



# GEF-6 REQUEST FOR PROJECT ENDORSEMENT/APPROVAL

PROJECT TYPE: Full-sized Project

TYPE OF TRUST FUND: GEF Trust Fund

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## PART I: PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Conservation and sustainable management of key globally important ecosystems for multiple benefits			
Country(ies):	Kazakhstan	GEF Project ID: <sup>1</sup>	9193
GEF Agency(ies):	UNDP	GEF Agency Project ID:	5696
Other Executing Partner(s):	Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Government of Kazakhstan	Submission Date:	February 28, 2018
GEF Focal Area (s):	Multi-focal area	Project Duration (Months)	60
Integrated Approach Pilot	IAP-Cities <input type="checkbox"/> IAP-Commodities <input type="checkbox"/> IAP-Food Security <input type="checkbox"/>	Corporate Program: SGP <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name of Parent Program	N/A	Agency Fee (\$)	766,572

### A. FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK AND OTHER PROGRAM STRATEGIES<sup>2</sup>

Focal Area Objectives/Programs	Focal Area Outcomes	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
			GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
LD-3 Program 4	<b>Outcome 3.1:</b> Support mechanisms for SLM in wider landscapes established. <b>Outcome 3.2:</b> Integrated landscape management practices adopted by local communities based on gender sensitive needs. <sup>[1]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub>	GEFTF	1,793,151	19,287,931
BD-1 Program 2	<b>Outcome 2.1:</b> Increase in area of terrestrial and marine ecosystems of global significance in new protected areas and increase in threatened species of global significance protected in new protected areas. <b>Outcome 2.2:</b> Improved management effectiveness of new protected areas.	GEFTF	3,586,301	38,575,853
SFM-1	<b>Outcome 1:</b> Cross-sector policy and planning approaches at appropriate governance scales, avoid loss of high conservation value forests. <sup>[1]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub> <b>Outcome 2:</b> Innovative mechanisms avoid the loss of high conservation value forest. <sup>[1]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub>	GEFTF	1,719,726	18,498,140
SFM-2	<b>Outcome 3:</b> Increased application of good management practices in all forests by relevant government, local community (both women and men) and private sector actors. <b>Outcome 4:</b> Increased contribution of sustained forest ecosystem services to national economies and local livelihoods of both women and men. <sup>[1]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub>	GEFTF	970,000	10,433,752
<b>Total project costs</b>			8,069,178	86,795,676

<sup>1</sup> Project ID number remains the same as the assigned PIF number.

<sup>2</sup> When completing Table A, refer to the excerpts on [GEF 6 Results Frameworks for GETF, LDCF and SCCF](#) and [CBIT programming directions](#).

## B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

<b>Project Objective:</b> <i>Improve conservation status and management of key forest and associated grassland, riparian and arid ecosystems important for conservation of biodiversity, land resources and provision of livelihoods for local communities</i>						
Project Components/ Programs	Financing Type <sup>3</sup>	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
					GEF Project Financing	Confirmed Co- financing
<b>Component 1.</b> Improved representation of globally important forest biodiversity and improved management of protected conservation-important forests <sup>4</sup>	TA	<b>Outcome 1.1:</b> Prevention of loss of conservation important forest and associated non-forest ecosystems and their biodiversity: - New protected areas established covering net new 1,830,389.7 ha - METT scores improved 30% over baseline by end of project in 23 PAs covering 4.72 million ha - Increased coverage of 1,284,286 ha of mountain forests tugai, and saxaul ecosystems in PA system - Improved trend of populations of globally significant biodiversity indicator species, such as snow leopard, argali, goitered gazelle and other species within the expanded PA estate  <b>Outcome 1.2:</b> Improved	<b>Output 1.1.1:</b> Protection regimes approved in 11 new and expanded PAs for globally important forest ecosystems (saxaul, floodplain forest, and mountain forest), and their associated SLM and biodiversity ecosystem services, in cooperation with local communities  <b>Output 1.1.2:</b> Newly established 11 forest PAs are operationalized with improved management effectiveness, including community management mechanisms  <b>Output 1.2.1:</b> Development and implementation of	GEFTF	2,547,067	27,397,385

<sup>3</sup> Financing type can be either investment or technical assistance.

<sup>4</sup> The project works with 23 PAs (12 existing, 11 proposed). The exact figure for hectares cannot be determined until the "new" PAs are created, and their specific boundaries are known. However, the total estimated number of PA hectares to be addressed is 4.72 million ha. Of this, 2.19 million ha are existing PAs (614,848.23 ha forest area), and 2,531,082.70 are new PAs (1,284,286 ha forest area). However, of the "new" PAs, 700,693 hectares are from existing lower level PAs, resulting in a net new PA hectares of 1,830,389.70.

		management of protected conservation important forests, through HCVF-specific management measures in PA forests - HCVF-specific management measures under implementation for 1,899,134 ha of protected conservation-important forests	forest-specific management measures in 12 existing and 11 new PA management plans, covering 1,899,134 ha of HCVF (total geographic area of 12 existing and 11 new PAs is 4.72 mln ha)			
<b>Component 2.</b> Better integration of forest PAs in wider landscape, including enabling environment for sustainable management of conservation-important ecosystems	TA	<b>Outcome 2.1:</b> Improved management of high conservation value forests and pastures in forest PA landscapes with direct community benefits: - 1,895,700 ha of pasture and forest pasture under sustainable management - 4 community pasture management plans developed and under implementation - 4 models of private-public partnership afforestation piloted (partner co-financed, covering 200 ha) and results documented and disseminated - 6 district level integrated land-use management plans developed indicated PA buffer zones and corridors, and under implementation	<b>Output 2.1.1.</b> HCVF management measures implemented for 6 forestry units (outside forest PAs) covering 2,350,200 ha (with 1,174,500 ha forested area), including community input mechanisms <b>Output 2.1.2.</b> Forest pasture management plans (including grazing plans) developed and implemented with local community engagement in 4 pilot sites bordering PAs and forestry territories covering 720,000 ha <b>Output 2.1.3.</b> Incentive-based Forest Ecosystem Management Partnership: Four models of afforestation investments are designed and tested within different ownership patterns, including local community	GEFTF	4,017,000	43,208,639

		<p>- PA tourism management plans developed and under implementation in 9 PAs facing greatest impacts from unmanaged tourism</p> <p>- 2,836,037 tons CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent direct emissions avoided</p>	<p>engagement</p> <p><b>2.1.4</b> Integrated land and forest management plans developed and implemented in six administrative districts through community consultation covering 350,000 ha surrounding newly established PAs, including designation of buffer zones and corridors</p> <p><b>Output 2.1.5</b> Tourism management strategies developed for forest PAs in cooperation with local communities, strategies integrated in PA management plans and under implementation</p> <p><b>Output 2.1.6</b> Hunting regulations developed to fully incorporate biodiversity considerations and economic benefits to local communities, and implemented with strengthened monitoring and enforcement capacity</p>			
		<p><b>Outcome 2.2:</b> Strengthened enabling environment to support SFM objectives through updated national policies, regulations, and knowledge management systems supporting improved management of</p>	<p><b>Output 2.2.1.</b> Review of and modifications to existing forest governance system to ensure that the HCVF managed by 123 forestry entities (12,652,400 ha) are covered by policy objectives to be managed as an integral component of the national ecological network (IUCN VI</p>			

		12,652,400 ha of national forest territory	<p>PA category Managed resource protected area)</p> <p><b>Output 2.2.2.</b> HCVF standards, tools, and practices are integrated into national forest management guidelines and regulations to improve the management effectiveness of HCVF</p> <p><b>Output 2.2.3.</b> Training program and improved forest research and data analysis capacities to support implementation and uptake of HCVF management approaches</p> <p><b>Output 2.2.4.</b> Based on afforestation pilot activities, relevant by-laws and amendments to the existing legislation are developed and approved.</p> <p><b>Output 2.2.5.</b> Technical knowledge bank for the private afforestation is set up and maintained by FWC, and accessible by potential interested groups and individuals</p>			
		<p><b>Outcome 2.3:</b> Integrated economic and environmental valuation of ecosystem services and SFM criteria and indicators embedded in decision making in</p>	<p><b>Output 2.3.1.</b> Integrated economic and environmental resource management optimization assessments (Targeted Scenario Analysis (TSA)) demonstrated in three resource-management</p>			

		<p>natural resource management, through piloting of innovative sustainable economic development planning mechanisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 127,050 ha of conservation-important forest ecosystems benefit from improved natural resource management</li> <li>- 3 TSA analyses conducted with results integrated in natural resource-management planning and decision-making</li> </ul>	<p>scenarios for improved conditions of mountain forests and grasslands, Tugai and Saxaul forest ecosystems.</p> <p><b>Output 2.3.2.</b> Methodology and guidance for TSAs related to mountain forests and grasslands, Tugai and Saxaul forest ecosystems, are integrated in Kazakh legal context</p> <p><b>Output 2.3.3.</b> TSA is integrated into capacity development and professional training courses.</p>			
<p><b>Component 3.</b> International cooperation and knowledge management</p>	TA	<p><b>Outcome 3.1</b> Increased capacities of Kazakhstan to monitor its wildlife, ensure law enforcement and share knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Capacities and awareness of at least 100 staff of law enforcement authorities, transport police and customs services raised to handle in trafficking and trade crime in sub-regional context</li> <li>- Snow leopard monitoring system improved in order to accurately report on Kazakhstan's snow leopard population on an annual basis</li> <li>- Education activities on HCVF management completed for staff of 6 forestry units;</li> </ul>	<p><b>Output 3.1.1.</b> Enhanced enforcement capacities of wildlife protection agencies through: (i) improved effectiveness of monitoring, apprehending, and prosecution of illegal activities; (ii) training materials developed and rolled out for wildlife protection agencies.</p> <p><b>Output 3.1.2</b> Implementation of Kazakhstan's National Snow Leopard Ecosystem Conservation Plan Through Development of Integrated Landscape Planning in National Priority Snow Leopard Landscapes</p> <p><b>Output 3.1.3.</b> System for long-term regular</p>	GEFTF	1,120,865	12,056,531

		awareness raising activities on SFM, SLM, and INRM completed in 4 pilot communities; education and awareness on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity completed in 10 communities neighboring PAs; increased awareness about snow leopard conservation at national level through publication of national state of the snow leopard report	monitoring of snow leopard in Kazakhstan put in place applying internationally certified quality standards (GIS-based), including transboundary monitoring arrangements with key neighboring countries <b>Output 3.1.4</b> Knowledge products disseminated and education and awareness activities completed to enhance understanding of natural resource managers and communities about SFM, SLM, and biodiversity conservation			
Subtotal					7,684,932	82,662,555
Project Management Cost (PMC) <sup>5</sup>				GEFTF	384,246	4,133,121
<b>Total project costs</b>					8,069,178	86,795,676

### C. CONFIRMED SOURCES OF CO-FINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY NAME AND BY TYPE

Please include evidence for co-financing for the project with this form.

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Cofinancing	Amount (\$)
GEF Agency	UNDP	Grants	200,000
Recipient Government	Forestry and Wildlife Committee	Grants	70,510,507
Recipient Government	Almaty Province	Grants	8,229,217
Recipient Government	East Kazakhstan Province	Grants	7,177,711
Recipient Government	Institute of Zoology	In-kind	59,249
CSO	ACBK	Grants	300,000
CSO	WWF-Russia	Grants	318,992
<b>Total Co-financing</b>			86,795,676

### D. TRUST FUND RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY(IES), COUNTRY(IES), FOCAL AREA AND THE PROGRAMMING OF FUNDS

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country Name/Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					GEF	Agency Fee	Total

<sup>5</sup> For GEF Project Financing up to \$2 million, PMC could be up to 10% of the subtotal; above \$2 million, PMC could be up to 5% of the subtotal. PMC should be charged proportionately to focal areas based on focal area project financing amount in Table D below.

					<b>Project Financing (a)</b>	<sup>a)</sup> (b) <sup>2</sup>	(c)=a+b
UNDP	GEF	Kazakhstan		SFM	2,689,726	255,524	2,945,250
UNDP	GEF	Kazakhstan	Biodiversity		3,586,301	340,699	3,927,000
UNDP	GEF	Kazakhstan	Land Degradation		1,793,151	170,349	1,963,500
<b>Total Grant Resources</b>					8,069,178	766,572	8,835,750

#### E. ROJECT'S TARGET CONTRIBUTIONS TO GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS<sup>6</sup>

Provide the expected project targets as appropriate.

<b>Corporate Results</b>	<b>Replenishment Targets</b>	<b>Project Targets</b>
1. Maintain globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services that it provides to society	Improved management of landscapes and seascapes covering 300 million hectares	4,720,000* hectares
2. Sustainable land management in production systems (agriculture, rangelands, and forest landscapes)	120 million hectares under sustainable land management	4,407,829** hectares
4. Support to transformational shifts towards a low-emission and resilient development path	750 million tons of CO <sub>2e</sub> mitigated (include both direct and indirect)	5,838,328*** metric tons

\*The project will improve the management of approximately 4.72 million ha of PAs (2.19 million ha of existing PAs (results from Output 1.2.1), and planned approximately 2.53 million ha of new PAs (results from Outputs 1.1.1 and 1.1.2); the project will implement 350,000 ha of biodiversity buffer zones and corridors as part of integrated natural resource management plans in six districts (Output 2.1.4), but this is likely to include significant portions of the HCVR and pastureland indicated under indicator 2 below, and so is not added in order to avoid double-counting.

\*\* The project will ensure adoption of SLM and SFM practices in forest management plans of six forest units with forest pasture area of 1,175,700 ha (results from Output 2.1.1), in 720,000 ha of forest-pasture lands in rural districts (results from Output 2.1.2), and in 2,512,129 ha through six district integrated natural resource management plans (results from Output 2.1.4).

\*\*\* As per FAO EX-ACT tool for the 5-year project duration plus 15-year post-project "lifetime" benefits, including both biomass and soil carbon for avoided forest degradation and afforestation (partner co-financed), and soil carbon for reduced degradation in grasslands.

#### F. DOES THE PROJECT INCLUDE A "NON-GRANT" INSTRUMENT? NO

(If non-grant instruments are used, provide an indicative calendar of expected reflows to your Agency and to the GEF/LDCF/SCCF/CBIT Trust Fund) in Annex D.

## **PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION**

### **A. DESCRIBE ANY CHANGES IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE PROJECT DESIGN WITH THE ORIGINAL PIF<sup>7</sup>**

A.1. *Project Description*. Elaborate on: 1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed; 2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects, 3) the proposed alternative scenario, GEF focal area<sup>8</sup> strategies, with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project, 4) [incremental/additional cost reasoning](#) and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, CBIT and [co-financing](#); 5) [global environmental benefits](#) (GEFTF) and/or [adaptation benefits](#) (LDCF/SCCF); and 6) innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up.

<sup>6</sup> Update the applicable indicators provided at PIF stage. Progress in programming against these targets for the projects per the *Corporate Results Framework* in the [GEF-6 Programming Directions](#), will be aggregated and reported during mid-term and at the conclusion of the replenishment period.

<sup>7</sup> For questions A.1 –A.7 in Part II, if there are no changes since PIF, no need to respond, please enter "NA" after the respective question.

<sup>8</sup> For biodiversity projects, in addition to explaining the project's consistency with the biodiversity focal area strategy, objectives and programs, please also describe which [Aichi Target\(s\)](#) the project will directly contribute to achieving..

*A.1.1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed:*

Section II “Development Challenge” of the UNDP PRODOC describes briefly in specific terms the forest ecosystems and protected areas context of Kazakhstan, with significant additional detailed supporting information in the PRODOC ANNEXES. Section II “Development Challenge” describes the context of protected areas in Kazakhstan, and challenges related to sustainable forest management in Kazakhstan, including the institutional framework, and problems related to land-use planning. ANNEXES to the UNDP PRODOC are included that provide a profile of each of the three major regions that the project will be working in, and the extent of saxaul, tugai, and mountain forest resources in these regions. The site profile annexes also include detailed information on the socio-economic situation and status in each of the targeted regions. The annexes provide detailed maps showing the targeted project areas, with information on forested areas, protected areas, snow leopard habitat, and other detailed information. An annex is provided on the legal and policy context for biodiversity conservation and forest management. An annex is provided on the current status of national snow leopard monitoring in Kazakhstan. An annex is provided outlining in detail the protected areas capacity needs assessment that was conducted during the project development phase. Multiple annexes are included that describe in detail the situation related to the status of HCVP in Kazakhstan, including detailed information on forest policy and administration in Kazakhstan.

