a rating on a scale of 1 to 4: 1 = Neither national/local reforms nor IMCs 2 = National/local reforms in preparation, IMCs functional 3 = National/local reforms and IMCs in place 4 = National/local reforms/policies implemented, supported by IMCs. Non-cumulative	Tracking of national or local reforms for the cooperative management of river and lake basins and catchment areas through project reports and official government announcements	M&E Officer	a) Brazil b) Cambodia c) Tanzania	a) 1 b) 1 c) 1	-	-	a) 2 b) 2 c) 2	a) 3 b) 3 c) 3	Brazil: establishment of the Advisory Committee for the National Freshwater Conservation and Protection Programme; Cambodia: CI will collaborate with provincial governments to engage relevant departments through the Sub-national Fisheries Coordination Team (FCT) in addressing freshwater-related issues such as restoration, ecosystem health, water pollution, upstream deforestation, ecotourism, and gender inclusion. Additionally, CI can support local governments in escalating identified issues from the FCT level to national platforms, including Technical Working Groups (TWGs), development partner forums, and NGO coordination meetings (e.g., UNDP, IUCN, FAO); Tanzania: will organize and convene a multi-sectoral forum with a

										focus on the Malagarasi and Muyovosi wetlands representative of the stakeholders in the landscape. Assumption: political support for freshwater conservation and restoration exists in current governments and political changes do not negatively affect such support. The project will ensure the learning hub aligns with IW:LEARN guidance, participate in training/twinning events, produce experience notes, and participate in the IW Conference; countries will contribute case study learnings from Output 3.1.2.
GEF Core Indicator 7: Shared water ecosystems under new or improved cooperative management Sub-indicator 7.4: Level of engagement in IW:LEARN through participation and delivery of key products	Sub-indicator 7.4: GEF: This indicator is based on a rating for the level of engagement in International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN). Details: Projects provide a rating on a scale of 1 to 4: 1 = No participation 2 = Website in line with IW:LEARN guidance active 3 = As above, plus strong participation in training/twinning events and production of at least one experience note and one results note 4 = As above, plus active participation of project staff and country representatives at International Waters conferences and the provision of spatial data and other data points via project website. Non-cumulative	Tracking of engagement in IW:LEARN - project reports on contributions to IW:LEARN website; linkage of FWC website with IW:Learn; participation in IW training, twinning & conferences; data sharing	M&E Officer	N/A	FWC website is not overtly linked to IW:LEARN platform and has yet to be populated with learning materials; FWC core partner staff actively involved in IW conferences and events	-	-	3	4	
Core Indicator 11: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment (# **people**)	GEF: This indicator captures the total number of direct beneficiaries including the proportion of women beneficiaries; i.e. those who receive targeted support from a given GEF project/activity and/or who use the specific resources that the project maintains or enhances. Support is defined as direct assistance from the project/activity. Direct beneficiaries are all individuals receiving targeted support from a given project. Targeted support is the intentional and direct assistance of a project to individuals or groups of individuals who are aware that they are receiving that support and/or who use the specific resources. **Cumulative**	Field reports; database	M&E Officer in consultation with gender and stakeholder engagement staff	a) Brazil b) Tanzania c) Cambodia d) Global	0	a) 350 (100 women) b) 600 (400 women) c) 20 (5 women) d) 260 (130 women)	a) 1000 (300 women) b) 1500 (1000 women) c) 60 (10 women) d) 800 (400 women)	a) 2000 (600 women) b) 2200 (1500 women) c) 80 (20 women) d) 1800 (900 women)	a) 3,500 (1,050 women) b) 3,000 (2,000 women) c) 100 (30 women) d) 2,590 (1,295 women)	Beneficiaries: Component 2: Brazil – 3,500 (1,050 women) through engaging 239 river basin committees; Cambodia – 100 (30 women, 10 Indigenous reps) through exchange visits between upstream and downstream communities; Tanzania – 3,000 (2,000 women) through multi-

											stakeholder engagement including traditional and community platforms, Water User Association groups, and training for government staff; Component 3: 2,190 (1,095 women) through learning hub usage, FWC exchanges, peer-to-peer learning, online technical clinics); Component 4: 400 (200 women) through communications training, regional dialogues, communications events and youth grants. Rounded total of 9,190 people; 4,375 women and 4,815 men. Assumption: Stakeholders in project demonstration areas support the project goals and provide their cooperation.
Component 1: Supporting Countries and Development Institutions to Monitor Freshwater Challenge Objectives											
Outcome 1.1: Improved guidance on indicators and tracking approaches for freshwater ecosystems											
Indicator 1.1.1: No. of international organizations endorsing the indicator framework and tracking approach adopted by FWC partnership	International organizations refers to inter-governmental bodies such as MEA Secretariats and UN organizations, as well as international NGOs. The indicator framework and tracking approach refers to the FWC products to be developed in Outputs 1.1.1 and 1.1.2, and piloted in 1.1.3. Cumulative.	Communications from international organizations indicating their endorsement of the FWC-related indicator framework and tracking approach	M&E Officer	N/A	0	0	8	11	15	As the FWC Core Partners (9 organizations) will only provide endorsement during the project, they are not considered as 'Baseline'
Indicator 1.1.2: No. countries piloting the FWC	The indicator framework and tracking approach refers to the FWC products to be developed in Outputs 1.1.1 and 1.1.2, and	Assessment of results of pilot studies in annual	M&E Officer	N/A	0	0	0	3	10	