Further description of the root causes and barriers has been included in Section II “Development Challenge”, with additional information provided in multiple annexes. Building on the preliminary assessment in the PIF, the three major barriers identified are: 1.) Insufficient capacity to further develop and expand the protected area network covering forest ecosystems, to support Kazakhstan meeting the international standard of 10% of the national territory protected; 2.) Ineffective and inefficient forest management, due to poor institutional framework, and limited technical capacity; and 3.) Insufficient scientific and resource management data, inadequate data and knowledge management, and poor coordination in using and leveraging data for resource conservation and management.

*A.1.2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects:*

The description of the baseline scenario and the associated baseline projects has been expanded. These improvements are briefly summarized as follows:

Section IV.ii “Partnerships” of the UNDP PRODOC provides significant additional information on current activities and initiatives ongoing in Kazakhstan that relate to the project’s objectives, and highlights how the project will be incremental to these efforts. This section of the PRODOC provides more details of the resources, capacity and financing that are committed by a range of national and international organizations – over the five-year time frame of the project - to address, in part, the key barriers to the conservation and sustainable use of the biodiversity including protected areas, forest management, and the conservation of snow leopards, wild prey and their habitats in the Kazakhstan. The baseline analysis also focuses on the baseline investments that are targeting improvements in the planning, management, use, control and monitoring of PAs, pastures, forests, snow leopards and snow leopard wild prey across the snow leopard range. The “Partnership” section of the PRODOC updates and expands coverage of the relevant baseline projects and activities in Kazakhstan, including additional details on baseline activities in relation to the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation Program (GSLEP); activities of key multilateral and bilateral partner organizations, including the World Bank, UNDA, and CEPF; and NGO partners including WWF, and ACBK.

Without the GEF investment in the proposed project, the ‘business-as-usual scenario’ for the conservation biodiversity (including snow leopards and their prey species), and the sustainable management of forest and land resources is one where:

- (i) Kazakhstan’s alpine forest and pasture landscape will not be managed as an integrated whole, as management approaches will remain uncoordinated and un-cohesive, without buffer zones, wildlife migration corridors, HCVPs and other high-biodiversity value landscape elements identified and managed appropriately;
- (ii) New forest protected areas may not be established, and if they are, they will remain mostly as “paper parks”, as authorities have limited ability to invest in effective management of new protected areas, with little ability

to monitor biodiversity or monitor and enforce regulations, leading to ongoing declines in threatened species;

- (iii) Millions of hectares of forest resources in Kazakhstan, including HCVF, are not sustainably managed for biodiversity benefits or other ecosystem services, are continuously degraded by livestock intrusion and unmanaged domestic use, with little expansion in forest coverage as livestock hampers natural regeneration and forest managers have low capacity to carry out reforestation;
- (iv) Tens of thousands of hectares of forest-associated pasturelands, including alpine pasturelands, continue to degrade from over- or under-grazing, as local resource managers do not have capacity or data to effectively implement SLM measures, and there remains no revised Law on Pastures to guide SLM measures; and
- (v) Kazakhstan is only able to implement its national snow leopard and ecosystem conservation plan at a basic level, without comprehensive national monitoring of snow leopards or their prey species, and without effective wildlife trade monitoring and enforcement.

Kazakhstan is making significant baseline investments in these issues, although the baseline efforts are not wholly adequate to address the development challenge. In addition to committing notable national resources, as indicated in the “Partnerships” section of the Prodoc, Kazakhstan is leveraging the support of development partners and other stakeholder organizations to partially take on some of the barriers to sustainable forest and land management, and the conservation of biodiversity in forest landscapes. It is conservatively estimated that the current annual baseline funding (from all sources) for sustainable forest and land management and conservation of biodiversity in Kazakhstan’s forest landscapes amounts to approximately \$50 million USD per year during the life of the project. This is based on the investments from partner organizations, as outlined in the Prodoc, and government baseline investments below.

The **Forest Code** establishes the framework for the protection, restoration and use of forests. Among other improvements, the Forest Code improves the enforcement framework governing forest management. Kazakhstan has set a national target to increase the area under forests to 5.1% by 2020, with about 3.8 million ha of land to be planted. **The 2014-2018 Forestry Development Sub-Program** of the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Agriculture stipulates allocation of budgetary resources (over US\$ 113.4), for forest regeneration, creation and maintenance of protected areas, as well as for promotion of community forest ownership. However, there are non-practical mechanisms in place so far to launch community and private management of forests. With respect to biodiversity management, the government adopted a **strategy for Protected Areas System Expansion until 2030**, which seeks to expand PA coverage by 3% of the territory, up from 8.12% currently. The budget of the program is US\$ 143.5 mln. A new Protected Areas Law regulates PA planning, creation and management of protected areas. Despite financial difficulties, the Government does invest in protected area management and expansion at rates and in volumes higher than average for Central Asia.

The **Fund for Financial Support of Agriculture (FFSA)/DAMU Program** was defined as a most appropriate fund for the project’s activities under the Outcome 2 targeted at demonstration of resource use and management practices that would minimize the impact on the valuable forest ecosystems caused by local communities, agricultural businesses, tourism, hunting, non-timber forest products, and water use. FFSA has been operational in Kazakhstan since 1994 and is one of a few organizations that render microcredit services to residents of rural areas. FFSA focuses on providing and expanding the access of rural businesses and individuals to financial services of the microcredit market. The Fund carries out its activities through its widespread network of representative offices in 14 administrative regions of Kazakhstan, thus covering about 100% of rural territories of the country. FFSA has successfully implemented the micro-credit program for support of rural communities in variety of livelihood activities. The loan portfolio of FFSA as of January 2017 is 82.6 billion KZT. In 2016 the loan portfolio increased by 120%. Number of active borrowers is 36,600 people. In 2016, the Fund issued 11,000 loans totaling 35 billion KZT. The project will work with “Eco-Damu” Program of the FFSA offering the lowest interest rate 4% with the average in Kazakhstan – 14-20%. The program goal is to fund the alternative types of activities and implementation of sustainable methods of agriculture, forestry, fishery and hunting within the area of 50 km around the protected areas. The program will last until 2024 under the Agreement between UNDP-GEF portfolio and the Ministry of Agriculture.

*A.1.3) the proposed alternative scenario, GEF focal area strategies, with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project:*

Section III “Strategy” and Section IV.i. “Expected Results” of the UNDP PRODOC has been improved in response to STAP and German Council comments. These improvements are briefly summarized as follows:

The strategic context for this GEF-funded project is provided by multiple ongoing policy initiatives and priorities in Kazakhstan: (i) the expansion of the national protected area system to increase PA coverage to the stated international target objective of at least 10% of national territory; (ii) the current existing political will to undertake a national forest sector reform process; (iii) ongoing national efforts to revise the Law on Pastures, including SLM elements; and Kazakhstan’s support for the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program, including Kazakhstan’s own National Strategy for Snow Leopard Conservation, which includes the Zhongar Alatau and North-Central Tien Shan (targeted by this project) as national priority snow leopard landscapes.

The ‘alternative scenario’ that the project seeks to contribute to is characterized by: (i) preventing the further fragmentation of key biodiversity landscapes and degradation of forest and land resources in Kazakhstan that provide critical ecosystem services; (ii) ensuring habitat connectivity across Kazakhstan’s forest and pasture landscape for key species, including snow leopard and prey, and improving the sustainability of pasture and forest use in forest ecosystems; (iii) implementation of snow leopard and prey monitoring and conservation measures, and reduction of direct threats, in Kazakhstan’s snow leopard habitats.

The project is consistent with the objectives of, as well as contributing to the outcomes and outputs of the GEF’s Biodiversity, Land Degradation, and Sustainable Forest Management Focal Area Strategies for the GEF-6 period. For the **Biodiversity Focal Area** the project will contribute to the expected outcomes and indicators as outlined in Table 1 below:

**TABLE 1 PROJECT COMPLIANCE WITH GEF BIODIVERSITY RESULTS FRAMEWORK**

GEF-6 Biodiversity Results Framework			
Objective	Program	Outcome	Indicator (and project contribution to indicator)
<b>BD-1</b> Improve sustainability of protected area systems	<b>Program 1:</b> Improving Financial Sustainability and Effective Management of the National Ecological Infrastructure	<b>Outcome 1.2:</b> Improve management effectiveness of protected areas	<b>Indicator 1.2:</b> Protected area management effectiveness score.  <i>Project contribution to indicator:</i> The project strengthens management effectiveness in 12 key previously existing forest PAs, with a total area of 2.19 million ha, from a METT baseline of an average of 66 to an average of greater than 76, an increase of more than 15%.
	<b>Program 2:</b> Nature's Last Stand: Expanding the reach of the global protected area estate	<b>Outcome 2.1:</b> Increase in area of terrestrial and marine ecosystems of global significance in new protected areas and increase in threatened species of global significance protected in new protected areas.	<b>Indicator 2.1:</b> Area of terrestrial and marine ecosystems and number of threatened species.  <i>Project contribution to indicator:</i> The project supports establishment of multiple new PAs with a total area of 2.53 million ha. The project also creates wildlife corridors and buffer zones at a total area of 350,000 ha, but it is anticipated these will overlap with the forest and pastureland management area (indicator 9.1 below).
		<b>Outcome 2.2:</b> Improved management effectiveness of new protected areas	<b>Indicator 2.2:</b> Protected area management effectiveness score.  <i>Project contribution to indicator:</i> The project strengthens the management of 11 PAs to be established, from an average METT baseline value of 20, to a target average of >48.

For the Land Degradation Focal Area (LD), the project will contribute to the expected outcomes and indicators of LD-3 Program 4 out indicated in Table 2 below:

**TABLE 2 PROJECT COMPLIANCE WITH GEF LD RESULTS FRAMEWORK**

GEF-6 Land Degradation Results Framework			
Objective	Program	Outcome	Indicator (and project contribution to indicator)
<b>LD-3 Integrated Landscapes:</b> Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape	<b>Program 4:</b> Scaling-up sustainable land management through the landscape approach	<b>Outcome 3.2:</b> Integrated landscape management practices adopted by local communities based on gender sensitive needs	<p><b>Indicator 3.2:</b> Application of integrated natural resource management (INRM) practices in wider landscapes.</p> <p><i>Project contribution to indicator:</i> As a <u>direct</u> impact, the project will integrate and implement SLM practices in pasture management plans for 720,000 ha of pasturelands bordering PAs (including 73,000 ha of degraded pasturelands) in six target communities. The project is also supporting the implementation of sustainable grazing practices in 1,175,700 hectares of national forestry lands in 6 leskhozoes ("forest management units") that are not covered by actual trees (i.e. "forest pasture" lands). As an <u>indirect</u> impact, the project will ensure adoption of ecologically sound land and natural resource management practices in territorial development of six districts with a total area of 2.51 million ha.</p>

For the Sustainable Forest Management Focal Area (SFM), the project will contribute to the expected outcomes and indicators of SFM-1 and SFM-2 as indicated in Table 3 below:

**TABLE 3 PROJECT COMPLIANCE WITH GEF SFM RESULTS FRAMEWORK**

GEF-6 Sustainable Forest Management Results Framework			
Objective	Program	Outcome	Indicator (and project contribution to indicator)
<b>SFM-1 Maintained Forest Resources:</b> Reduce the pressures on high conservation value forests by addressing the drivers of deforestation.	<b>Program 2:</b> Identification and maintenance of high conservation value forests.	<b>Outcome 1:</b> Cross-sector policy and planning approaches at appropriate governance scales, avoid loss of high conservation value forests	<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> Area of high conservation value forest identified and maintained.</p> <p><i>Project contribution to indicator:</i> 1.90 million ha of HCVF are identified and maintained.</p>
<b>SFM-2: Enhanced Forest Management:</b> Maintain flows of forest ecosystem services and improve resilience to climate change through SFM.	<b>Program 5:</b> Capacity development for SFM within local communities.	<b>Outcome 3:</b> Increased application of good management practices in all forests by relevant government, local community (both women and men) and private sector actors.	<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> Area of sustainably managed forest, stratified by forest management actors.</p> <p><i>Project contribution to indicator:</i> 1.18 million ha of six leskhozoes' forests are under SFM and joint forest management arrangements.</p>

The project's theory-of-change (TOC) draws on long-standing foundational approaches to biodiversity conservation and natural resource management, while combining these approaches in new and innovative ways. The project's overall strategy is underpinned by three main theories-of-change, which have been combined to target the effective conservation and sustainable use of forest ecosystems and associated pastures in Kazakhstan. The first main theory-of-change relies on the idea of protected areas as core conservation zones for biodiversity, including rare species and valuable ecosystems. The project will be working to establish new protected areas that encompass forest and pasture

ecosystems, and to strengthen the functioning of existing protected areas. The new protected territory will cover critical biodiversity habitats totaling 2.5 million hectares. Protected areas can vary in the degree of conservation approaches applied within their boundaries, and the new and expanded protected areas targeted by the project are expected to range from IUCN category Ia to VI. Once the new PAs are established the project will invest in getting them set up and operational, with the development of appropriate management plans, and the strengthening of management capacity (depending on the timing of the establishment of new PAs during the project's life). To improve the functioning of existing forest PAs, the project must also improve management effectiveness of the PAs through capacity development. This includes the development of high-conservation value forest specific management measures, and the implementation of these measures. This also includes the training of staff, investments in equipment necessary for functioning of the PAs, and the development (and adoption) of additional regulations and legal approaches to facilitate the reduction of threats; for example, it is necessary to develop new regulatory approaches to address the need for active management of invasive species in core conservation zones. In addition, the project will work closely with neighboring communities and stakeholders, to ensure PA management measures are appropriate and reflect nearby resource-user considerations and partnerships.

The second theory-of-change applied by the project is based on the recognition that as critical as protected areas are, they are not a complete solution for the effective conservation of biodiversity. The project plans to implement this theory of change through multiple strategic approaches. The project will support the development of sustainable forest and pasture management plans for HCVF and associated pastures in areas surrounding PAs. The project will work with forest management units ("leskhozoes") to develop forest management plans that reflect HCVF management principles. In addition, the project will work with leskhozoes and pasture resource users to develop sustainable pasture management plans for forest pastures. These forest-pasture ecosystems surrounding PAs will help serve as PA buffer zones, as they will apply management approaches that take biodiversity conservation requirements into consideration; for example, nesting or calving sites within the landscape may receive special seasonal protections. Part of this work will include strengthening the capacity of forest and pasture managers through training and technical investments to ensure they are able to implement the sustainable resource management plans. Key threats to the sustainability of forest management include fires and unregulated tourism, and therefore these issues will receive special consideration under the project to ensure appropriate management measures are developed and implemented, such as raising awareness of tourists about the importance of fire safety, and of using designated tourism infrastructure.

The project will also take a landscape-scale approach through integrated resource management and planning at the district level. The project will work with six districts that have forest PAs within their territories to develop land-use plans that recognize PA buffer zones and corridors between PAs. While the project will be working with individual districts on this activity, the project is in-fact applying a landscape conservation approach, as the six districts to be involved have been strategically chosen to form a contiguous reach of territory stretching nearly 1000 km from the southeast corner of Almaty Province to the shores of Lake Balkhash in the northwest of this province.

To facilitate improved forest and pasture management on the ground the project will also work to strengthen the national institutional and regulatory framework for forest management in Kazakhstan. While much of the project's work will be at the site-level on the ground, sustainable forest management approaches must necessarily be supported and guided by strategic policy and regulation from above. Therefore, in order to support the implementation of HCVF management measures in individual forest units, the project will also work with the Forestry and Wildlife Committee to improve the institutional oversight structure of leskhozoes, and develop policies that recognize and support HCVF management approaches. The project will also apply a strategic approach of developing incentive based partnerships for reforestation and afforestation<sup>9</sup>, as it is government policy to increase the forest coverage within the country by 2030.

To further develop and strengthen the theory of change for improved natural resource management in the wider landscape, the project plans to pilot an innovative approach for identifying and applying cost-benefit analysis that integrates ecological considerations. This is the Targeted Scenario Analysis (TSA) approach developed by UNDP environmental economists in collaboration with other partners. This approach works to analyze the ecological as well as economic costs of certain natural resource management decisions, thereby providing decision makers with improved information and insights. The mechanism for change in this activity is that if environmental externalities are fully accounted for in natural resource management decision-making then this will lead to improved environmental

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<sup>9</sup> Afforestation will only be financed through partner co-financing, with no use of GEF funds.

outcomes. In the case of this project, the TSA pilots will focus specifically on natural resource management approaches that directly impact biodiversity and forest management.

The third theory-of-change approach relates to coordination and knowledge management for biodiversity conservation activities. This approach is based on the fact that biodiversity outcomes are improved if, a.) stakeholders have quality scientific information to base management decisions on; and b.) if conservation efforts are coordinated among stakeholders. Therefore the project will carry out a number of strategic activities under the third component to improve the quality of biodiversity monitoring information, in particular in relation to monitoring of snow leopard populations, their prey, and their habitats. In addition the project will carry out knowledge management activities to disseminate and share biodiversity monitoring information. The project also plans a set of education and awareness raising activities to further engage stakeholders in conservation activities, and improve coordination among stakeholders. The project will also coordinate actors in relation to wildlife law enforcement; there are a wide range of government organizations and institutions involved in various aspects of wildlife law enforcement, and to ensure the effectiveness of enforcement activities these partners must operate in a complementary and synchronized manner. Finally, the project will coordinate among neighboring countries in relation to snow leopard conservation, particularly with respect to snow leopard monitoring. This is critical since snow leopards, and their prey, have large home ranges that can extend across international borders. Therefore to fully understand and manage these wildlife populations it is necessary to neighboring range states to share monitoring data and other information important for effective management.

The project objective is to improve conservation status and management of key forest and associated grassland, riparian and arid ecosystems important for conservation of biodiversity, land resources and provision of livelihoods for local communities. The project also seeks to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, to the extent relevant and feasible within the scope of the project. In order to achieve the project objective, and address the barriers, the project's intervention has been organized into three components:

- Component 1: Improved representation of globally important forest biodiversity and improved management of protected conservation-important forests.
- Component 2: Better integration of forest PAs in wider landscape, including enabling environment for sustainable management of conservation-important ecosystems.
- Component 3: International cooperation and knowledge management.

On the ground the project will work in regions with key areas of Kazakhstan with alpine forest, tugai forest, and saxaul forest ecosystems. These ecosystems (and particularly alpine ecosystems, the main habitat of the snow leopard) are encompassed in the three administrative regions targeted by the project: East Kazakhstan Province (Altai and Saur-Tarbagatai mountain zones); Almaty Province (Zhongar Alatau, North and Central Tien Shan mountains, Charyn and Ile river and Ile-Balkhash delta floodplain forests, and associated saxaul ecosystems); and South Kazakhstan Province (West Tien Shan mountain ecosystems, and Syr Darya river floodplain forests, and associated saxaul ecosystems).

Institutionally the project will work with 11 newly planned PAs, 12 existing PAs, 10 forestry units, 12 rural districts, 4 villages, and 6 districts of Almaty region for landscape planning output. The project works at both the national level and at the site level, at multiple planned demonstration sites.

Section IV.i Expected Results of the UNDP PRODOC more fully details the full suite of project outcomes, outputs and activities, as well as the specific implementation arrangements for the outputs and activities.

Annex B to this CEO Endorsement Request document summarizes the adjustments made to the strategic focus of the components and the changes made based on the STAP and GEF Council comments. Table 4 below summarizes changes to the project framework organization in terms of changes to the proposed project outputs, and the rationale for these changes (relative to the outputs initially planned in the PIF).

**TABLE 4 ADJUSTMENTS TO PROJECT FRAMEWORK**

Components	Original outputs in the PIF	Changes made to outputs at GEF CEO ER stage <sup>10</sup>	Rationale for changes to outputs
<b>Component 1 (Outputs)</b>	Output 1.1.1. Ecosystems with globally important biodiversity and valuable SLM functions (Saxaul, Tugai, and Mountain forests and grasslands) put under effective protection: - PAs established, with zoning arrangements, management and business plans for financial sustainability	Revised Output 1.1.1 Protection regimes approved for globally important forest ecosystems (saxaul, floodplain forest, and mountain forest), and their associated SLM and biodiversity ecosystem services, in cooperation with local communities  New Output 1.1.2 Newly established forest PAs are operationalized with improved management effectiveness, including community management mechanisms.	No strategic change; wording revised to clarify and emphasize the focus on establishment of new PAs with community-based inputs. Also, the former single output 1.1.1 was split into two operational steps, now output 1.1.1 and 1.1.2. The previous Output 1.1.1 was split into two outputs for ease of planning and project management purposes, since the process of establishing PAs is significantly different than the process of operationalizing them once they are established. This operational distinction will also help improve the efficiency of project budget planning.
	Output 1.1.2. Forest management plans within the PAs (total area 812,000 ha) designed and put under effective implementation following the standards of managing of High Conservation Value Forests <sup>2</sup> and testing community co-management model designed under Component II (further details are in the text subject to detailed planning at the PPG stage).	Revised Output 1.2.1. Development and implementation of forest-specific management measures in PA management plans for PAs.	No strategic change; wording revised for clarity. The output was shifted to being a full new output within Component 1 (As Output 1.2) for logical and organizational clarity, to separate the project activities of establishing protected areas from the project activities of supporting effective management of HCVF within protected areas.
	Output 1.1.3. Integrated land and forest management plans developed and are under implementation at six administrative districts surrounding the newly established PAs (are of districts is app. 4 mln ha) in land areas heavily exposed to land and forest degradation: - Full biodiversity, soil and landscape diversity inventories, biodiversity-important forests identified and mapped, forest management plans updated with inclusion of biodiversity-and soil conservation requirements; [1] [SEP] - Areas of potential conflict between biodiversity, SLM	Revised Output 2.1.4. Integrated land and forest management plans developed and implemented in six administrative districts through community consultation, surrounding newly established PAs, including designation of buffer zones and corridors.  Revised Output 2.1.1. Revision and implementation of forest management and monitoring standards and processes and for 8 forestry units bordering forest PAs, including community input mechanisms.  Revised Output 2.1.2. Forest pasture management plans developed and implemented with local community engagement.	No strategic change; this output was re-organized in the project framework to be under Component 2 to support the strategic distinction between the project's activities within PA boundaries (Component 1) vs. within the wider landscape beyond PA boundaries (Component 2). In addition, for improved planning and simplification the original output was split into its individual parts, while the linkages between these activities remain: - Integrated land and forest management planning in six administrative districts (revised output 2.1.4) - Sustainable forest management planning developed and

<sup>10</sup> Note that the format of output numbering has changed due to differences in document template formats and standard project activity planning approaches during different phases of the UNDP-GEF project development cycle.

Components	Original outputs in the PIF	Changes made to outputs at GEF CEO ER stage <sup>10</sup>	Rationale for changes to outputs
	<p>and production activities identified; <sup>[1]</sup><sub>SEP</sub></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Species and habitat maintenance plans for buffer areas and corridors developed; <sup>[1]</sup><sub>SEP</sub></li> <li>- Land and forest management plans finalized, adopted by communities and Government, and set for implementation / enforcement.</li> </ul>		<p>implemented in areas surrounding PAs to support buffer zones and corridors (revised output 2.1.1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainable pasture management planning developed and implemented in areas surrounding PAs to support buffer zones and corridors (revised output 2.1.2).</li> </ul>
	Output 1.1.4 Community based sustainable hunting scheme piloted in at least one district (subject to feasibility assessment at PPG). <sup>[1]</sup> <sub>SEP</sub>	Output 2.1.6. Hunting regulations developed to fully incorporate biodiversity considerations and economic benefits to local communities, and implemented with strengthened monitoring and enforcement capacity.	The output was re-organized under Component 2, which is the part of the project that focuses on the wider landscape outside the boundaries of protected areas. Based on the feasibility assessment conducted during the project development phase (also see comments related to this issue in the previous table), the strategic focus of this output was shifted to focus on education, awareness, and enforcement of existing hunting regulations.
<b>Component 2 (Outputs)</b>	Output 2.1.1 Methodology and guidance for the integrated economic and environmental valuation of mountain forests and grasslands, Tugai and Saxaul forest ecosystems, are in place and integrated in national budget planning. Based on Targeted Scenario analysis.	Output 2.3.1. Integrated economic and environmental resource management optimization assessments (Targeted Scenario Analysis (TSA)) demonstrated in three resource-management scenarios for improved conditions of mountain forests and grasslands, tugai and saxaul forest ecosystems.	No strategic change; output wording revised for clarity.
	Output 2.1.2 The Results of the TSA are integrated in forest management plans of 3 types of conservation important ecosystems (mountain forests and grasslands, Tugai, and Saxaul).	Integrated as part of Output 2.3.1 above.	This output forms part of the logical process and sequence of activities related to piloting and completing the TSA assessments. Based on the results of the TSA exercises, the resource management plans for the resources targeted will be revised to reflect the results of the TSA. This is all part of one set of activities under the revised output 2.3.1. For example, if the TSA is conducted for the water management regime of the Moinak hydropower facility, then following the TSA the water management regime will be adjusted to reflect the conclusions of the TSA.

Components	Original outputs in the PIF	Changes made to outputs at GEF CEO ER stage <sup>10</sup>	Rationale for changes to outputs
	Output 2.1.3 TSA is integrated into capacity development and professional training courses.	Output 2.3.3. TSA is integrated into capacity development and professional training courses.	No change.
	Output 2.1.4 Based on results of TSA, SFM and SLM principles, criteria, & indicators for each key ecosystem type in Kazakhstan are designed, based on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Task forces for key types of conservation-important ecosystems in Kazakhstan;</li> <li>- Data collection and analysis system, methodological, and technical standards, standards on monitoring of conservation-important ecosystems.</li> </ul>	Output 2.3.2. Methodology and guidance for TSAs related to mountain forests and grasslands, tugai and saxaul forest ecosystems, are integrated in Kazakh legal context.	No strategic change; output wording revised for clarity.
	Output 2.1.5 Tourism loads and hunting practices and policies reviewed to release pressure on species and allow for sustainable community-based hunting (subject to feasibility analysis at PPG).	Revised Output 2.1.5 Tourism management strategies developed for forest PAs in cooperation with local communities, strategies integrated in PA management plans under implementation.	The original output 2.1.5 overlapped conceptually with original output 1.1.4. Therefore the hunting focus of these outputs was separated as the new output 2.1.6 (discussed in this table above, in relation to original output 1.1.4). Therefore the original output 2.1.5 was revised as an output focused on reducing threats to PAs from tourism (fire, ecosystem degradation, waste management), and was revised to be conceptually more clear and distinct from the issue related to sustainable hunting.
	Output 2.2.2. Enabling environment for community engagement into forest and grassland ecosystem restoration and sustainable management through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participatory consultations between communities, private sector and state on: reforming land tenure, improved pasture management, assessing demand for developing timber and non-timber forest product markets, achieving equitable revenue sharing; forest and husbandry subsidies, taxation and revenue collection systems, resulting in reformulation / adoption of new policies and</li> </ul>	Revised Output 2.2.1. Review of and modifications to existing forest governance system to ensure that the HCVF managed by 123 forestry entities (12,652,000 ha) are covered by policy objectives to be managed as an integral component of the national ecological network (IUCN VI PA category managed resource protected area).  Revised Output 2.2.2. HCVF standards, tools, and practices are integrated into national forest management guidelines and regulations to improve the management effectiveness of HCVF  Revised Output 2.2.3. Training	The original outputs 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 combined multiple aspects related to these issues, and these have been conceptually separated into more specific and concrete outputs. Under the newly organized approach, activities under overall Outcome 2.1 (Outputs 2.1.1 to 2.1.6) relate to practical field-based activities, site-based management planning, and implementation of sustainable forest and land management plans. Activities under overall Outcome 2.2 (Outputs 2.2.1 to 2.2.5) relate to strengthening the enabling environment and institutional framework to support improved efficiency and effectiveness of forest management, and facilitate

Components	Original outputs in the PIF	Changes made to outputs at GEF CEO ER stage <sup>10</sup>	Rationale for changes to outputs
	<p>removal of institutional barriers that restrain or discourage private sector and community engagement in SLM and SFM, [SEP]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensuring relevant training and skills development and research for the forestry [SEP] sector professionals and local communities.</li> </ul>	<p>program and improved forest research and data analysis capacities to support implementation and uptake of HC VF management approaches.</p> <p>Revised Output 2.2.4. Based on afforestation pilot activities, relevant by-laws and amendments to the existing legislation are developed and approved.</p> <p>Revised Output 2.2.5. Technical and information base for the private afforestation is set up and accessible by potential interested groups and individuals</p>	<p>scaling-up of the pilot activities under Outcome 2.1.</p> <p>The project's scope of work in relation to the original output 2.2.2 has not significantly changed, but the work has been split out between work required at the national level in relation to the enabling environment for sustainable management of HC VFs, and work required at the ground level in relation to management planning and implementation of management plans for individual forest management units.</p>
	<p>Output 2.2.3. Incentive-based Forest Ecosystem Management Partnership implemented in 3 districts neighboring to PAs (area of 80,000 ha) 4 between authorities and local communities defining the principles of community forest management and sustainable forest resource use regimes (limitations of cattle grazing in forests important for prevention of lands slides, forest terracing in mud slide prone areas; timing, mode and limits of timber and non-timber forest resource withdrawal, medicinal plant collection protocols and limits, forest patrolling, species-focused forest management activities, change of timing of vehicle and human passage, promotion of mosaic reforestation, involvement of communities in sustainable Saxaul forest management). Communities and foresters trained in maintaining and enforcing the protection regimes at these areas, and assistance delivered to trigger the implementation and monitoring of the scheme.</p>	<p>Revised Output 2.1.3. Incentive-based Forest Ecosystem Management Partnership: Four models of afforestation investments are designed and tested within different ownership patterns, including local community engagement.</p> <p>Revised Output 2.2.4. Based on afforestation pilot activities, relevant by-laws and amendments to the existing legislation are developed and approved.</p> <p>Revised Output 2.2.5. Technical and information base for the private afforestation is set up and accessible by potential interested groups and individuals</p> <p>Revised Output 2.1.1. Revision and implementation of forest management and monitoring standards and processes and for 8 forestry units bordering forest PAs, including community input mechanisms.</p> <p>Revised Output 2.1.2. Forest pasture management plans developed and implemented with local community engagement.</p> <p>Revised Output 2.2.3. Training program and improved forest research and data analysis capacities to support implementation and uptake of</p>	<p>The original output was conceptually very broad, covering a wide range of issues related to sustainable forest management, and piloting of new approaches. This output has been broken down to focus on its individual components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Revised Output 2.1.3 focuses on the incentive-based forest ecosystem management partnership, which will pilot new public-private models for afforestation and forest management, including community-based management models.</li> <li>- Revised Output 2.1.1. addresses the sustainable management of forest resources in state forestlands bordering PAs, including community co-management mechanisms.</li> <li>- Revised Output 2.1.2. addresses the sustainable management of forest pastures in state forest lands</li> <li>- Revised Output 2.2.3 focuses on the capacity development aspect necessary for the successful and sustained implementation of sustainable forest and land management practices</li> </ul>

Components	Original outputs in the PIF	Changes made to outputs at GEF CEO ER stage <sup>10</sup>	Rationale for changes to outputs
		HCVF management approaches.	
<b>Component 3 (Outputs)</b>	Output 3.1.1. Enhanced enforcement capacities of wildlife protection agencies through: (i) improved effectiveness of monitoring, apprehending, and prosecution of illegal activities; (ii) training materials developed and rolled out for wildlife protection agencies.	Output 3.1.1. Enhanced enforcement capacities of wildlife protection agencies	No change. Wording shortened in Prodoc from PIF for clarity; the ways in which this will be done are clear in the activities under the output in the Prodoc.
	<i>Note: In the PIF there was an output numbering error, and there was no output numbered 3.1.2 in the PIF.</i>	Output 3.1.2 Implementation of Kazakhstan's National Snow Leopard Ecosystem Conservation Plan Through Development of Integrated Landscape Planning in National Priority Snow Leopard Landscapes	This output was added based on STAP and GEF Council comments encouraging stronger linkages between the snow leopard conservation focus of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> component with the project's focus on forest and forest-pastures in Components 1 and 2. Including this output will allow the project to work on developing integrated snow leopard landscape management plans that draw together elements of the first two project components. Under this output, integrated snow leopard landscape management plans will be developed for two national priority landscapes of over 1,000,000 hectares (the Zhongar Alatau, and the North-Central Tien Shan). These snow leopard landscape conservation plans will link together the elements of PAs and biodiversity-friendly forest and pasture management in the wider landscape. In addition this output will provide a stronger linkage to the international snow leopard conservation efforts under GSLEP, which has the objective of securing 20 snow leopard landscapes by 2020.
	Output 3.1.3. System for long-term regular monitoring of Snow Leopard in Kazakhstan put in place applying internationally certified quality standards (GIS-based).	Output 3.1.3. System for long-term regular monitoring of snow leopard in Kazakhstan put in place applying internationally certified quality standards (GIS-based), including transboundary monitoring arrangements with key neighboring countries.	No change. Wording slightly expanded for clarity.
	Output 3.1.4 A set of activities (in line with STAP comments) on knowledge management and sharing.	Output 3.1.4 Knowledge products disseminated and education and awareness activities completed to enhance understanding of natural	No change. Output activities developed in-line with STAP comments on knowledge management and learning.