indicator framework and tracking approach to monitor and report on progress against FWC 2030 targets	piloted in 1.1.3. Cumulative	project reports							
Component 2. Supporting Countries to Operationalize their Freshwater Challenge Objectives from Source to Sea									
Outcome 2.1: Increased operationalization of FWC objectives in national and sub-national plans and resourcing co-led with selected FWC member countries									
Indicator 2.1.1: No. of policy recommendations arising from project demonstration activities that operationalize FWC objectives and are included in water-dependent plans and investment strategies in selected FWC member countries (Brazil, Cambodia and Tanzania)	Water-dependent plans include national and subnational water resource management plans and programmes, wetland management or restoration plans and programmes, river basin and catchment management plans, and inputs to sector plans. FWC objectives are stated here: https://www.freshwaterchallenge.org/about-the-challenge Cumulative	Tracking of the uptake of project demonstration activity policy recommendations in water-dependent plans through project progress reports, official government plans, minutes of policy-making meetings	M&E Officer	a) Brazil b) Cambodia c) Tanzania	a) 0 b) 0 c) 0	a) 0 b) 0 c) 0	a) 1 b) 1 c) 1	a) 2 b) 2 c) 2	a) 5 b) 3 c) 3	Brazil: will provide policy recommendations for Advisory Committee, National Freshwater Conservation and Protection Programme development, 3 protocols; Cambodia: will provide policy recommendations to the government regarding restoration of the inundation regime of Tonle Sap, fishery conservation, and flooded forest fire early warning system; Tanzania: identification of potential areas for restoration in the Malagarasi - Muyovosi wetlands; recommendations for water resources monitoring network for the Malagarasi River catchment; and environmental flows in key tributaries of the Malagarasi River. Assumption: National

									governments remain supportive of FWC objectives through any changes in governance.
Outcome 2.2: Improved integration of Source to Sea actions in country plans in selected FWC member countries									
Indicator 2.2.1: No. of project-supported actions contributing towards FWC objectives that adopt a Source to Sea framing in selected FWC member countries (Brazil, Cambodia and Tanzania)	Source-to-Sea Management entails land, freshwater, coastal and marine resources being managed holistically, balancing benefits for the environment, communities, and economy – from source to sea. This source-to-sea continuum is linked by key aspects of the biophysical system, such as water, biota, sediment, pollutants, materials and ecosystem services. When any of these are altered in one part of the source-to-sea system, those alterations may have impacts either upstream or downstream of where they occur. See: https://siwi.org/source-to-sea-platform/source-to-sea-management/ Adoption of Source-to-Sea framing entails intersectoral and interdisciplinary collaboration, inclusive and participatory decision-making, robust data and knowledge sharing, significant investment in science and education, and the mainstreaming of source-to-sea thinking into governance and project planning to address environmental and development challenges. Non-cumulative	Project reports on demonstration activities; official government announcements and documents that add new elements on source-to-sea framing in selected FWC member countries	M&E Officer	a) Brazil b) Cambodia c) Tanzania	0	0	0	a) 1 b) 1 c) 1	a) 1 b) 2 c) 3	Brazil: Development of "source-to-sea" conservation and restoration models for the São Francisco River Basin that can be replicated for other River Basin Committees and other basins, including transboundary ones; Cambodia: will conduct water diplomacy, such as water dialogue, with relevant national and sub-national authorities through existing mechanisms to ensure sufficient seasonal inundation through maintaining seasonal flow of the tributaries of Tonle Sap and Mekong River; Tanzania: assessment of optimum water resources monitoring network requirement in Malagarasi River catchment, environmental flow assessment (EFA) for key tributary of the

										Malagarasi River, media engagement strategy emphasising S2S context for local stakeholders. Assumption: Project stakeholders are supportive of the Source-to-Sea concept and provide their cooperation
Component 3: Enabling Country Learning to Strengthen National Freshwater Challenge Objectives										
Outcome 3.1: Improved availability of knowledge and learning resources that supports effective integration, program design, and monitoring of FWC objectives by countries										
Indicator 3.1.1: No. of case studies related to FWC objectives submitted for inclusion in the global FWC Learning Hub	Each selected FWC member country will develop case studies that document experiences, best practices and lessons learned from project-related activities across subject areas such as technical, policy and planning, resource mobilisation, gender, youth and stakeholder engagement themes related to FWC objectives. Non-Cumulative	Case studies submitted by country partner organizations for inclusion in the proposed FWC Learning Hub	M&E Officer	a) Brazil b) Cambodia c) Tanzania	0	0	a) 2 b) 2 ~~c) 2~~ c) 2	a) 4 b) 4 ~~c) 4~~ c) 4	a) 6 b) 6 ~~c) 6~~ c) 6	Assumption: Case studies provide lessons that are relevant to other countries
Indicator 3.1.2: No. of a) individual users, and b) countries with users making use of the global FWC learning hub's resources	The FWC Learning Hub will be a resource facility integrated into an improved version of the existing FWC Website. Users of the Learning Hub are individuals that access the resources to inform their work. Cumulative	Tracking of hits for FWC Learning Hub web-pages according to individual users and their geographical distribution (eg using Google Analytics)	M&E Officer	a) No. Individual Users b) No. Countries with users	FWC website is operational but offers no Learning Hub facilities at present	Learning hub under development	a) 500 b) 20	a) 1,000 b) 40	a) 2,000 b) 60	Assumption: Tracked users make intentional use of the learning hub that contribute towards capacity development
Outcome 3.2: Improved knowledge among FWC member countries that supports effective FWC-related planning and implementation										
Indicator 3.2.1: No. of participants gaining knowledge from Freshwater Challenge Exchanges, Peer-to-Peer Learning, and online technical clinics as demonstrated by post-implementation questionnaires and debriefing reports (gender and youth	Number of participants in project supported capacity development activities consisting of exchanges, peer-to-peer learning and online technical clinics that demonstrate achievement of learning objectives of these activities through completion of assessment questionnaires and debriefing reports (gender and youth disaggregated) Cumulative	Collection and analysis of post-training questionnaires and debriefing reports by participants to determine number of participants (disaggregated) and achievement of learning objectives	M&E Officer	a) Total No Participants b) % women c) % youth	0	a) 20 b) 50% c) 10%	a) 80 b) 50% c) 10%	a) 140 b) 50% c) 10%	a) 190 b) 50% c) 10%	Estimated at 3 technical advisory missions; 6 FWC exchanges; 6 P2P exchanges; 16 online technical clinics (4/year) Assumption: Post-training assessment questionnaires are completed diligently and truthfully.