Components	Original outputs in the PIF	Changes made to outputs at GEF CEO ER stage <sup>10</sup>	Rationale for changes to outputs
		resource managers and communities about SFM, SLM, and biodiversity conservation	

*A.1.4) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTE, LDCF, SCCF, CBIT and co-financing:*

and

*A.1.5) global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF):*

Section III “Strategy” of the UNDP PRODOC has been significantly improved in response to STAP and GEF Council comments. These improvements are briefly summarized as follows:

Without the GEF investment in the proposed project, the ‘business-as-usual scenario’ for the conservation biodiversity (including snow leopards and their prey species), and the sustainable management of forest and land resources is one where:

- (i) The Kazakhstan’s forest and forest-pasture landscape will not be managed as an integrated whole, as management approaches will remain uncoordinated and un-cohesive, without buffer zones, wildlife migration corridors, HCVPs and other high-biodiversity value landscape elements identified and managed appropriately;
- (ii) Newly established forest protected areas in Kazakhstan remain mostly as “paper parks”, as authorities have low capacity to effectively manage established protected areas, with little ability to monitor biodiversity or monitor and enforce regulations, leading to ongoing declines in threatened species;
- (iii) Hundreds of thousands of forest resources in Kazakhstan, including HCVP, are not sustainably managed for biodiversity benefits or other ecosystem services, are continuously degraded by livestock intrusion and unmanaged domestic use, with little expansion in forest coverage as livestock hampers natural regeneration and forest managers have low capacity to carry out reforestation;
- (iv) Hundreds of thousands of pasturelands in South Kazakhstan Province, Almaty Province, and East Kazakhstan Province, including alpine pasturelands, continue to degrade from over- or under-grazing, as local pasture users do not have capacity or data to effectively implement SLM measures in accordance with the Law on Pastures; and
- (v) Kazakhstan is only able to implement its national snow leopard and ecosystem conservation plan at a basic level, without comprehensive national monitoring of snow leopards or their prey species, and without effective wildlife trade monitoring and enforcement.

The ‘alternative scenario’ that the project seeks to contribute to is characterized by: (i) preventing the further fragmentation of key biodiversity landscapes and degradation of forest and land resources in Kazakhstan that provide critical ecosystem services; (ii) ensuring habitat connectivity across Kazakhstan’s forest landscapes for key species, including snow leopard and prey; (iii) improving the conservation status, and sustainability of pasture and forest use in mountain ecosystems; (iv) implementation of snow leopard and prey monitoring and conservation measures, and reduction of direct threats, in the Zhonghar Alatau and North-Central Tien Shan priority snow leopard conservation landscapes.

The total cost of investment in the project is estimated at \$ \$94,864,854 USD of which \$8,069,178 USD constitutes grant funding from GEF and \$86,795,676 USD comprises co-financing from national government (FWC and Institute of Zoology), regional governments (Almaty Province and East Kazakhstan), UNDP, and NGOs (ACBK and WWF).

The incremental value of the alternative scenario is summarized in Table 5 below:

**TABLE 5 SUMMARY OF THE ALTERNATIVE SCENARIO**

Summary of baseline scenario	Summary of GEF scenario	Increment
<b>Biodiversity</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outdated PA management plans, no business planning paradigm within the PA management planning process.</li> <li>- Under-represented tugai and saxaul ecosystems in the PA estate</li> <li>- Snow leopard habitat coverage by PA estate is 40%. While forest conservation remains a government priority, the mosaic (forest-pasture) areas important for the passage and feeding of the snow leopard in three landscapes (Tien Shan, Zhungar Alatau, and Altay) will not get sufficient protection.</li> <li>- Wildlife data collection from stakeholders (PA, hunting areas, community members) remains dispersed, uncoordinated, and thus, inaccurate, unreliable, and misinterpreted.</li> <li>- Suboptimal patrolling practices. Patrol planning is not based on spatial analysis of threats, risks, and monitoring data and does not use common information management system. There is no technical capacity within the valuable landscapes to implement efficient patrolling and law enforcement.</li> <li>- While green economy promoted as a national development concept, the use of payment for ecosystem service transactions is unfamiliar in practice; no science-based guidance on ecosystem services quantification and economic valuation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Up to date PA estate with modern management and business plans engagement communities and private sector with benefits for ecosystems and local development</li> <li>- Increasing the representation of tugai, saxaul ecosystems</li> <li>- Increasing representation of snow leopard habitat within the PA estate ensuring protection not only for forests but also grassland areas among the forests important for snow leopard ecology.</li> <li>- Landscape plans of administrative districts targeted by the project are in line with ecological requirements.</li> <li>- Ecosystem services valued and partnerships with private sector and communities tested at conservation-important forests</li> <li>- Revised hunting and tourism policies remove disturbance and hunting pressure on snow leopard and its prey.</li> <li>- Improved capacities of research institutions, PAs and hunters will enable a long term data flow from Kazakhstan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New protected areas at Key Biodiversity Areas, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Mountain forests and grasslands: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Southwest slope of Zhetysu Alatau – 805,074 ha</li> <li>▪ North-Central Tien Shan – 529,196 ha</li> <li>▪ Kyrgyz range – 88,554 ha</li> <li>▪ West Tian Shan – 19,700 ha</li> <li>▪ Saur-Tarbagatai – 475,710 ha</li> </ul> </li> <li>o Increased PA coverage of national priority snow leopard habitat of 1,087,000 ha - increasing PA coverage of priority snow leopard habitats from 40% to 89%.</li> <li>o Tugai/riparian forest and floodplain ecosystems in Ile river basin (612,848 ha), including saxaul shrub and desert ecosystems in Balkhash Lake region</li> </ul> </li> <li>- For snow leopard, this includes most important northern transboundary habitats of the snow leopard that will enable populations mixing and viability in the international context.</li> <li>- Removal of threats (73,000 ha of degraded pastureland, 11,306 ha of degraded forestland, poaching), and better protection of globally threatened species listed in IUCN Red Data List: snow leopard, argali, goitered gazelle. Improved capacities of stage agencies for anti-poaching and anti-trafficking performance.</li> <li>- Illegal trade in snow leopard products strictly controlled using best international surveillance, information and enforcement approaches</li> <li>- The project results contribute to CBD PoWPA (expansion of PAs, integration of PAs in wider landscapes, and community engagement schemes) and Aichi Targets</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainable Land Management</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Grazing in mountain pastures in snow leopard habitat exceeding carrying capacity by 1.5 times resulting in erosion, mudslides, and worsening of water quality</li> <li>- Land use planning (large infrastructure placement, tourism overloads, hunting practices)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integrated land use plans developed and launched in four mountain regions</li> <li>- Shift to sustainable pasture management in mountainous areas promoted: rotational</li> </ul>	<p>Competitive pressures between land uses in alpine, tugai and saxaul forest pasture reduced in 1.90 million ha (720,000 ha of community forest-pasture lands, and 1,175,700 ha of forest-pastures in state forest lands):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Decrease in grazing pressure and improved condition of mountain meadow ecosystems</li> <li>- Reduced infringement of cattle on forests</li> </ul>

Summary of baseline scenario	Summary of GEF scenario	Increment
follows the short-term economic imperative threatening the resilience of soil and vegetation stability in the long term, which not only undermined the ecology of Snow Leopard but jeopardizes local development in the long term.	grazing; pasture watering to stimulate grasses for vigorous growth and healthy root systems through pasture watering water supply points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduced human-wildlife conflict</li> <li>- Improved vegetation cover, fodder productivity and pasture regeneration</li> <li>- Increased incidence of SLM approaches applied by small-scale holders leading to soil and vegetation quality improvements</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainable Forest Management</b>		
<p>Within each of the three forest ecosystems targeted by the project (tugai, saxaul, alpine mountains), forests play a key role and cover significant areas (indicated in Section A.1.1). At the same time, the unique nature of these ecosystems is that forest biotopes closely interact with non-forest biotopes (e.g. in the case of tugai there is close relationship between forests and the water regimes of river channels and floodplain meadows; in the case of saxaul – between pastureland and forests; in the case of alpine mountains – between forests and alpine grasslands). Conservation and sustainable management activities, therefore, may not focused solely either on biodiversity, or land degradation or forestry; rather a set of similar interventions designed by the project (i.e. the protected area establishment, the territorial land use planning and implementation, the support to incentives for communities in sustainable forest and land management, etc.) target the ecosystems as a whole and synergistically produce biodiversity, SLM and SFM benefits.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Highly centralized forest planning and management</li> <li>- No incentives for engagement of local communities and private sector in SFM</li> <li>- Share of private sector/local community engagement in forest regeneration, forest management, agroforestry, is close to zero.</li> <li>- Forest values are assessed exclusively from the perspective of timber value</li> <li>- Forest management plans make no provisions for the special management / conservation needs of Mountain, Saxaul and Tugai forests</li> <li>- No management standards in place and no training of forestry professionals in the area of valuation and sustaining of ecosystem functions of conservation important forests</li> <li>- Outdated and ineffective methods for assisted regeneration of certain forests types with low regeneration capacity (e.g. Tian Shan Spruce)</li> <li>- Continued loss of valuable mountain, saxaul and tugai forest ecosystems</li> <li>- Low share of forests in the Protected Area estate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Policies and regulations in place for increased efficiency and effectiveness of forest management, and engagement of private sector and communities in SFM</li> <li>- Forest valuation in national economic statistics and forest budget planning takes into account the ecosystem functions of conservation important forests</li> <li>- Forest management planning routine incorporates HCVF principles and forestry professionals are trained to apply it</li> <li>- Improved forest monitoring and research enables faster regeneration of conservation important forests with low natural regeneration rates (spruce forests)</li> <li>- Decreased loss of saxaul, tugai and mountain forests at target areas</li> <li>- Increased representation of forests in the protected area estate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SFM-1: Maintaining positive status and reduced pressure on conservation-important forests on 1,899,134 ha (through Output 1.1.2 and Output 1.2.1): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o 1,316,318 ha of mountain forests</li> <li>o 582,816 tugai and saxaul forests</li> </ul> </li> <li>- SFM-2: Maintained flow of forest ecosystem services and improved resilience to climate change at 1,174,500 ha of forests outside protected areas.</li> <li>- Integrated economic and environmental valuation of forests and SFM criteria and indicators embedded in national forest investment policies and subsidies in the forestry sector.</li> <li>- Share of investment of the private sector and communities in SFM is at least 12% by year 5 of the project at the target areas</li> <li>- Increase of forests in protected area system from 5.75% to 7%</li> <li>- Protected Area system is expanded by inclusion of 1,284,286 ha of conservation important forests</li> <li>- Reduced soil erosion under 1.01 mln ha under saxaul forests in Balkhash Lake region</li> <li>- Carbon benefits: avoidance of emissions in the equivalent of 5,838,328 resulting from sustainable forest management and grassland management. Using FAO EX-ACT calculator, using current rates of forest and and grassland degradation as baseline assumptions (FAO EX-ACT file available separately).</li> </ul>

*A.1.6) innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up:*

Innovativeness: The project has multiple innovative elements. The concept of HCVF is not currently applied in Kazakhstan, and therefore the introduction and implementation of this management approach for forests in Kazakhstan will be innovative at the national level. The project strategy is forward looking in that it seeks to apply a fully integrated landscape management approach to address the interdependent and complementary issues of biodiversity conservation, sustainable forest management, and sustainable land management. The fact that the project will focus on these three integrated environmental issues will allow the project to actually carry out on-the-ground activities in an integrated manner, rather than as separate and disparate activities. Through the Incentive-based Ecosystem Management Partnership this project is promoting engagement of communities and particularly the private sector in sustainable management and restoration of ecosystems important for their biodiversity and land integrity functions. Furthermore, this project is the first in the region that will promote full valuation of mountain, tugai and saxaul ecosystem services, and integration of the ecological values into the economic land use decision-making. In addition, with respect to biodiversity monitoring, including snow leopard and prey monitoring, the project expects to apply the latest and most current technological approaches available, including camera traps, GPS tracking, DNA analysis, and other similar technologies. A standardized monitoring approach that would be compatible with research, monitoring and surveillance standards in the neighboring countries will enable a full picture on the status of snow leopard and quick and effective action taken to remove or avoid threats to it, paving the way to the stability of the species, not only in Kazakhstan but throughout its range.

Sustainability and potential for scaling-up: The implementation of the regulatory and policy activities piloted under Component II will be carried out beyond the project with funding from the FWC, as the SLM and SFM practices will by then be built into the routine system of management planning for mountain, tugai and saxaul ecosystems. The expanded PA estate (Component I), with updated management and business plans, will be fully supported by state PA budget after project closure; the business plans will expand the budget income from non-government sources that thus make PAs less dependent on government financing (this element will be measured through the METT section on budget management of the targeted PAs). The post-project implementation of the adjusted six land use plans (Output 2.1.4) will be vested with the responsibility of local authorities and relevant communities, who will receive the training support and technical assistance through the project. The training across all the components will be institutionalized in the professional development programs of the FWC, as appropriate. For example, the professional forestry training programs under the FWC will integrate the training inputs from the project. The database under Output 2.2.5 will be monitored and maintained by the relevant department of the FWC, and the snow leopard monitoring database under Output 3.1.3 will be maintained by the Institute of Zoology.

Scaling-up of the project results will be ensured by the vocational training activities incorporated in Component I and Component II. Component III will further contribute to replication and dissemination of project results, by resolving the threats to snow leopard in a wider context (i.e. throughout the whole range of the snow leopard in Kazakhstan and in the transboundary context) through an efficient law enforcement system, as well extensive trainings, and adoption of international standards in snow leopard monitoring, research and patrolling. The replication of the Incentive-based Ecosystem Management Partnership tested under Component II will be assisted through the amended policies and regulations that remove barriers to wider engagement of communities and private sector in ecosystem management. A replication strategy will be elaborated by the project in the last year of operation, to ensure the wide and efficient coverage of the potential beneficiaries. The strategy will detail actions targeted at the audience outside the immediate project scope with the focus on those who hold the power to influence the decision making processes and those who have the interest to scale up the results, but are limited in power in decision-making.

*A.2. Child Project?* If this is a child project under a program, describe how the components contribute to the overall program impact.

NO: The project is not a child project.

A.3. [Stakeholders](#). Elaborate on how the key stakeholders engagement, particularly with regard to [civil society organizations](#) and [indigenous peoples](#), is incorporated in the preparation and implementation of the project.

*Note: There are no defined groups of indigenous peoples in Kazakhstan.*

The participation and contribution of key stakeholders is critical for the success of the project, for stakeholders at both the national and local levels. Table 6 below summarizes the key project stakeholders. A stakeholder engagement and communication plan is included as Annex G to the Prodoc. The project is applying multiple strategies and mechanisms to ensure stakeholder engagement. First and foremost is the Project Board (as discussed further in Prodoc Section VIII on Management Arrangements), involving the FWC as the primary beneficiary, and UNDP as the supplier. UNDP and FWC have a long history of collaboration and successful project completion, including multiple previous GEF-funded projects. The project team will ensure gender-mainstreaming aspects are addressed and integrated throughout all aspects of the project's stakeholder engagement activities.

There are multiple stakeholder types at the local level in the planned project field sites. These include representatives of regional, district, and rural governments, administrations of PAs and forestries, community -based groups, individual and cooperative farms, agricultural businesses, and NGOs. The project will facilitate participatory planning processes and support the establishment of Community Councils in each of the demonstration sites, which will include local government representatives, PA managers, forest managers, local pasture committees and other site-specific key stakeholders. In addition, the project has multiple education and awareness activities planned that will engage local communities and stakeholders in addressing sustainable forest and land management, and conservation of biodiversity. Formal and informal partnerships will be developed and established with gender balance, and gender mainstreaming approaches in mind.

**TABLE 6 SUMMARY STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS**

Stakeholder	Role
Government agencies	
Forestry and Wildlife Committee (FWC) of the Ministry of Agriculture	Implementing Partner for the project. It is the key government institution responsible for SFM, regulating biodiversity, including the establishment and management of protected areas, hunting areas and forests. It oversees and seeks state funding for the establishment/ expansion of PAs, including negotiations with local authorities and stakeholders, through its regional offices, preparation and justification of the relevant budgets. FWC ensures conservation and recovery of the threatened and endangered species and that efficient information management system is in place. FWC will initiate and lobby all policy amendments within the ministries and the Parliament.
Committee of Water Resources	This Committee and its regional branches are responsible for management of water resources to meet the needs of water users of different sectors of the economy in a sustainable way. The Committee and its branches will contribute to development of landscape-level planning frameworks and development and implementation of the sustainable water use models at the regional and district level.
Ministry of Agriculture	Develops and implements state policy and programs in agriculture sector. The Ministry will contribute to development of landscape-level management plans and implementation of sustainable use alternatives in rangeland and agricultural productive landscapes.
Ministry of Energy	Inherited the mandate of the Ministry of Environment after it was abolished. Current role of the Ministry of Energy is to develop state policies and programs on environmental conservation and sustainable development, and coordinate with the Secretariat of the CBD. One of the key players in development of planning frameworks that focus on the economic potentials (rather than the constraints) of safeguarding and maintaining ecosystem services in the districts. Ensure that its monitoring and data collection systems under its Environmental Information Center are harmonized with the decision support systems developed by the project. MEP and its Oblast branches are responsible for Environmental impact assessments, which are needed for any of the planned activities related to conservation or use of nature resources.
Ministry of National Economy, Ministry on Investments and Development, Ministry of Finance	These three ministries will be engaged in economic valuation of the ecosystem services, development of the PES schemes, demonstration of TSA project, and drafting and lobbying the relevant policies and regulations.
JSC "Samrul Energo"	Is a 100% shareholder of the Hydro Power Stations that impact the floodplain forests of Ili and Syrdarya

Stakeholder	Role
	Rivers by regulating their hydrological regime. The project will engage the company for implementation of the threats analysis for floodplain forests and development of recommendations on integrated water use planning with the relevant PAs and forestries through the TSA tools.
<b>Local communities and local administrations</b>	
Land Management Committee (oblast and rayon-level branches)	At a national is responsible for development and implementation of state policy and programs on land use planning and land management, geodesies and cartography. Oblast branches are responsible for key decisions related to zoning and allocation of land use permits for agriculture, mining, etc at oblast level. One of the key players in development of planning frameworks that focus on the economic potentials (rather than the constraints) of safeguarding and maintaining ecosystem services in the districts.
Administrative Units of 12 existing PAs and new PAs	These are the key beneficiaries of activities on protected area expansion and strengthening management effectiveness. Coordinate negotiations with oblast/ rayon administrations and other relevant government agencies regarding zoning arrangements and the creation of buffer zones and corridors, as well as adaptive landscape management to ensure that the PA is managed in tandem with the management of production activities occurring in the larger landscape.
Forestry Administrations of the target areas	Forest units are state funded legal entities operating under the regional administrations aimed at management of the forest fund lands outside the protected areas system comprising about 80 % of forested area in Kazakhstan. The project will focus on improving capacity of the forestries within the boundaries of the project sites.
Oblast Akimats	Grant official endorsement of land use projects for PAs of local importance. Allocate land for planned PAs. Disseminate the project's lessons learned related to landscape-level planning and management and advocate for replication of this ecosystem approach throughout Oblast. Assist in community mobilization and awareness activities.
Rayon akimats	Lead the development and implementation of the landscape-level management plans by providing coordinating inputs of all stakeholders
<b>Non-government organizations</b>	
There is a number of NGOs that are already engaged in conservation actions in the selected regions. The tentative list may include: Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan, Eco-Altay, Biosphere, Eco-Museum, Green Salvation, Snow Leopard Fund, Avalon. All these NGOs will be engaged in variety of activities relevant for their field of expertise.	
<b>Research institutions</b>	
Institute of Zoology	Is already implementing a camera trapping project, but still no data and publications are available. The institute will not only provide expertise related to biodiversity in Kazakhstan, but will also be a beneficiary of the project through improved capacity in using new tools of data processing like biostatistics and population/habitat modeling.
Institute of Geography	Has vast experience in producing data maps for landscape planning and management. So considering the vast and complicated areas of four landscapes of the project, this institute will contribute to this work.
Institute of Botany	Will be engaged in surveys and research on habitat status to be integrated into the SL habitat management plans and establishment of new PAs. Will also be involved in the landscape planning activities.
Forestry Institute and Kazlesproekt (State project design institute under CFH)	Will contribute their research, experience and expertise for training and site visits related to monitoring of the habitat and introduction of new information management systems.
State enterprise "Science & Production Center on Land Resources Management"	Will support project activities related to implementation of demonstration projects on sustainable land and pasture management, and monitoring land degradation
Kazakh Research Institute of Livestock Breeding and Fodder Production	Will support project activities related to implementation of demonstration projects on sustainable land and pasture management, and monitoring land degradation
<b>Private sector</b>	
Local industries and entrepreneurs	Will participate in consultations and provide inputs to the development of the landscape-level management plans for further implementation.
Hunting and Fishery Managers	Will contribute to the development and implementation of the landscape-level management plans as being key repositories of ecological information on biodiversity, land resources, wildlife, and habitats. Will ensure that monitoring and data collection and processing systems are harmonized with the decision support system. Will engage patrolling rangers of existing hunting areas for introduction of the new spatial monitoring and reporting tool.

Stakeholder	Role
Rural consumer cooperatives and communities	Will be actively engaged in the development of income-generation activities (through Public Councils) at the PAs and corridors that are a focus of the project, as well as in sustainable use demonstrations at project territories.

**A.4. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.** Elaborate on how gender equality and women's empowerment issues are mainstreamed into the project implementation and monitoring, taking into account the differences, needs, roles and priorities of women and men.

The project's focus on and support for gender equality and women's empowerment has been fully elaborated in the UNDP Prodoc, starting with Section IV.iv "Mainstreaming gender". This section of the Prodoc summarizes the gender context in Kazakhstan, and the ways in which the project will engage on this issue. During the project development phase a gender analysis was carried out to identify the trends in gender policy and practices within the project areas and thematic focus to develop recommendations for the project on mainstreaming the gender issues into the project activities and monitoring, and to define the project specific gender indicators, that will demonstrate how the project contributed to the implementation of the gender equity policy in Kazakhstan. The gender analysis provided overview of three main profiles demonstrating the status, gaps and opportunities for achieving gender equality of project target group (rural communities), including employment, access to financial and natural resources, and role in the society. The full gender analysis is included as Annex H to the UNDP Prodoc. A summary of gender context issues for consideration in project development and implementation is as follows:

- The current demographic situation in the project areas is balanced with almost 1:1 ratio of female population to male population. The traditional economic activities undertaken are livestock breeding, farming, and household keeping mainly run by man while women are engaged in keeping family and household.
- Female population constitutes half of the population of the region where the key production sector is agriculture: crop farming and livestock breeding. Since women are mainly represented in the employee category, in the agricultural sector they are usually self-employed and produce agricultural products themselves, including in the private backyards (households), thus making significant contributions to the agricultural sector of the region through provision of labor for planting, weeding, harvesting and processing of products in addition to reproductive activities and public work. It is worth noting that women also produce and sell vegetables from home gardens or forest products whereas incomes generated by this are used for family consumption, sustaining the level of food supplies, health services and access to education. However, the latter is not yet reflected at the national statistics level and is rarely recognized at the level of domestic relations.
- Women continue to hold weaker positions than men in the labor market: the level of their professional qualifications and salaries are lower while occupational and sectoral segregation is high.
- Women are often socially vulnerable and have been increasingly involved in informal employment and as a consequence no decent involvement in the social protection system and no pension provision in particular.
- Women have fewer chances to find work through their own efforts in case of unemployment, thus forcing them more often than men to contact the employment services so that they can be registered as unemployed, receive the allowance and find a job. It is should also be noted that women with higher and specialized secondary education, at 45 and older have less chances for employment.
- Women's limited access to financial resources, especially in rural areas in order to be engaged in entrepreneurship, forces them to start small businesses, mainly in the informal sector of economy, which generates low income.
- Being deprived of individual ownership right on capital assets (livestock, house, land), women are more often engaged in informal economic activities with low income and social security.

- Having limited access to information about financial resources and business opportunities, women are less often initiate small business or have fewer opportunities in decision making about the households economy.
- Forest dependent rural communities (men and women) have limited knowledge and understanding of connections between the current agricultural activities and condition of forest ecosystems, their potential impact on limited forest and land resources, economic implications of such resource use practices in a longer term, and access to information and knowledge on how it can be improved. As well as they do not have sufficient technical and financial capacity to transfer to a better management agricultural practices. There is no system in place that would provide such support, information, and funding. Most people are not aware of the threats to forest ecosystems and the impact of forest degradation on the fundamental ecological functions important to sustain livelihoods of local rural communities.
- There is no inter-sectoral management mechanism in the villages neighboring PAs or forest stands, that would enable all stakeholders' (including community members – men and women) to be engaged in planning and decision-making in relation to the status of the natural resources, Such non-integrated management approach does not allow planning and management of the different sectors on a landscape level in a sustainable way to maintain fair and equal access to forest and land resources.
- Women's inadequate access to capital, financial resources and information was the major factor in disempowerment of rural women – only 2.9% of agricultural lands whose qualitative characteristics (fertility, volumes and location) are low due to scarcity of loans and credits taken by women. The lack of property (collateral) among women makes it difficult to obtain credits for farming and therefore makes their entrepreneurial activities less efficient than men's.
- The local governments, PAs and forest entities do not have sufficient capacity and integrated system of data collection and analysis in relation to land and forest use, changes in ecosystems, and threats analysis, which hampers their role of resource managers and information and services providers to local households that would enable sustainable management of important forest resources in a long-term perspective.
- Gender-specific and gender-sensitive indicators are not integrated into the local and district planning and reporting systems, which impairs the statistics-based component of the gender analysis and demands more efforts to be implied to the survey-based analysis to develop and measure relevant indicators over the project span.

Considering the above the project will strive to:

- Minimize the negative impact of certain economic and social activities on the important forest ecosystems and limited agricultural lands by raising awareness among men and women regarding the links between their established patterns of production and consumption and the effects of those patterns on the forest ecosystems and biodiversity. To achieve this the project will consider specific roles of women and men in performing social and economic activities and design advocacy approaches that will take into account specific women's and men's roles;
- Ensure sustainable use of natural resources by promoting innovative gender-responsive solutions based on improved capacity, knowledge, new self-employment opportunities, and access to planning and decision-making. These solutions will produce changes in status and role of women and men and to some extent transform gender relations to make them more equal. For example, improved access of women to knowledge on PA management -since there are mainly responsible for those activities, improved access of women to local decision-making which will have empowering impact on their status and consideration of their role in community affairs, improved access of women to job opportunities which will improve their economic situation and consequently their role and status in family decision-making etc.;

- Increase women's participation in development of environmentally sound, cost-effective practices and methods of sustainable forest and pasture management, agroforestry, fuel forests development, and water resource management and their wide spread use by men and women. In this context the project will consider the roles played by women and men in finding alternatives when water, other resources are deficient; and
- Improve local and regional policy in nature resource related sectors to ensure that integrated gender mainstreaming approach (IGMA) is applied, including gender-responsive budgeting, which is the main mechanism for implementing the gender policy at all levels of socioeconomic development. Gender mainstreaming at the level of local budgeting means incorporation of the gender-responsive budgeting elements in the range of management processes. Theoretical and practical experiences of advanced countries of the world has shown that putting gender-responsive processes in place contributes, first of all, to faster economic growth; improvement in the quality of services for people; more sustainable resource management aiming to promote the policy of equal opportunities and ensure sustainable development of the region.

**A.5 Risk.** Elaborate on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, the proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation.(table format acceptable):

A risk analysis was conducted during the PPG phase, and the project Risk Assessment and Mitigation table in UNDP format is included as Annex I of the UNDP Prodoc. As per standard UNDP requirements, the Project Manager will monitor risks quarterly and report on the status of risks to the UNDP Country Office. The UNDP Country Office will record progress in the UNDP ATLAS risk log. Risks will be reported as critical when the impact and probability are high (i.e. when impact is rated as 5, and when impact is rated as 4 and probability is rated at 3 or higher). Management responses to critical risks will also be reported to the GEF in the annual PIR.

The non-SESP risks identified are summarized in Table 7 below, including climate risks. Four non-SESP risks were identified, which are all rated low.

An additional risk assessment exercise for social and environmental risks was conducted, as required, through the UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Protocol (SESP). The SESP analysis is included as Annex F to the Prodoc, and the SESP risks are also summarized in the project risk assessment table in Annex I of the Prodoc. Six risks were identified, with five of the six risks identified being assessed as being low risk. The SESP risk 6 related to SESP Standards 5.2 and 5.4 (relating to possible economic displacement, or possible change in customary land use) assessed as "moderate" (Impact = minor, probability = moderately likely). Therefore the project overall in relation to SESP measures is considered moderate risk. This is consistent with the UNDP-GEF approach that all UNDP-GEF projects that include on the ground activities related to protected areas must be classified as at least "moderate" risk.

The risks identified in the SESP mainly relate to the fact that the project will be supporting the establishment of protected areas. When protected areas are established in any place in any country, there are possible risks related to land use regime change, and the potential for social or economic displacement. In some instances globally there is also a risk of physical displacement, although there is no risk of physical displacement in this particular project. As discussed in the SESP, the project will work closely with all stakeholders throughout the project to ensure that potential risks related to the establishment of protected areas are minimized and mitigated. The project will also ensure that all legal policies and procedures in Kazakhstan related to the establishment of protected areas are respected and followed, as well as international norms relating to the establishment of protected areas.

**TABLE 7 IDENTIFIED NON-SESP PROJECT RISKS**

Project risks					
Description	Type	Impact & Probability	Mitigation Measures	Owner	Status
Changes in government policy priorities related to sustainable forestry development	Political	I = 2 (minor) P = 2 (not	Despite its modest forest resources compared to other countries in Europe and Asia, forestry has a long tradition in Kazakhstan. Forestry continues to	UNDP	N/A

Project risks					
Description	Type	Impact & Probability	Mitigation Measures	Owner	Status
		likely)	be high on the government agenda, particularly due to several government policies including State Forest Planting Program «Jasyl El» and the 2003 Forest Code.		
Biodiversity science and conservation community continue to ignore/underestimate the participatory approaches in planning the landscapes and continue to use formal social surveys as a key tool for community engagement.	<i>Political</i>	I = 2 (minor) P = 2 (not likely)	The project will develop and distribute high quality case studies demonstrating the benefits and differences between conventional and participatory approaches for community engagement activities. And will propose relevant amendments to policies and land use plans, feasibility studies and other planning tools currently used for infrastructural and development projects.	UNDP	N/A
Data deficiencies to complete the ecosystem services quantification and economic valuation research may undermine the quality of the final products related to species and habitats modeling.	<i>Operational</i>	I = 2 (minor) P = 2 (not likely)	The project will engage high quality international expertise in species and habitats management and will follow the advice especially in relation to methodological tools. The project will avoid completing fundamental scientific research, but will rather focus on specific threats, risks, and solutions within the landscapes.	UNDP	N/A
Mountain ecosystems are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts, and data and analysis on climate change impacts for the mountain forest ecosystems of Kazakhstan is still not well developed. Therefore climate change could lead to ecosystem impacts that negatively influence the status of biodiversity and the sustainability of forest ecosystems, despite project efforts. The question will be in what timeframe such effects may happen, whether it would be within the lifetime (or shortly thereafter) of the project, or whether such effects, if they occur, would be on much longer timescales.	<i>Environmental</i>	I = 2 (minor) P = (not likely)	The project will be sure to utilize the best available climate science and data for Kazakhstan's mountain ecosystems. The project will apply this data to ensure appropriate planning and management of PA boundaries, and related buffer zones and corridors in order to support biodiversity requirements. The project will also support the development of a monitoring program for assessing climate impacts on woody species, which will further be used to improve biodiversity outcomes. The project will ensure that climate resilience measures are incorporated in all relevant project activities.	UNDP	N/A

**A.6. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination.** Describe the institutional arrangement for project implementation. Elaborate on the planned coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

The UNDP Prodoc Section VIII. Governance and Management arrangements outlines the project institutional arrangements in detail.

**Institutional Arrangements:** The project will be implemented following UNDP's national implementation modality, according to the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between UNDP and the Government of Kazakhstan, and the Country Programme. The **Implementing Partner** for this project is the Forestry and Wildlife Committee under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Implementing Partner is responsible and accountable for managing this project, including the monitoring and evaluation of project interventions, achieving project outcomes, and for the effective use of UNDP resources. A senior representative of the Forestry and Wildlife Committee will be named as the National Project Director on behalf of the Implementing Partner and the government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. A diagram of the project Organizational Structure is included in Section VIII of the Prodoc on Governance and Management Arrangements.