disaggregated)									
Indicator 3.2.2: No. of identified technical, institutional and policy issues related to conserving and restoring freshwater ecosystems at scale covered during Freshwater Challenge Exchanges, Peer-to-Peer Learning, and online technical clinics	Number of technical, institutional and policy issues related to conserving and restoring freshwater ecosystems at scale covered during Freshwater Challenge Exchanges, Peer-to-Peer Learning, and online technical clinics determined through completion of assessment questionnaires and debriefing reports Cumulative	Collection and analysis of post-training questionnaires and debriefing reports by participants to determine number of identified technical, institutional and policy issues related to conserving and restoring freshwater ecosystems at scale covered during the activities	M&E Officer		0	3	8	10	10	Estimated at 3 technical advisory missions; 6 FWC exchanges; 6 P2P exchanges; 16 online technical clinics (4/year) Assumption: Post-training assessment questionnaires are completed diligently and truthfully.
Component 4: Communicating to Raise the Profile of Freshwater Ecosystems Locally, Nationally, in Transboundary Basins, and Globally									
Outcome 4.1: Increased awareness of freshwater ecosystem threats and solutions among the general public and decision makers									
Indicator 4.1.1: No. of media stories on freshwater issues per country per year enabled by project communications support in the four selected FWC member countries	Media stories on freshwater issues are picked up in local, national or international media in diverse forms including print, online, radio and TV media	Tracking of national media and uploading links and stories to the FWC learning hub	M&E Officer; country communications staff	-	0	20	40	80	80	The project communications strategy will be rolled out at national level and capacity development support provided to national journalists to cover FW issues. Assumption: Reported number of media stories does not include recycled material from other sources
Indicator 4.1.2: No. of policy recommendations arising from regional round table discussions on freshwater challenge issues;	Regional round table dialogues will be organized to share lessons and best practices, demonstrating FWC benefits to countries, review resources mobilized for freshwater wetland restoration and to promote expansion of the FWC membership. Policy recommendations will be included in the regional round table reports and used in advocacy to advance FWC	Regional round table reports made available on the FWC website	M&E Officer	-	0	-	10	10	10	Assumption: Policy recommendations address issues of concern to regional stakeholders.

	objectives within each region. Cumulative									
Indicator 4.1.3: No. of participants in regional dialogues and representation of countries, women, youth and private sector	Regional round table dialogues will be organized to share lessons and best practices, demonstrating FWC benefits to countries, review resources mobilized for freshwater wetland restoration and to promote expansion of the FWC membership. Participants lists will be included in the regional round table reports as an indication of geographical, institutional and individual diversity. Cumulative	Regional round table reports made available on the FWC website	M&E Officer	a) No. countries b) No. women; c) No. youth; d) No. private sector	0		a) 6 b) 6 c) 10 d) 3	a) 6 b) 6 c) 10 d) 3	a) 6 b) 6 c) 10 d) 3	
Outcome 4.2: Strengthened engagement of diverse stakeholders in FWC messaging and objectives										
Indicator 4.2.1: No. of new communications-related partnerships built in support of FWC objectives	Establishment of partnerships that diversify the voices supporting the FWC including youth organizations, environmental media organizations and networks, etc. Partnerships should be formally established with the FWC through signed agreements. Cumulative	Review of new partnership agreements signed with FWC and announced on the FWC Website	M&E Officer	N/A	0	0	2	4	8	Assumption: New partnerships are operational and not passive.
Indicator 4.2.1: No. of youth (m/f) participating in co-design and complementation of global and national communications and messaging (Output 4.1.1, Output 4.2.1) design of engagement approaches and workshop sessions during regional round tables (Output 4.1.2), and co-facilitation and participation in country "Challenge Exchanges" (Output 3.2.1).	The United Nations defines 'youth' for statistical purposes as individuals between the ages of 15 and 24. Cumulative	Participants lists for project activities to disaggregate e youth and gender. Assess project reports to extract statistics on youth participating in the relevant activities	M&E Officer	N/A	0	20 (50% women)	40 (50% women)	60 (50% women)	80 (50% women)	
Monitoring and Evaluation										
5.1.1 Percentage of Adaptive Management Actions	Adaptive management actions are actions recommended by reflection workshops held the previous year to inform project strategy and AWPB	AWPBs, project reports	M&E Officer	N/A	N/A	100%	100 %	100 %	100 %	Assumption: Project management staff actively participate in

developed in the previous year completed	development. Non-cumulative									annual reflection workshops and are committed to incorporating M&E data and analysis into workplans Assumption: Project management staff actively participate in annual reflection workshops and are committed to incorporating M&E data and analysis into workplans
5.1.2 % reflection workshops where monitoring data informed project strategy and development of AWPBs	Reflection workshops are held annually for project management purposes to provide feedback using monitoring data to inform AWPB development. Non-cumulative	AWPBs, project reports	M&E Officer	N/A	100%	100%	100 %	100 %	100 %	
5.1.3 Percentage of grievances from all project GRMs resolved within the stipulated timeline during the reporting period.	The GRM is described in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan for this project. Non-cumulative	Grievance reports log	M&E Officer	N/A	100%	100%	100 %	100 %	100 %	Assumption: Grievance reports log is actively maintained by PMU staff