The **Project Board** (also called Project Steering Committee) is responsible for making by consensus, management decisions when guidance is required by the Project Manager, including recommendation for UNDP/Implementing Partner approval of project plans and revisions. In order to ensure UNDP's ultimate accountability, Project Board

decisions should be made in accordance with standards that shall ensure management for development results, best value money, fairness, integrity, transparency and effective international competition. In case a consensus cannot be reached within the Board, final decision shall rest with the UNDP Programme Manager. The Project Board will be chaired by a senior representative of the Forestry and Wildlife Committee. The terms of reference for the Project Board are contained in Annex E. The Project Board is proposed to be comprised of the representatives of the following institutions:

1. Chair of the Forestry and Wildlife Committee, Ministry of Agriculture RK
2. Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP in Kazakhstan
3. Land Management Committee, Ministry of Agriculture RK
4. Water Resource Management Committee, Ministry of Agriculture, RK
5. Science Committee, Ministry of Education and Science RK
6. Department of Budgeting for Agricultural Sector, Natural Resources, Construction and Utilities, Ministry of Finance RK
7. Committee on Environmental Regulation and Control, Ministry of Energy RK
8. Department of Natural Resource Management and Use of regional Akimats of Almaty, South Kazakhstan, Zhambyl, and East Kazakhstan regions.
9. Ecological Alliance “Baitak Bolashak”, NGO
10. Association of forest management and wood processing organizations “Zhasyl Orman”, NGO

The composition of the Project Board must include the following roles:

Executive: The Executive is an individual who represents ownership of the project who will chair the Project Board. This role can be held by a representative from the Government Cooperating Agency or UNDP. The Executive is: Chairman of the Forestry and Wildlife Committee. The Executive is ultimately responsible for the project, supported by the Senior Beneficiary and Senior Supplier. The Executive’s role is to ensure that the project is focused throughout its life cycle on achieving its objectives and delivering outputs that will contribute to higher level outcomes. The executive has to ensure that the project gives value for money, ensuring cost-conscious approach to the project, balancing the demands of beneficiary and supplier.

Specific Responsibilities: (as part of the above responsibilities for the Project Board):

- Ensure that there is a coherent project organization structure and logical set of plans;
- Set tolerances in the AWP and other plans as required for the Project Manager;
- Monitor and control the progress of the project at a strategic level;
- Ensure that risks are being tracked and mitigated as effectively as possible;
- Brief relevant stakeholders about project progress;
- Organize and chair Project Board meetings.

Senior Supplier: The Senior Supplier is an individual or group representing the interests of the parties concerned which provide funding and/or technical expertise to the project (designing, developing, facilitating, procuring, implementing). The Senior Supplier’s primary function within the Board is to provide guidance regarding the technical feasibility of the project. The Senior Supplier role must have the authority to commit or acquire supplier resources required. If necessary, more than one person may be required for this role. Typically, the implementing partner, UNDP and/or donor(s) would be represented under this role. The Senior Supplier is: The Deputy Resident Representative of the UNDP Kazakhstan Country Office.

Specific Responsibilities (as part of the above responsibilities for the Project Board):

- Make sure that progress towards the outputs remains consistent from the supplier perspective;
- Promote and maintain focus on the expected project output(s) from the point of view of supplier management;
- Ensure that the supplier resources required for the project are made available;

- Contribute supplier opinions on Project Board decisions on whether to implement recommendations on proposed changes;
- Arbitrate on, and ensure resolution of, any supplier priority or resource conflicts.

**Senior Beneficiary:** The Senior Beneficiary is an individual or group of individuals representing the interests of those who will ultimately benefit from the project. The Senior Beneficiary's primary function within the Board is to ensure the realization of project results from the perspective of project beneficiaries. The Senior Beneficiary role is held by a representative of the government or civil society. The Senior Beneficiary is: Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Senior Beneficiary is responsible for validating the needs and for monitoring that the solution will meet those needs within the constraints of the project. The Senior Beneficiary role monitors progress against targets and quality criteria. This role may require more than one person to cover all the beneficiary interests. For the sake of effectiveness, the role should not be split between too many people.

Specific Responsibilities (as part of the above responsibilities for the Project Board):

- Prioritize and contribute beneficiaries' opinions on Project Board decisions on whether to implement recommendations on proposed changes;
- Specification of the Beneficiary's needs is accurate, complete and unambiguous;
- Implementation of activities at all stages is monitored to ensure that they will meet the beneficiary's needs and are progressing towards that target;
- Impact of potential changes is evaluated from the beneficiary point of view;
- Risks to the beneficiaries are frequently monitored.

The **Project Manager** will run the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the Implementing Partner within the constraints laid down by the Board. The Project Manager function will end when the final project terminal evaluation report, and other documentation required by the GEF and UNDP, has been completed and submitted to UNDP (including operational closure of the project). A full-time Project Assistant and Procurement Specialist will provide support to the Project Manager in all tasks of the project, including administration, procurement, management of information and contacts, logistics etc.

The Project Manager will supervise three **implementation teams**. These teams will operate full-time: 1) Astana based team will be responsible for implementation, coordination and monitoring of the activities within three project components and will include appropriate Experts (PAs Expert, Expert on landscape Planning and Community Engagement, Wildlife management Expert, Forest management Expert, Communications and Capacity Building expert). Each Expert will be responsible for attainment of the specific Outputs. The exact contractual modalities for members of these teams will be determined on a case-by-case basis based on the match of tasks and qualifications (most likely, year-to-year service contracts). 2) Almaty base Site Coordinator will be responsible for coordination, monitoring, and support of the field based activities in the Almaty, South Kazakhstan, and Zhambyl regions. 3) Oskemen based Site Coordinator will be responsible for coordination, monitoring, and support of the field activities in the East-Kazakhstan region. The Site Coordinators should have a background in natural resource management. UNDP will engage national and international consultants as indicated in Annex E as needed to ensure high quality and efficiency of the implementation of the project activities.

In addition, UNDP will provide **technical support** via practical guides, reference documents, tools and training packages for the use of the project. UNDP will coordinate with project partners to help ensure consistency and synergy among the project in Kazakhstan. Beyond the project cycle management services provided by UNDP, UNDP will provide services to the project in financial management and procurement, with quality control consistent with the agency's overall safeguards and best practices. An agreement on Direct Project Costs (DPCs) between UNDP and the Implementing Partner has been determined based on the level of services to be delivered (refer to the Letter of Agreement in Annex Y).

The project will build **partnerships** with a variety of stakeholders whose participation is needed for successful implementation. In order to prevent commercial conflicts of interest, they will not be eligible to serve on the Project

Board, nor will they play a direct role in project governance. But the Project Board may invite them as appropriate to board meetings and discussions of project plans and evaluation.

Project Assurance: UNDP provides a three – tier supervision, oversight and quality assurance role – funded by the GEF agency fee – involving UNDP staff in Country Offices and at regional and headquarters levels. Project Assurance must be totally independent of the Project Management function. The quality assurance role supports the Project Board and Project Management Unit by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. This role ensures appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed. The Project Board cannot delegate any of its quality assurance responsibilities to the Project Manager. This project oversight and quality assurance role is covered by the GEF Agency. The UNDP Country Office will provide project assurance, specifically the Programme Officer for the Sustainable Development and Urbanization Unit, as well as the UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor, working out of the Istanbul Regional Hub.

Coordination: Implementation of the proposed project will be fully coordinated with a number of on-going relevant GEF-financed initiatives, in order to avoid duplication and increase synergies and effectiveness. At regional level, strong coordination will be sought with the regional (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) UNDP-GEF medium-sized project “*Transboundary Cooperation for Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation.*” The implementation phase of the regional project (2017-2020) will overlap with the implementation phase of this project (2018-2022). This project will, thus, seek to adopt and operationalize, at the national level, the relevant tools and guidelines that will be developed under the regional project particularly concerning snow leopard monitoring techniques and law enforcement bodies training on wildlife crime. The implementation of this project will, in particular, benefit significantly from the effective coordination of efforts, and sharing of knowledge between the projects using existing on-line platforms created under initiatives such as NBSAP Forum and BES-Net led by UNDP. The coordination will be established with SLT implementing the regional project.

There are three GEF financed multi-focal area projects in snow leopard landscapes and ecosystems, implemented by UNDP in Central Asia: in Tajikistan the UNDP/GEF Project “*Conservation and sustainable use of Pamir-Alay and Tian Shan ecosystems for Snow Leopard protection and sustainable community livelihoods*”; in Uzbekistan the UNDP/GEF Project “*Sustainable natural resource and forest management in key biodiversity areas important for Snow Leopard*”; and in Kyrgyzstan the project “*Conservation of globally important biodiversity and associated land and forest resources of Western Tian Shan mountain ecosystems to support sustainable livelihoods.*” The proposed project will work closely with each of these projects seeking opportunities to establish synergies and experience sharing between them. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan submitted an application for inclusion of the mountains of the Western Tian Shan to the UNESCO World Heritage List, and the nomination was approved July 17, 2016. In this regards, this snow leopard-related project would contribute to the promotion of transboundary cooperation in Western Tian Shan.

On the national level the project will use the lessons from implemented UNDP/GEF Project “*Improving Sustainability of PA System in Desert Ecosystems through Promotion of Biodiversity-compatible Livelihoods in and around PAs*” (GEF ID #4584) in continuing the process for the establishment of new PAs, and in improving the management effectiveness of forest PAs.

The proposed project will coordinate with and build on the UNDP project “*Building financial frameworks to increase investments in biodiversity management*”. The project has studied opportunities for mainstreaming biodiversity into national development and sectoral planning to reduce negative impacts resulting in biodiversity loss and to achieve economic efficiency. New methodological tools were developed and piloted, including PES, compensations, tax incentives, subsidies, certifications. The project has prepared a theoretical basis for PES schemes within forest ecosystems through studying and calculations of forests’ CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration functions. The results of this study will be applied in proposed project.

The proposed project will coordinate with and take good practices from the UNDP-GovKz project “*Improvement of wildlife management planning and monitoring system*”. The project is focused on policy and institutional capacity of the hunting concessions to ensure that they are economically viable and are managed in an ecosystem friendly way. The project has revised the existing policies and management practices, identified gaps and amended relevant bylaws on the national and local level. The project has brought various types of international expertise in managing and monitoring of game species and protection of endangered species within different ecosystems, including forests. The project has also

developed a methodology for Snow leopard monitoring, which was briefly compared during the PPG to the global recommendations and will further be revised accordingly.

The proposed project will build on good practices and lessons from the initiative *Forest and Biodiversity Governance Including Environmental Monitoring* (FLERMONECA), which was implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, the German forestry agency Hessen-Forst, the Austrian Environment Agency (UBA) and the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) in all five Central Asian countries. The project was finished in 2015 and produced a number of valuable recommendations that can be implemented with a new project. In Kazakhstan the main focus was forest and biodiversity governance, including environmental monitoring. Responding to the Government's request the main outcome of the project was assessment of the potential for the private forests development in Kazakhstan. A basic study was carried out but the lack of accurate and systemized data on forest ecology was a key barrier for producing more specific recommendations. The new project will consider all the reports of FLERMONECA initiative from the five Central Asian countries to address the policy and institutional capacity gaps as well as forest data management systems by introducing SFM standards.

The proposed project will coordinate with the Fund for Financial Support of Agriculture (FFSA)/DAMU Program, which was identified as the most appropriate fund for the project's activities under the Outcome 2 targeted at demonstration of resource use and management practices that would minimize the impact on the valuable forest ecosystems caused by local communities, agricultural businesses, tourism, hunting, non-timber forest products, and water use. FFSA has been operational in Kazakhstan since 1994 and is one of a few organizations that render microcredit services to residents of rural areas. FFSA focuses on providing and expanding the access of rural businesses and individuals to financial services of the microcredit market. The Fund carries out its activities through its widespread network of representative offices in 14 administrative regions of Kazakhstan, thus covering about 100% of rural territories of the country. FFSA has successfully implemented the micro-credit program for support of rural communities in variety of livelihood activities. The loan portfolio of FFSA as of January 2017 is 82.6 billion KZT. In 2016 the loan portfolio increased by 120%. Number of active borrowers is 36,600 people. In 2016, the Fund issued 11,000 loans totaling 35 billion KZT. The project will work with "Eco-Damu" Program of the FFSA offering the lowest interest rate 4% with the average in Kazakhstan – 14-20%. The program goal is to fund the alternative types of activities and implementation of sustainable methods of agriculture, forestry, fishery and hunting within the area of 50 km around the protected areas. The program will last until 2024 under the Agreement between UNDP-GEF portfolio and the Ministry of Agriculture.

The project will also coordinate with ongoing NGO activities, such as WWF active initiatives in Kazakhstan: Caspian Tiger Re-establishment. The second region outlined as a potential site for the restoration programme is the southern shore of Lake Balkhash in Kazakhstan, around and to the east of the Ili River delta. Wild boar are found here in vast tugai woodlands and reed thickets, and Bukhara deer could be reintroduced. During site preparation, new protected areas must be created with strict enforcement over at least half of the proposed future habitat. It is also critical to ensure that economic use of the areas aligns with programme goals and limits human presence by stimulating relocation, especially with regard to residents engaged in grazing domestic livestock. A comprehensive management plan for the area must be developed and implemented, including a plan to stop poaching and prevent banned natural resource use activities. It is simultaneously necessary to increase the population density of wild boar by an order of magnitude through intentional breeding, potentially accomplished by engaging existing leaseholders of hunting territories. The proposed project will enable required conditions for successful reintroduction by supporting the following targets of the reintroduction program: a) Anti-poaching measures; b) Strengthening enforcement and management agency infrastructure and capacity; c) Engaging local residents in alternative activities to improve living standards through community-based anti-poaching enforcement programmes on their land; d) Organization of new PAs and reorganization of existing PAs to incorporate ungulate habitats in the region; e) Overall improvement of ecosystems and organizing regular monitoring of wildlife populations in the region.

The project will closely coordinate with the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation Program (GSLEP), which is an important international baseline program, and which this project directly builds upon. Although this is not a financing project, rather a conventional framework, it unites governments, UN agencies, NGOs and researchers of the snow leopard range in the effort to conserve this species, as postulated by the International Agreement on snow leopard signed in Bishkek in 2013. GSLEP and the Working Secretariat are supported by the international NGO Snow Leopard Trust.

The project will closely coordinate with the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project 2016-2019. The objective of this project is to strengthen the national capacity of five target countries (Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan) to develop national criteria and indicators (C&I) and reporting, or accountability systems, for sustainable forest management (SFM). The project is expected to enable the target countries actively participate in international processes related to forests, and contribute to the sustainable development of the sector towards a green economy. National criteria and indicators for SFM will serve as a tool to communicate the relevance of forests as they relate to the environment as well as socioeconomic situation at national, regional and international levels. In Kazakhstan the project is implemented by the Forestry and Wildlife Committee that will ensure effective partnership with the proposed project. In Kazakhstan the project is mainly focused on the development of the National SFM Criteria and Indicators supported with capacity building activities within the relevant governmental bodies.

The project will closely coordinate the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF). In 2016 CEPF together with the European Union and other members of its Donor Council agreed to fund the ecosystem profile preparation in the Mountains of Central Asia biodiversity hotspot. The profile process was launched in May 2016, and concluded in May 2017. The purposes of the ecosystem profile are to provide an overview of biodiversity conservation in the Mountains of Central Asia biodiversity hotspot, to present an analysis of the priorities for action, and to strengthen the constituency for conservation in the region. In doing so, the profile lays out a framework for the implementation of the CEPF grant-making program, which will run for about five years from 2017 to 2022, and which defines a broad conservation agenda in the region. The GEF project's geographic and thematic focus overlaps with the proposed profile priorities. The project will be engaged in designing and implementation of the grant program to be launched in Kazakhstan as a part of trans-regional partnership.

#### Additional Information not well elaborated at PIF Stage:

**A.7 Benefits.** Describe the socioeconomic benefits to be delivered by the project at the national and local levels. How do these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of global environment benefits (GEF Trust Fund) or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)?

It is estimated that the project will have approximately 41,000 direct beneficiaries, including more than 2,000 staff of forest protected areas in Kazakhstan, more than 450 forestry staff, and more than 38,500 local resource users in the targeted project areas. The number of indirect beneficiaries is calculated as 397,000, which is the population of the six districts most involved in the project activities. The project will contribute to socio-economic benefits in a variety of ways. On the whole the project will improve the sustainability of forest and land use in the targeted area, which will improve the sustainability of rural livelihoods. Specifically, the project will: i.) Undertake pilot activities for improved forest and forest pasture use, including installation of livestock watering points located in strategic locations away from critical habitat areas; ii.) improved wildlife management for local sustainable use, as well as improved revenue from trophy hunting; iii.) Targeted Scenario Assessments conducted for forest, land and water resources to improve sustainability of resource planning and management, to benefit sustainable livelihoods; iv.) provide technical and financial support to local communities for improved pasture management; v.) implement pilot community-based forestry activities with local livelihood benefits; and vi.) strengthening of community-based management mechanisms for PAs, forests and pastures. The project will develop local pasture management groups in any targeted areas that do not already have such mechanisms in place. The project will improve the communication, collaboration and cooperation between tenure holders, rights holders, natural resource users and the relevant state, regional and local administrations.

**A.8 Knowledge Management.** Elaborate on the knowledge management approach for the project, including, if any, plans for the project to learn from other relevant projects and initiatives (e.g. participate in trainings, conferences, stakeholder exchanges, virtual networks, project twinning) and plans for the project to assess and document in a user-friendly form (e.g. lessons learned briefs, engaging websites, guidebooks based on experience) and share these experiences and expertise (e.g. participate in community of practices, organize seminars, trainings and conferences) with relevant stakeholders.

Each project output will include the documentation of lessons learned from implementation of activities under the output, and a collation of the tools and templates (and any other materials) developed during implementation. The Project Manager will ensure the collation of all the project experiences and information. This knowledge base will then be made accessible to different stakeholder groups in order to support better future decision-making processes in snow leopard conservation and more consistent adoption of best practice.

Replication of good practices developed by the project will be achieved through the direct replication of selected project elements and practices and methods, as well as the scaling up of experiences. The following activities have preliminarily been identified as suitable for replication and/or scaling up: (i) development of sustainable forest management measures in forest unit management plans based on HCVF principles; (ii) development and implementation of sustainable grazing management plans in forest pastures; (iii) piloting of Targeted Scenario Analysis (TSA); (iv) rehabilitation and restoration of degraded high altitude pastures; (v) local demonstration sites for SFM and SLM activities such as tree nurseries for rare species, and placement of livestock watering points; and (vi) new snow leopard and prey population monitoring technologies (e.g. camera traps, DNA analysis, and GPS collars). The lessons learned in project implementation will be incorporated into the National Action Plan for Snow Leopard Conservation. The sharing of best practices and lessons learned in project implementation with other GSLEP member countries will be facilitated through regional GSLEP meetings and regular communications through the GSLEP Working Secretariat.

## **B. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONSISTENCY OF THE PROJECT WITH:**

**B.1 Consistency with National Priorities.** Describe the consistency of the project with national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions such as NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc.:

The project supports the *Recommendations on Preservation of Snow Leopards and Their High Mountain Ecosystems* that were adopted at the international meeting on conservation of snow leopards held in Bishkek on December 3, 2012. Overall, the project proposal is consistent with the recommendations of the Global Snow Leopard Survival Strategy. The recommendations have been reflected in the project document, and they all have been adapted to the situation in Kazakhstan. By implementing these activities it will be possible to create conditions for preservation and increase of snow leopard population.

The project addresses some of the priorities of the National Action Program to Combat Desertification (NAPCD, 2002). The NAPCD envisions improvement of land planning, restoration of degraded rangelands and hayfields, restoring forests and developing economic mechanisms for ensuring more sustainable use of natural resources. The project addresses these priorities through various activities in the second component.

Being a party to the UN Convention on Biodiversity Conservation, Kazakhstan is taking actions to align the national biodiversity conservation planning with the latest resolutions of COP and regularly reports to the Secretariat through the National Biodiversity Communications. In 2013-2014 UNDP-GEF provided support to the Government to initiate a broad, open and participatory process of strategic planning for the next program cycle of the Government. As a result of this process the Forestry and Wildlife Committee has approved a Concept for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use (Concept) for the period 2015- 2022 supported with the detailed Action Plan.

The project stems from the baseline fact that Government of Kazakhstan has a national plan to proceed with expanding its protected areas system as confirmed by the Government Resolution #449, 15 October 2015 signed by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The GEF funding would allow for the expanded PA system to improve its efficiency and better integrate communities. With GEF support in the past projects, the Government expanded its PA estate in wetland, steppe and desert ecosystems, whereby not only the management of those newly created PAs has improved, but also those projects had positive repercussions in the form of raising the central government understanding and skills in the area of PA management and providing alternative financial schemes for engagement of communities in sustainable resource management at the boundaries or within the PAs. The proposed project fully complies with the national Biodiversity Concept and will enable its implementation.

The project directly supports the achievement of Aichi Target 12: By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained. Through the landscape approach it substantially contributes to the following targets:

- Target 5: By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced.
- Target 11: By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.
- Target 15: By 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification.

### **C. DESCRIBE THE BUDGETED M &E PLAN:**

The project results as outlined in the project results framework will be monitored annually and evaluated periodically during project implementation to ensure the project effectively achieves these results.

Project-level monitoring and evaluation will be undertaken in compliance with UNDP requirements as outlined in the UNDP POPP and UNDP Evaluation Policy. While these UNDP requirements are not outlined in this project document, the UNDP Country Office will work with the relevant project stakeholders to ensure UNDP M&E requirements are met in a timely fashion and to high quality standards. Additional mandatory GEF-specific M&E requirements (as outlined below) will be undertaken in accordance with the GEF M&E policy and other relevant GEF policies.

In addition to these mandatory UNDP and GEF M&E requirements, other M&E activities deemed necessary to support project-level adaptive management will be agreed during the Project Inception Workshop and will be detailed in the Inception Report. This will include the exact role of project target groups and other stakeholders in project M&E activities including the GEF Operational Focal Point and national/regional institutes assigned to undertake project monitoring. The GEF Operational Focal Point will strive to ensure consistency in the approach taken to the GEF-specific M&E requirements (notably the GEF Tracking Tools) across all GEF-financed projects in the country. This could be achieved for example by using one national institute to complete the GEF Tracking Tools for all GEF-financed projects in the country, including projects supported by other GEF Agencies.

#### **M&E Oversight and Monitoring Responsibilities:**

**Project Manager:** The Project Manager is responsible for day-to-day project management and regular monitoring of project results and risks, including social and environmental risks. The Project Manager will ensure that all project staff maintain a high level of transparency, responsibility and accountability in M&E and reporting of project results. The Project Manager will inform the Project Board, the UNDP Country Office and the UNDP-GEF RTA of any delays or difficulties as they arise during implementation so that appropriate support and corrective measures can be adopted.

The Project Manager will develop annual work plans based on the multi-year work plan included in Annex A, including annual output targets to support the efficient implementation of the project. The Project Manager will ensure that the standard UNDP and GEF M&E requirements are fulfilled to the highest quality. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring the results framework indicators are monitored annually in time for evidence-based reporting in the GEF PIR, and that the monitoring of risks and the various plans/strategies developed to support project implementation (e.g. gender strategy, KM strategy etc..) occur on a regular basis. The project monitoring plan is included as Annex B to this Procurement Document.

**Project Board:** The Project Board will take corrective action as needed to ensure the project achieves the desired results. The Project Board will hold project reviews to assess the performance of the project and appraise the Annual Work Plan for the following year. In the project's final year, the Project Board will hold an end-of-project review to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up and to highlight project results and lessons learned with

relevant audiences. This final review meeting will also discuss the findings outlined in the project terminal evaluation report and the management response.

**Project Implementing Partner:** The Implementing Partner is responsible for providing any and all required information and data necessary for timely, comprehensive and evidence-based project reporting, including results and financial data, as necessary and appropriate. The Implementing Partner will strive to ensure project-level M&E is undertaken by national institutes, and is aligned with national systems so that the data used by and generated by the project supports national systems.

**UNDP Country Office:** The UNDP Country Office will support the Project Manager as needed, including through annual supervision missions. The annual supervision missions will take place according to the schedule outlined in the annual work plan. Supervision mission reports will be circulated to the project team and Project Board within one month of the mission. The UNDP Country Office will initiate and organize key GEF M&E activities including the annual GEF PIR, the independent mid-term review and the independent terminal evaluation. The UNDP Country Office will also ensure that the standard UNDP and GEF M&E requirements are fulfilled to the highest quality.

The UNDP Country Office is responsible for complying with all UNDP project-level M&E requirements as outlined in the UNDP POPP. This includes ensuring the UNDP Quality Assurance Assessment during implementation is undertaken annually; that annual targets at the output level are developed, and monitored and reported using UNDP corporate systems; the regular updating of the ATLAS risk log; and, the updating of the UNDP gender marker on an annual basis based on gender mainstreaming progress reported in the GEF PIR and the UNDP ROAR. Any quality concerns flagged during these M&E activities (e.g. annual GEF PIR quality assessment ratings) must be addressed by the UNDP Country Office and the Project Manager.

The UNDP Country Office will retain all M&E records for this project for up to seven years after project financial closure in order to support ex-post evaluations undertaken by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) and/or the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO).

**UNDP-GEF Unit:** Additional M&E and implementation quality assurance and troubleshooting support will be provided by the UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor and the UNDP-GEF Directorate as needed.

**Audit:** The project will be audited according to UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules and applicable audit policies on NIM implemented projects.

**Additional GEF monitoring and reporting requirements:**

120. **Inception Workshop and Report:** A project inception workshop will be held within two months after the project document has been signed by all relevant parties to, amongst others:

- a) Re-orient project stakeholders to the project strategy and discuss any changes in the overall context that influence project implementation;
- b) Discuss the roles and responsibilities of the project team, including reporting and communication lines and conflict resolution mechanisms;
- c) Review the results framework and finalize the indicators, means of verification and monitoring plan;
- d) Discuss reporting, monitoring and evaluation roles and responsibilities and finalize the M&E budget; identify national/regional institutes to be involved in project-level M&E; discuss the role of the GEF OFP in M&E;
- e) Update and review responsibilities for monitoring the various project plans and strategies, including the risk log; Environmental and Social Management Plan and other safeguard requirements; the gender strategy; the knowledge management strategy, and other relevant strategies;
- f) Review financial reporting procedures and mandatory requirements, and agree on the arrangements for the annual audit; and
- g) Plan and schedule Project Board meetings and finalize the first year annual work plan.

The Project Manager will prepare the inception report no later than one month after the inception workshop. The inception report will be cleared by the UNDP Country Office and the UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Adviser, and will be approved by the Project Board.

**GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR):** The Project Manager, the UNDP Country Office, and the UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor will provide objective input to the annual GEF PIR covering the reporting period July (previous year) to June (current year) for each year of project implementation. The Project Manager will ensure that the indicators included in the project results framework are monitored annually in advance of the PIR submission deadline so that progress can be reported in the PIR. Any environmental and social risks and related management plans will be monitored regularly, and progress will be reported in the PIR.

The PIR submitted to the GEF will be shared with the Project Board. The UNDP Country Office will coordinate the input of the GEF Operational Focal Point and other stakeholders to the PIR as appropriate. The quality rating of the previous year's PIR will be used to inform the preparation of the subsequent PIR.

**Lessons learned and knowledge generation:** Results from the project will be disseminated within and beyond the project intervention area through existing information sharing networks and forums. The project will identify and participate, as relevant and appropriate, in scientific, policy-based and/or any other networks, which may be of benefit to the project. The project will identify, analyze and share lessons learned that might be beneficial to the design and implementation of similar projects and disseminate these lessons widely. There will be continuous information exchange between this project and other projects of similar focus in the same country, region and globally.

**GEF Focal Area Tracking Tools:** The following GEF Tracking Tool(s) will be used to monitor global environmental benefit results:

The baseline/CEO Endorsement GEF Focal Area Tracking Tool(s) – submitted in Annex D to this project document – will be updated by the Project Manager/Team and shared with the mid-term review consultants and terminal evaluation consultants (not the evaluation consultants hired to undertake the MTR or the TE) before the required review/evaluation missions take place. The updated GEF Tracking Tool(s) will be submitted to the GEF along with the completed Mid-term Review report and Terminal Evaluation report.

**Independent Mid-term Review (MTR):** The project Evaluation Plan is included as Annex C to this Prodoc. An independent mid-term review process will begin after the second PIR has been submitted to the GEF, and the MTR report will be submitted to the GEF in the same year as the 3rd PIR. The MTR findings and responses outlined in the management response will be incorporated as recommendations for enhanced implementation during the final half of the project's duration. The terms of reference, the review process and the MTR report will follow the standard templates and guidance prepared by the UNDP IEO for GEF-financed projects available on the UNDP Evaluation Resource Center (ERC). As noted in this guidance, the evaluation will be 'independent, impartial and rigorous'. The consultants that will be hired to undertake the assignment will be independent from organizations that were involved in designing, executing or advising on the project to be evaluated. The GEF Operational Focal Point and other stakeholders will be involved and consulted during the terminal evaluation process. Additional quality assurance support is available from the UNDP-GEF Directorate. The final MTR report will be available in English and will be cleared by the UNDP Country Office and the UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Adviser, and approved by the Project Board.

**Terminal Evaluation (TE):** An independent terminal evaluation (TE) will take place upon completion of all major project outputs and activities. The terminal evaluation process will begin three months before operational closure of the project allowing the evaluation mission to proceed while the project team is still in place, yet ensuring the project is close enough to completion for the evaluation team to reach conclusions on key aspects such as project sustainability. The Project Manager will remain on contract until the TE report and management response have been finalized. The terms of reference, the evaluation process and the final TE report will follow the standard templates and guidance prepared by the UNDP IEO for GEF-financed projects available on the UNDP Evaluation Resource Center. As noted in this guidance, the evaluation will be 'independent, impartial and rigorous'. The consultants that will be hired to undertake the assignment will be independent from organizations that were involved in designing, executing or advising on the project to be evaluated. The GEF Operational Focal Point and other stakeholders will be involved and consulted during the terminal evaluation process. Additional quality assurance support is available from the UNDP-GEF Directorate. The final TE report will be cleared by the UNDP Country Office and the UNDP-GEF Regional Technical

Adviser, and will be approved by the Project Board. The TE report will be publically available in English on the UNDP ERC.

The UNDP Country Office will include the planned project terminal evaluation in the UNDP Country Office evaluation plan, and will upload the final terminal evaluation report in English and the corresponding management response to the UNDP Evaluation Resource Centre (ERC). Once uploaded to the ERC, the UNDP IEO will undertake a quality assessment and validate the findings and ratings in the TE report, and rate the quality of the TE report. The UNDP IEO assessment report will be sent to the GEF IEO along with the project terminal evaluation report.

Final Report: The project's terminal PIR along with the terminal evaluation (TE) report and corresponding management response will serve as the final project report package. The final project report package shall be discussed with the Project Board during an end-of-project review meeting to discuss lesson learned and opportunities for scaling up.

GEF M&E requirements	Primary responsibility	Indicative costs to be charged to the Project Budget <sup>11</sup> (US\$)		Time frame
		GEF grant	Co-financing	
Inception Workshop	UNDP Country Office	\$10,000	\$5,000	Within three months of project document signature
Inception Report	Project Manager	None	None	Within 4 weeks of inception workshop
Standard UNDP monitoring and reporting requirements as outlined in the UNDP POPP	UNDP Country Office	None	None	Quarterly, annually
Monitoring of indicators in project results framework	Project Manager	None	None	Annually
GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR)	Project Manager and UNDP Country Office and UNDP-GEF team	None	None	Annually
Financial audit as per UNDP audit policies for NIM projects	UNDP Country Office	\$15,000 (\$3,000/year)	None	Annually or other frequency as per UNDP Audit policies
Monitoring of environmental and social risks, and corresponding management plans as relevant	Project Manager UNDP CO	None	None	On-going
Addressing environmental and social grievances	Project Manager UNDP Country Office BPPS as needed	None for time of project manager, and UNDP CO	None	On-going
Project Board meetings	Project Board UNDP Country Office Project Manager	\$10,000	\$5,000	At minimum annually
Supervision missions	UNDP Country Office	None <sup>12</sup>	None	Annually
Oversight missions	UNDP-GEF team	None <sup>12</sup>	None	Troubleshooting as needed
Lessons learned and knowledge generation	Project Manager	None	None	Annually
Knowledge management as outlined in Outcome 3	Project Manager	\$80,000	\$80,000	On-going
GEF Secretariat learning missions/site visits	UNDP Country Office and Project Manager and UNDP-GEF team	None	None	To be determined.

<sup>11</sup> Excluding project team staff time and UNDP staff time and travel expenses.


<sup>12</sup> The costs of UNDP Country Office and UNDP-GEF Unit's participation and time are charged to the GEF Agency Fee.