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

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

Project Preparation Activities Implemented	GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount ($)		
	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent To date	Amount Committed
Safeguard/gender consultant	20,000.00	17,600.00	0.00
Technical Consultancy (IUCN) for Stakeholder Engagement Plan and activities	12,000.00	12,000.00	2,400.00
Travel costs for participation of government stakeholders in project development workshop held in Zimbabwe alongside RAMSAR Meeting	12,000.00	4,000.00	8,000.00
Workshops for CEO ER Development and technical design held at international events to include country government and NGO participation	26,000.00	7,954.87	18,045.13
CEO Endorsement Request and Supporting Document Development Consultant	49,000.00	18,000.00	31,000.00

1 Workshop and multiple meetings held In-country in Cambodia, with stakeholders including govt. partners for project inputs	4,000.00	4,000.00	0.00
International Travel costs for freshwater experts for consultation and discussions with interested parties and stakeholders on project design - international conferences	27,000.00	27,000.00	0.00
Total	**150,000.00**	**90,554.87**	**59,445.13**

ANNEX E: PROJECT MAP AND COORDINATES

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

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Serra da Canastra	-20.2597	-46.4233	

Location Description:

Historical Spring in Minas Gerais state

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Serra da Canastra	-20.2347	-46.4413	

Location Description:

Geographic Spring in Minas Gerais state

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Bom Jesus da Lapa	-13.2500	-43.4166	

Location Description:

Approximate midpoint of Sao Francisco river basin, Bahia state

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Sao Francisco river mouth	-10.4833	-36.3833	

Location Description:

Between Brejon Grande and Piaçabuçu in Sergipe /Alagoas states

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Central area of Tonle Sap floodplain (Cambodia)	12.90429	104.0634	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
North area of Tonle Sap floodplain (Cambodia)	13.30080	103.5862	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
South area of Tonle Sap floodplain (Cambodia)	12.34991	104.6535	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Malagarasi Catchment area (Tanzania)	-4.5000	31.5000	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Ugalla Catchment Area (Tanzania)	-6.0000	32.0000	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Ruchugi Catchment Area (Tanzania)	-4.7500	30.2500	

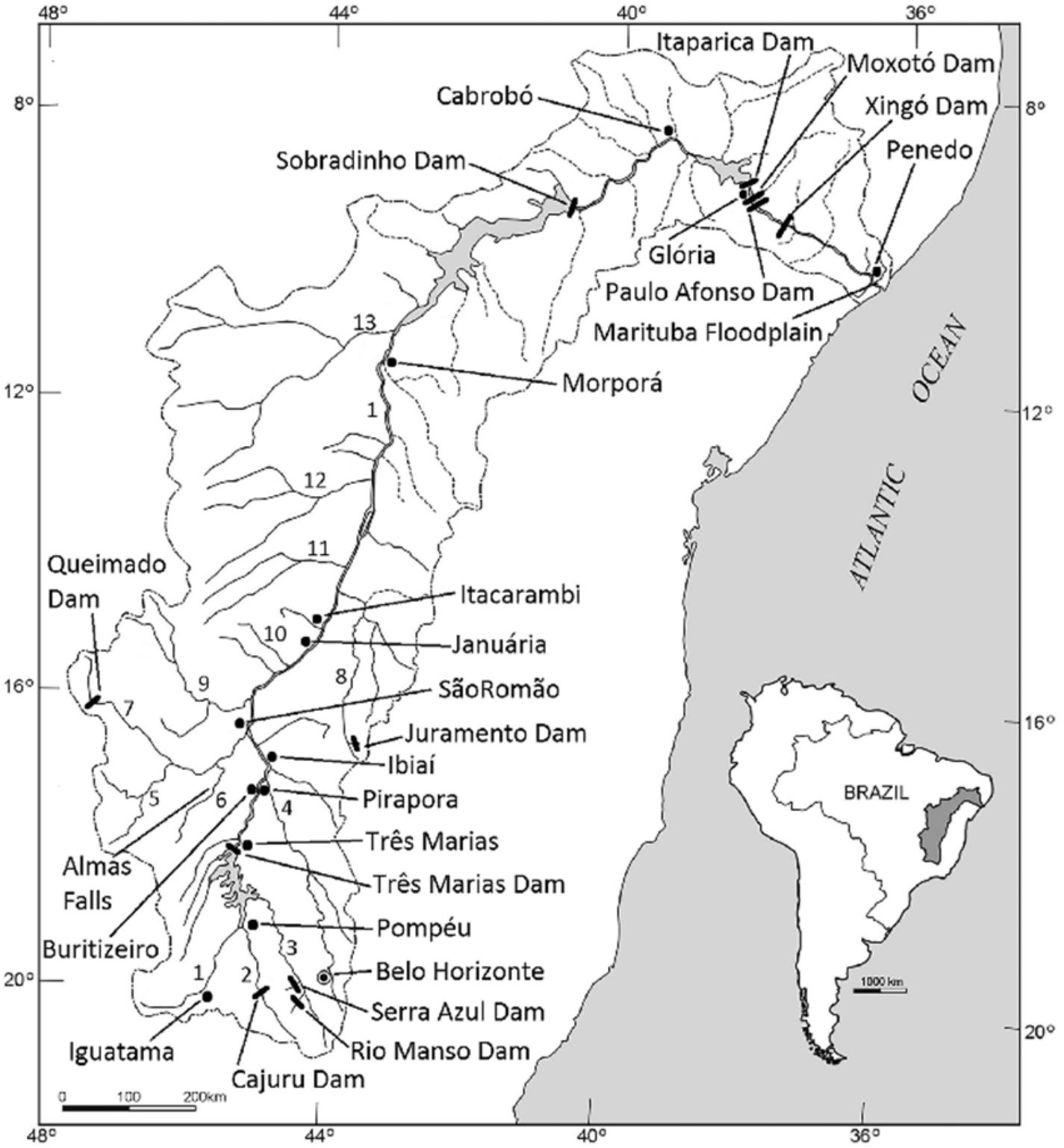
Location Description:

Activity Description:

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

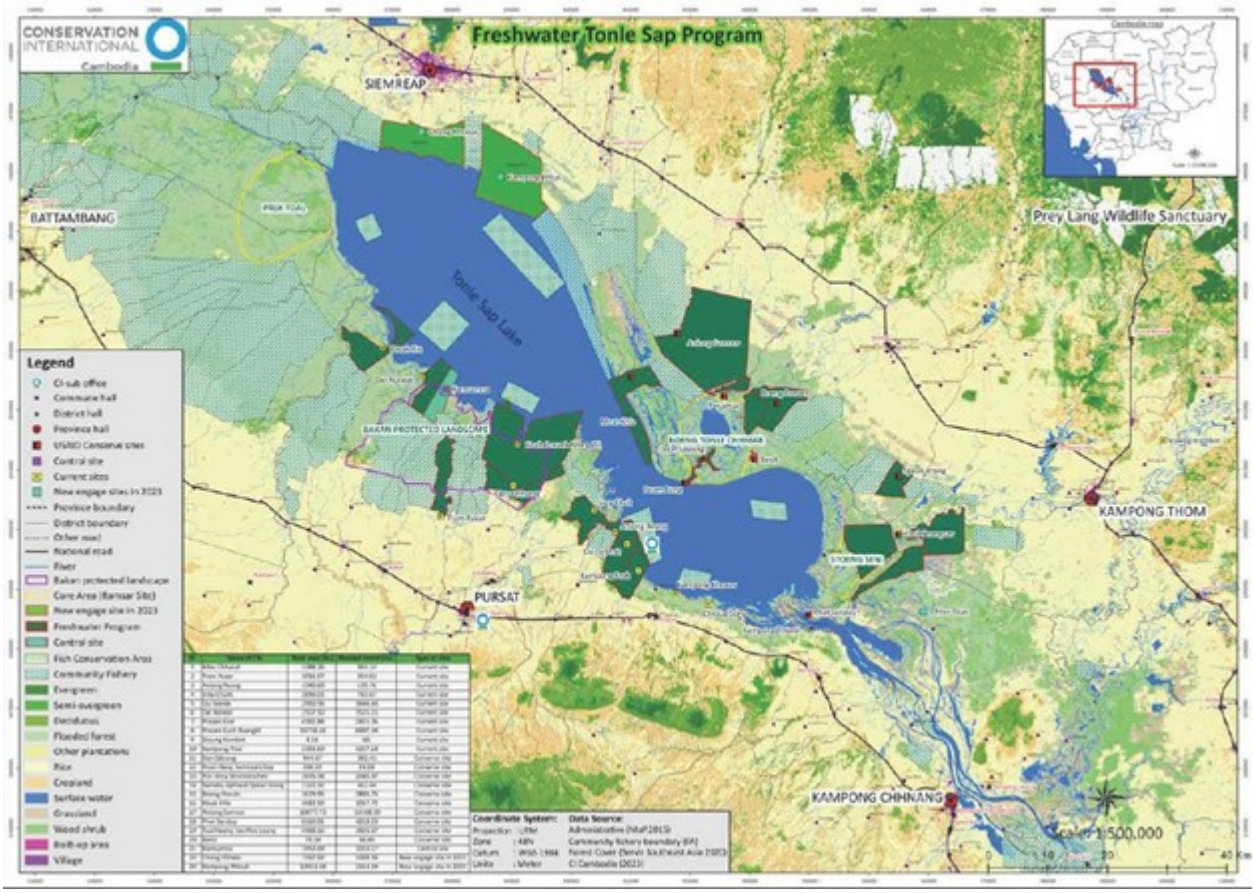
Brazil:

1. **São Francisco River Basin and its main dams**



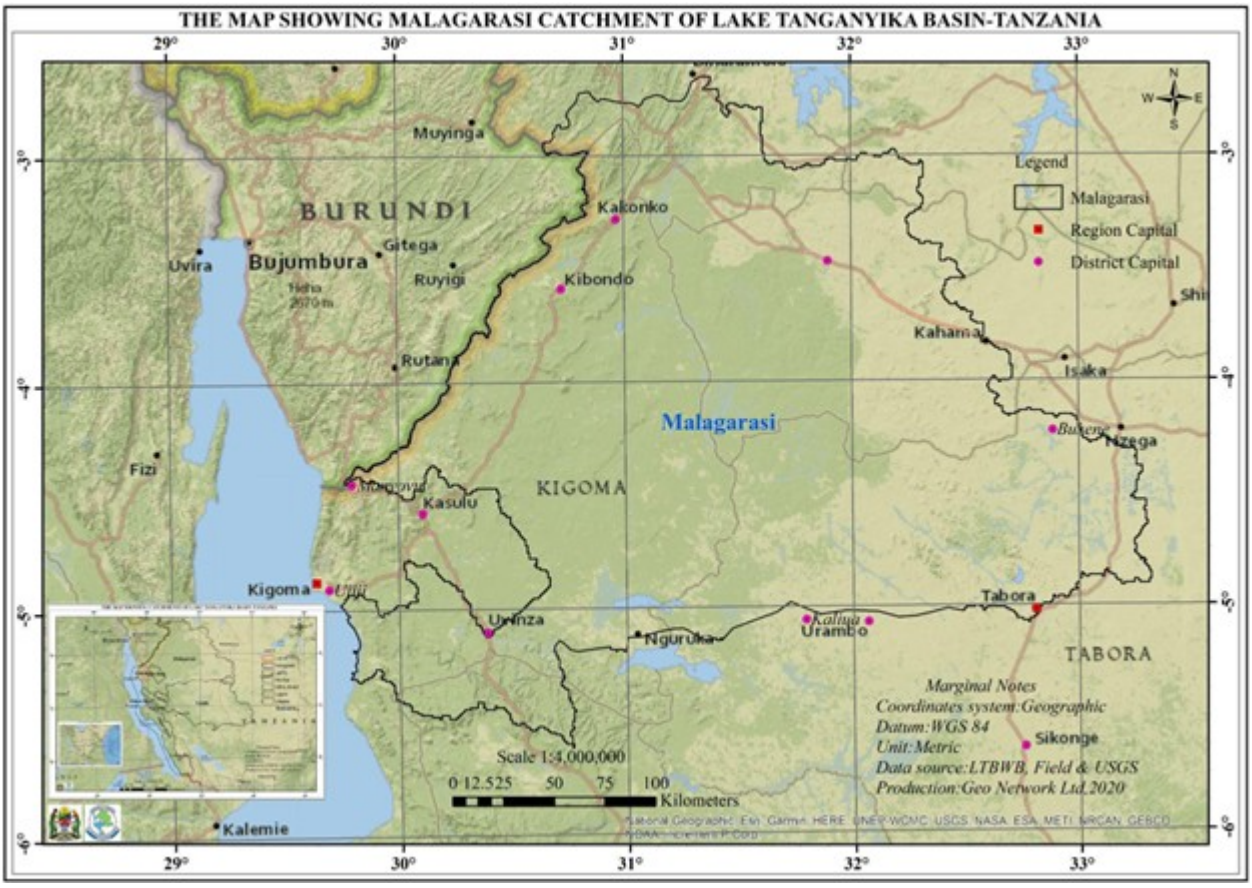
Cambodia:

2. Tonle Sap Lake

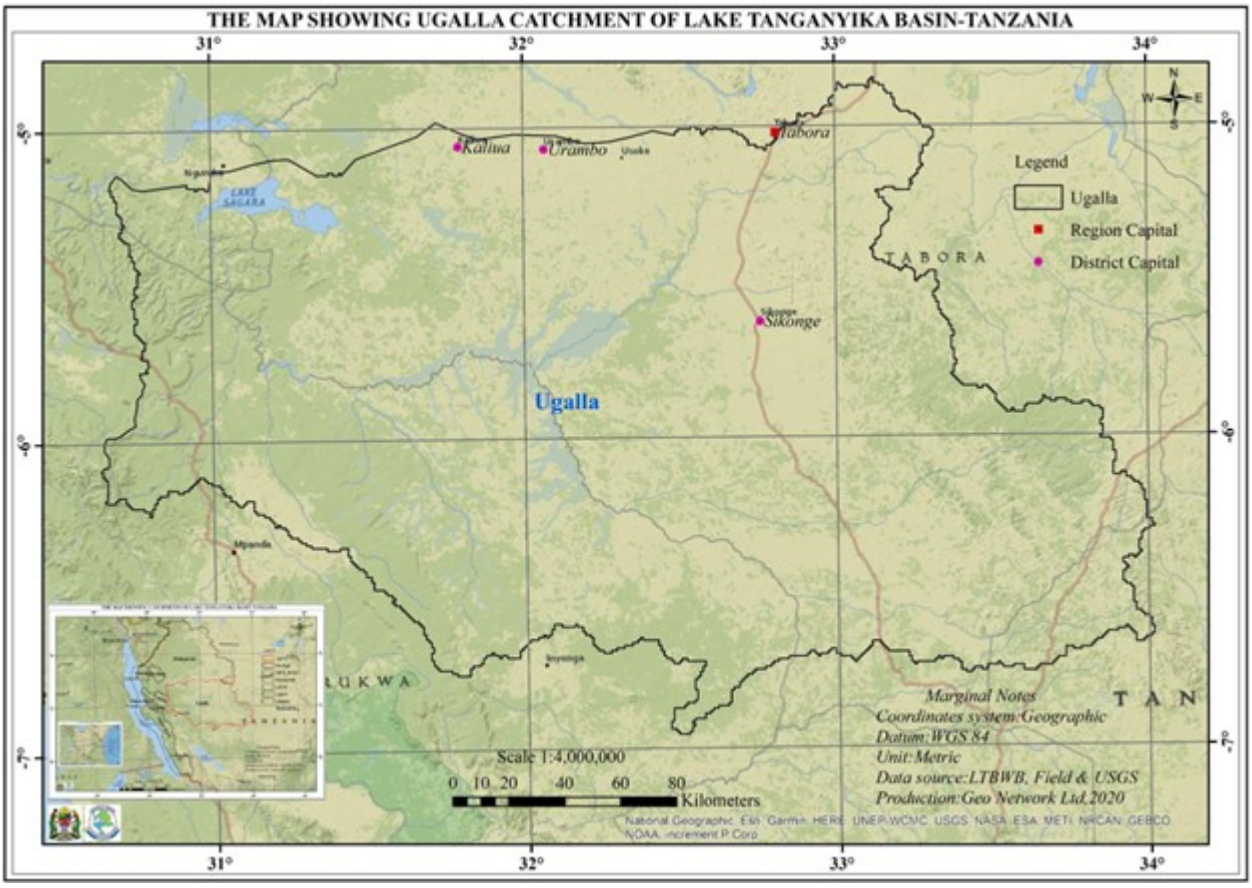


Tanzania

3. Malagarasi Catchment



4. Ugalla Catchment



ANNEX F: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING

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

Title
FWC Gender Analysis and Action Plan October
Stakeholder Engagement Plan - GEF MSP FWC Final
FWC_ESSF pre-screen
FWC Categorization Memo - Update Oct 2025

ANNEX G: BUDGET TABLE

Please upload the budget table here.

Expenditure Category		FWC Project Budget WWF GEF	

	Budget notes and assumptions #	TOTAL Outcome 1.1 Total COMPONENT 1	TOTAL COMPONENT 2	TOTAL COMPONENT 3	TOTAL COMPONENT 4	M&E	PMC	Total Project	Responsible Entity
Sub Grant to CI for Cambodia Office for transportation, workshops, trainings, technical expertise, consultancies to execute activities under Component 2 in Cambodia	1	-	452,554	-	-	-	-	452,554	IUCN
Sub Grant to CI Global for consultancies and technical expertise for national media coverage, questionnaires & reports for peer to peer exchanges and round table evaluations, develop lessons learned and Country led learning cases and all costs for translation	2	-	-	32,578	24,602	-	-	57,180	IUCN
Sub Grant to CI Global to work with CI Cambodia to identify national and local partners & potential youth partners	2				38,868			38,868	IUCN
Sub Grant to CI for trainings in Cambodia for piloting Indicators and tracking	2	15,099			-			15,099	IUCN
Sub Grant to CI for research and recommendation formulation for piloting Indicators and tracking	2	15,573	-	-	-	-	-	15,573	IUCN
Sub Grant to WI for consultancies and technical expertise for national media coverage, questionnaires & reports for peer to peer exchanges and round table evaluations, develop lessons learned and Country led learning cases and all costs for translation and coordination for the FWC across all components	3			65,000	115,000	-	-	180,000	IUCN
Sub Grant to WI for recommendation formulation for piloting Indicators and tracking in Brazil	3	10,400						10,400	IUCN
Sub Grant to Wetlands International for transportation, workshops, trainings, technical expertise, consultancies, to execute activities under Component 2 in Brazil	4	-	345,000	-	-	-	-	345,000	IUCN
Sub Grant to Wetlands International to support research and recommendation formulation for piloting Indicators and tracking recommendations	3	20,000	-	-	-	-	-	20,000	IUCN

Sub Grant to The Nature Conservancy for transportation, workshops, trainings, technical expertise, consultancies, to execute activities under Component 2 in Tanzania	5	-	345,000	-	-	-	-	345,000	IUCN
Sub Grant to TNC for stakeholder consultations and workshops to establish recommendations and guidance on indicator framework and partnership engagement for Comp. 4	6	10,000	-	-	10,000	-	-	20,000	IUCN
Sub Grant to TNC for consultancies and digital products for national media coverage, questionnaires & reports for peer to peer exchanges and round table evaluations, develop lessons learned and Country led learning cases and all costs for translation	6	-		80,000	65,000			145,000	IUCN
Sub Grant to TNC for trainings to pilot Indicators and tracking recommendations in the context of the Tanzania target wetlands	6	20,000			-			20,000	IUCN
Sub Grant to Wetlands International for development of Learning Hub and Country led learning cases developed and shared in the Learning Hub.	7	-		248,700	-			248,700	IUCN
Sub Grants to Youth Partners	8	-			240,000		-	240,000	IUCN
Total Sub Grants to Executing Partners		**91,072**	**1,142,554**	**426,278**	**493,470**	**-**	**-**	**2,153,374**	
Communications Plans and process guidance	9	-	-	-	25,000	-	-	25,000	IUCN
Consultancy to develop Methodology for Component 2	10	-	30,000	-	-	-	-	30,000	IUCN
Consultancy to develop selection criteria and evaluation process for youth grants		-	-	-	30,000	-	-	30,000	IUCN
Total Contractual Services - Individuals		-	30,000	-	55,000	-	-	**85,000**	
Research and facilitation of guidance and recommendations, Virtual Interviews, Writing, Communications, and Graphic Design	11	200,000	30,000	-	-	-	-	230,000	WWF US
Expert Inputs and Communications Support				64,940	-	-	-	64,940	IUCN
Total Contractual Services - Company		230,000	-	64,940	-	-	-	**294,940**	
Full Time Project Manager	12		90,824	161,648	181,648	45,412	60,549	540,081	IUCN
Finance and Administrative Officer (part time)		-	-	-	-	-	148,856	148,856	IUCN
Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (part time)		-	-	-	-	94,080	-	94,080	IUCN