GEF M&E requirements	Primary responsibility	Indicative costs to be charged to the Project Budget <sup>11</sup> (US\$)		Time frame
		GEF grant	Co-financing	
Mid-term GEF Tracking Tools to be completed by project team in collaboration with project stakeholders	Project Manager	\$10,000	\$10,000	Before mid-term review mission takes place.
Independent Mid-term Review (MTR) and management response	UNDP Country Office and Project team and UNDP-GEF team	\$40,000	\$10,000	Between 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> PIR.
Terminal GEF Tracking Tools to be completed by project team in collaboration with project stakeholders	Project Manager	\$10,000	\$10,000	Before terminal evaluation mission takes place
Independent Terminal Evaluation (TE) included in UNDP evaluation plan, and management response	UNDP Country Office and Project team and UNDP-GEF team	\$40,000	\$10,000	At least three months before operational closure
Translation of MTR and TE reports into English / Russian	UNDP Country Office	\$5,000	\$5,000	As soon as possible
<b>TOTAL indicative COST</b> Excluding project team staff time, and UNDP staff and travel expenses		\$220,000	\$135,000	

### **PART III: CERTIFICATION BY GEF PARTNER AGENCY(IES)**

#### **A. GEF Agency(ies) certification**

**This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF policies<sup>13</sup> and procedures and meets the GEF criteria for CEO endorsement under GEF-6.**

<b>Agency Coordinator, Agency Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date (MM/dd/yyyy)</b>	<b>Project Contact Person</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
Adriana Dinu, UNDP-GEF Executive Coordinator.		2/28/2018	Maxim Vergeichik, Regional Technical Advisor, EBD	+ 421-2- 59337152	maxim.vergeichik@undp.org

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<sup>13</sup> GEF policies encompass all managed trust funds, namely: GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF and CBIT  
GEF6 CEO Endorsement /Approval Template-August2016

## ANNEX A: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

**NOTE:** Additional data underlying the indicator baseline and target values is included in Annex J of the Prodoc.

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
<b>Project Objective:</b> <i>Improve conservation status and management of key forest and associated grassland, riparian and arid ecosystems important for conservation of biodiversity, land resources and provision of livelihoods for local communities</i>	1. Area of critical ecosystems with improved management, including tugai, saxaul, and mountain forests, and associated grasslands	N/A (zero hectares improved)	4,000,000	9,127,071 hectares	<p>Project reports and documentation; Successful completion of project activities for relevant project components, as verified by the MTR and TE.</p> <p>GEF-6 Corporate Results Indicator 1: <i>"Improved management of landscapes and seascapes covering 300 million hectares"</i></p> <p>GEF-6 Corporate Results Indicator 2: <i>120 million hectares under sustainable land management</i></p>	<p>- Project does not encounter critical risks that derail implementation</p> <p>- New threats do not emerge</p>
	2. Forest area in Kazakhstan under <u>indirectly</u> improved management	N/A (zero hectares indirectly improved)	N/A (zero hectares indirectly improved) <i>(achievement of result not expected at mid-point)</i>	Forests managed by 123 forestry entities = 12,652,400 ha of forest landscapes (within 29,318,750 total ha of national forest fund land); as indicated by status of HCVF management regulations (adopted at national level); Status of national institutional framework for forest management (plan for restructuring leskhozoes under FWC instead of akimats adopted at national level)	Project reports and documentation; Successful completion of project activities for relevant project components, as verified by the MTR and TE	<p>- Stakeholders remain interested in large-scale forest sector reform</p> <p>- Large scale sector reform can be achieved in the timeframe available for the project</p> <p>- Changing the institutional framework of the forest sector is not too complex for the scale and scope of the project</p>
	3. a. # direct project beneficiaries	N/A (zero beneficiaries)	a. Total: ~1,100 : b. PA staff: >1,000 PA	a. Total: ~41,000 : b. PA staff: >2,000 PA	Number of staff employed at PAs targeted	- All staff in targeted PAs and leskhozoes will

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
	b. # of PA staff with enhanced individual capacity c. # of forestry staff with enhanced individual capacity d. # of local resource users with improved sustainability of livelihoods		staff with enhanced capacity c. Forestry staff: 100 leskhoz staff d. Local resource users: Total: 0 (0 men; 0 women) ( <i>achievement of result not expected at mid-point</i> )	staff with enhanced capacity c. Forestry staff: 457 leskhoz staff d. Local resource users: Total: 38,753 (19,382 men; 19,371 women) (figures official from 2009 census)	by the project  Number of staff employed at leskhoz directly targeted by the project  Number of people living in rural districts directly targeted by the project	benefit from project investments in capacity strengthening - No large-scale staff turnover in targeted PAs and leskhoz - All community members in targeted districts depend at least partially on pastoralism for livelihoods, and therefore will benefit from project activities on sustainable land management
	4. Population trends for globally significant species, such as snow leopard, argali, goitered gazelle, and other threatened species within the expanded target PA estate:  <u>Alpine forest and associated ecosystems, flora:</u> - <i>Picea schrenkiana</i> - <i>Malus sieversii</i> - <i>Malus niedzwetzkyana</i> - <i>Juniperus sp.</i> ( <i>turkestanica</i> , <i>semiglobosa</i> , <i>seravschanica</i> ) - <i>Betula tianschanika</i> - <i>Populus tremula L.</i> - <i>Abies siberica</i> - <i>Crataegus turkestanica</i> - <i>Picea obovata</i>  <u>Alpine forest and associated ecosystems, fauna:</u> - <i>Uncia uncia</i> - <i>Ursus arctos</i> ( <i>incl. ssp isabellinus</i> )	Please see GEF-6 BD Tracking Tool METT scorecards for all PAs, cells C38 and C39  <u>Alpine forest and associated ecosystems, flora:</u> - <i>Picea schrenkiana</i> - 65,321 - <i>Malus sieversii</i> - 5,100 - <i>Malus niedzwetzkyana</i> - no data - <i>Juniperus sp.</i> ( <i>turkestanica</i> , <i>semiglobosa</i> , <i>seravschanica</i> ) - 7,572 - <i>Betula tianschanika</i> - 1,522 - <i>Populus tremula L.</i> - 4,788 - <i>Abies siberica</i> - 76,859 - <i>Crataegus turkestanica</i> - 1,100 - <i>Picea obovata</i> - 18,580  <u>Alpine forest and associated ecosystems, fauna:</u> - <i>Uncia uncia</i> - 110-130 - <i>Ursus arctos</i> ( <i>incl. ssp</i>	<u>Flora:</u> N/A ( <i>project activities will not affect ecological status by midpoint</i> ) <u>Fauna:</u> N/A ( <i>project activities will not affect ecological status by midpoint</i> )	<u>Flora:</u> Non-deterioration of baseline status <u>Fauna:</u> Increase relative to baseline	Annual PA flora and fauna monitoring, as summarized in METT scorecards cells C38 and C39	- Project lifetime is sufficient to allow impacts to be generated and monitored - New threats do not emerge

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Ovis ammon ssp</i> (<i>karelini</i>, <i>nigrimontana</i>)</li> <li>- <i>Capra sibirica</i></li> <li>- <i>Cervus elaphus</i></li> <li>- <i>Capreolus pygargus</i></li> <li>- <i>Canis lupus</i></li> <li>- <i>Marmota sp.</i> (<i>baibacina</i>, <i>caudate</i>, <i>menzbieri</i>)</li> </ul> <p><u>Floodplain (tugai) forest and associated ecosystems, flora:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Populus pruinosa</i></li> <li>- <i>Ulmus sp.</i></li> <li>- <i>Fraxinus sogdiana</i></li> <li>- <i>Elaeagnus oxycarpa</i></li> <li>- <i>Tamarix ramosissima</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Floodplain (tugai) forest and associated ecosystems, fauna:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Capreolus pygargus</i></li> <li>- <i>Sus scrofa</i></li> <li>- <i>Cervus elaphus bactrianus</i></li> <li>- <i>Hemiechinus auritus</i></li> <li>- <i>Columba eversmanni</i></li> <li>- <i>Falco cherrug</i></li> <li>- <i>Aegypius monachus</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Saxaul forest and associated ecosystems, flora:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Populus pruinosa</i> Schrenk</li> <li>- <i>Elaeagnus oxycarpa</i></li> <li>- <i>Haloxylon aphyllum</i>, <i>H. persicum</i></li> <li>- <i>Berberis iliensis</i> M. Pop</li> <li>- <i>Lonicera iliensis</i> Pojark</li> <li>- <i>Tamarix ramosissima</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Saxaul forest and associated ecosystems,</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>isabellinus</i>) - 507</li> <li>- <i>Ovis ammon ssp</i> (<i>karelini</i>, <i>nigrimontana</i>) - 685</li> <li>- <i>Capra sibirica</i> - 6,039</li> <li>- <i>Cervus elaphus</i> - 3,306</li> <li>- <i>Capreolus pygargus</i> - 7,072</li> <li>- <i>Canis lupus</i> - 561</li> <li>- <i>Marmota sp.</i> (<i>baibacina</i>, <i>caudate</i>, <i>menzbieri</i>) - 21,045</li> </ul> <p><u>Floodplain (tugai) forest and associated ecosystems, flora:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Populus pruinosa</i> - 172</li> <li>- <i>Ulmus sp.</i> - 280</li> <li>- <i>Fraxinus sogdiana</i> - 1474</li> <li>- <i>Elaeagnus oxycarpa</i> - unknown</li> <li>- <i>Tamarix ramosissima</i> - unknown</li> </ul> <p><u>Floodplain (tugai) forest and associated ecosystems, fauna:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Capreolus pygargus</i> - &gt;68</li> <li>- <i>Sus scrofa</i> - &gt;241</li> <li>- <i>Cervus elaphus bactrianus</i> - 126</li> <li>- <i>Hemiechinus auritus</i> - unknown</li> <li>- <i>Columba eversmanni</i> - &gt;518</li> <li>- <i>Falco cherrug</i> - 24</li> <li>- <i>Aegypius monachus</i> - 4</li> </ul> <p><u>Saxaul forest and associated ecosystems, flora:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Populus pruinosa</i> Schrenk - unknown</li> </ul>				

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
	<u>fauna:</u> - <i>Gazella subgutturosa</i> - <i>Capreolus capreolus</i> - <i>Aquila rapax</i> - <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> - <i>Lepus tolai</i>	- <i>Elaeagnus oxycarpa</i> - unknown - <i>Haloxylon aphyllum</i> , <i>H. persicum</i> - >447 - <i>Berberis iliensis</i> M. Pop - unknown - <i>Lonicera iliensis</i> Pojark - unknown - <i>Tamarix ramosissima</i> - unknown  <u>Saxaul forest and associated ecosystems,</u> <u>fauna:</u> - <i>Gazella subgutturosa</i> - 161 - <i>Capreolus capreolus</i> - unknown - <i>Aquila rapax</i> - 7 - <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> - 16 - <i>Lepus tolai</i> - 472				
<b>Component 1.</b> Improved representation of globally important forest biodiversity and improved management of protected conservation-important forests <b>Outcome 1.1:</b> Prevention of loss of conservation important forest and associated non-forest ecosystems and their biodiversity <b>Outcome 1.2:</b> Improved management of protected conservation important forests, through HC VF-specific management measures in PA forests	5. Incremental area under conservation management through establishment of new PAs	N/A (only existing PAs)	N/A (only existing PAs)	1,830,000 net new hectares under protection, which: - Increases the national PA coverage 0.67% from 8.81% to 9.49%, - Secures protection of 761,693 ha of alpine forest ecosystems and 522,593 ha of tugai and saxaul forest ecosystems; - Provides PA coverage for more than 1,000,000 ha of snow leopard range, which increases PA coverage of the two priority national snow leopard landscapes (Zhongar Alatau, and North/Central Tian Shan) from ~40% to ~90% (Zhongar Alatau = ~1,000,000 ha of snow	Area of newly established PAs, according to government approval decree documents, as reported in annual PIR, and verified by MTR and TE	- National political commitment to expanding the PA system remains firm - Project does not encounter critical risks related to stakeholders in establishment of new PAs - Various forms of PAs provide for improved conservation of biodiversity

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
				leopard habitat, with current PA coverage of ~30%, which will increase by approximately 645,000 ha or 61% of snow leopard range; North/Central Tian Shan ~1,100,000 ha of snow leopard range, with current PA coverage of ~48%, which will increase by approximately 440,000 ha, or 40% of snow leopard range)		
	6. Forest PA management effectiveness	Baseline METT Scores: <u>Alpine forest ecosystems:</u> Almaty Zapovednik: 67 Ile-Alatau NP: 66 Kolsay Kolderi NP: 80 Kolsay Kolderi NP Expansion: 24 Zhongar Alatau NP: 59 Zhongar Alatau NP Expansion: 27 SW Zhongar Alatau ("Koksu Reserve") (proposed): 23 Sairam-Ugam NP: 71 Aksu-Jabagly Zapovednik: 81 Karatau NP: 81 Karatau NP Expansion: 17 Katon Karagay NP: 20 Markakol Reserve: 48 Zapadno-Altay Reserve: 77 Ketmen Reserve (proposed): 21 Terskey Reserve (proposed): 21 Merke Reserve (proposed): 18	Increase in METT Score: <u>Alpine forest ecosystems:</u> Almaty Zapovednik: 68 Ile-Alatau NP: 67 Kolsay Kolderi NP: 81 Kolsay Kolderi NP Expansion: 25 Zhongar Alatau NP: 60 Zhongar Alatau NP Expansion: 28 SW Zhongar Alatau ("Koksu Reserve") (proposed): 24 Sairam-Ugam NP: 72 Aksu-Jabagly Zapovednik: 82 Karatau NP: 82 Karatau NP Expansion: 25 Katon Karagay NP: 21 Markakol Reserve: 49 Zapadno-Altay Reserve: 78 Ketmen Reserve (proposed): 22 Terskey Reserve (proposed): 22 Merke Reserve (proposed): 19	30% improvement in score gap ((1 – METT value)*0.3) over baseline Target METT Scores: <u>Alpine forest ecosystems:</u> Almaty Zapovednik: 77 Ile-Alatau NP: 76 Kolsay Kolderi NP: 86 Kolsay Kolderi NP Expansion: 47 Zhongar Alatau NP: 71 Zhongar Alatau NP Expansion: 49 SW Zhongar Alatau ("Koksu Reserve") (proposed): 46 Sairam-Ugam NP: 80 Aksu-Jabagly Zapovednik: 87 Karatau NP: 87 Karatau NP Expansion: 42 Katon Karagay NP: 44 Markakol Reserve: 64 Zapadno-Altay Reserve: 84 Ketmen Reserve (proposed): 45 Terskey Reserve	GEF-6 BD Tracking Tool METT for each PA	- Project activities are sufficiently targeted to increase PA METT score - Project results, in terms of increase METT score, can be documented within the timeframe of the project - Proposed PAs are established in time to begin implementation of PA including strengthening of management

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
		Saur-Manrak Reserve (proposed): 17 Tarbagatai NP (proposed): 18  <u>Floodplain (tugai) and saxaul forest:</u> Charyn Canyon NP: 68 Syr Darya-Turkestan Reserve: 73 Ile-Balkhash Reserve (proposed): 15 Ile Floodplain Reserve (proposed): 16	Saur-Manrak Reserve (proposed): 18 Tarbagatai NP (proposed): 19  <u>Floodplain (tugai) and saxaul forest:</u> Charyn Canyon NP: 69 Syr Darya-Turkestan Reserve: 74 Ile-Balkhash Reserve (proposed): 16 Ile Floodplain Reserve (proposed): 17	(proposed): 45 Merke Reserve (proposed): 43 Saur-Manrak Reserve (proposed): 42 Tarbagatai NP (proposed): 43  <u>Floodplain (tugai) and saxaul forest:</u> Charyn Canyon NP: 78 Syr Darya-Turkestan Reserve: 81 Ile-Balkhash Reserve (proposed): 41 Ile Floodplain Reserve (proposed): 41		
	7. Level of achievement of Kazakhstan's forest PAs in securing their biodiversity and other associated values	No forest PAs in Kazakhstan have achieved "Green List" certification	Green List certification assessment process initiated	At least 1 forest PA has had a preliminary Green List assessment	Presence of Green List assessment, as verified by MTR and TE	- Criteria of Green List standard are suitable for Kazakhstan context
<b>Component 2.</b> Better integration of forest PAs in wider landscape, including enabling environment for sustainable management of conservation-important ecosystems  <b>Outcome 2.1:</b> Improved management of high conservation value forests and pastures in forest PA landscapes with direct community benefits  <b>Outcome 2.2:</b> Strengthened enabling environment to support SFM objectives through updated national policies, regulations, and	8. Change in area of sustainably managed forest in forest ecosystems bordering protected areas	N/A	N/A ( <i>achievement of result not expected at mid-point</i> )	>1,000,000 ha, as indicated by adoption of improved HCVF management practices in 6 targeted leskhozoes	GEF-6 SFM Tracking Tool cell C18	- Forest managers are open and willing to implement HCVF management measures - Institutional framework re-alignment in the forest sector does not interfere with forest management planning at the site level
	9. Reduction in degraded and deforested area in targeted forestry territories bordering protected areas	11,305.60 ha Leskhoz: degraded ha, deforested ha Bakanas: (no data for degraded area, lack of monitoring capacity), 7,104 ha Narynkol: 70.6 ha, 67 ha Uygur: 986.4 ha