Full Time Communications and Partnerships Officer	13	105,000	105,000	95,000	95,000	-	-	400,000	IUCN
Safeguards and Gender Officer (part time)		-	31,360	62,720	-	-	-	94,080	IUCN
Total Staff Costs		150,413	227,184	319,368	185,824	**139,492**	**209,405**	**1,231,686**	
Workshop costs for IW events side meetings/sessions		20,000	-	-	73,000	-	-	93,000	IUCN
Regional Roundtables	14	-	-	-	210,000	-	-	210,000	IUCN
Total Trainings, Workshops and Meetings		20,000	-	-	283,000	**-**	**-**	**303,000**	
IW Regional and International Events		-	-	-	50,000	-	-	50,000	IUCN
Travel costs for global freshwater events, project framework rollout, peer to peer exchanges and international conferences		35,000	30,000	45,000	-	-	-	110,000	IUCN
Total Travel		35,000	30,000	45,000	50,000	**-**	**-**	**160,000**	
equipment for production of communications materials (printers, ink, graphic design support) following IW Guidance	15	-	-	20,000	35,000	-	-	55,000	IUCN
Monitoring and evaluation equipment including cameras, video equipment, A/V and projector		-	-	-	-	12,000	-	12,000	IUCN
Office Rental Costs for Hosting PMU Staff members		-	-	-	-	-	15,000	15,000	IUCN
Total Office Supplies		-	-	20,000	35,000	**12,000**	**15,000**	**82,000**	
Mid term and Terminal Evaluations	16	-	-	-	-	90,000	-	90,000	WWF GEF
Total Other Operating costs		-	-	-	-	**90,000**	**-**	**90,000**	
Grand Total		**526,485**	**1,429,738**	875,586	**1,102,294**	**241,492**	**224,405**	**4,400,000**	

1 BUDGET NOTES AND ASSUMPTIONS

CI grant for Cambodia for a consultation for the pipeline and gap analysis through stakeholder consultations and conduct desktop review of resourcing interventions for freshwater, capacity analyses, workshops, assessment of Tonle Sap Inundation, CI cambodia to conduct water diplomacy, consultations on fire management and fisheries, to develop khmer/english stories, production and sharing of comms materials, and conduct spatial mapping of priority locations for intervention

2 Funding in the form of a single grant to Conservation International FWC Core Partner for the coordination and delivery of part of Outputs 1.1.3, 3.1.2,3.2.1, 3.2.2 and 4.2.1 to include travel and workshop costs for participation in

regional events and peer to peer exchanges, development and management of relationships for the FWC Initiative and funding for M&E. .

3 Funding to FWC Core Partner Wetlands International for the coordination and delivery of part of Components 1, 3 and Component 4 to include travel and workshop costs for participation in regional events and peer to peer exchanges, development and management of relationships for the FWC Initiative and funding for M&E. Funding to Wetlands International will also cover the development and delivery of the learning hub under component 3. WI will provide coordination in supporting the knowledge exchanges events, mentorship, engaging countries for the global, regional and national fora, among others.

4 Wetlands International Sub grant for Brazil Activities, as well as for travel, workshops, communications supplies and materials and monitoring and evaluation efforts in association with the delivery of Outputs 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1

5 TNC Sub grant for Tanzania Activities, as well as for travel, workshops, communications supplies and materials and monitoring and evaluation efforts in association with the delivery of Outputs 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1

6 Funding to FWC Core Partner TNC for the coordination and delivery of part of Components 1, 3 and Component 4 to include travel and workshop costs for participation in regional events and peer to peer exchanges, development and management of relationships for the FWC Initiative and funding for M&E.

7 Sub Grant to Wetlands International for a Software, hardware, consultancy and technical expertise for development of Online FWC Learning Hub and Country led learning cases developed and shared in the Learning Hub.

8 IUCN to develop and manage a grant program to youth partners for engagement in the FWC

9 Support to develop and implement a global, communications strategy for the project, including forming strategic partnerships with communications organizations and training national journalists through field visits, technical terminology clarification, and support in interpreting and presenting complex environmental issues for public understanding-may entail hiring a consultant

10 Methodology designed to roll out and coordinate the Country delivery of Component 2 ensuring equal participation across countries with consolidation of country inputs and feedback

11 WWF to review existing indicators for freshwater ecosystem protection, restoration, and management; conduct consultations with country representatives, peer organizations, and multilaterals to identify alignment opportunities and validate proposed indicators; and prepare a framework with indicator definitions, rationale, and links to additional resources.

12 Full Time Project manager who will provide technical inputs and functions for components, see TORs for detailed contributions

13 Full Time Communications and Partnerships Officer who will provide technical inputs and functions for components, see TORs for detailed contributions, additionally the incumbent will be responsible for monitoring and coordination for IW events and workshops

14 IUCN to lead Regional roundtable on freshwater challenges and solutions incl. at least 3 events to include funding for participants to attend the events. Project covers budget for regional and local hosting costs for roundtable participation is provided to each country representative in the budget.

15 Costs for the production of communications materials, ongoing materials and printers and space for communications production.

16 Mid Term and Terminal Evaluation consultancy, conducted by an external company, managed by WWF GEF Agency.

Please explain any aspects of the budget as needed here

ANNEX I: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS

From GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF.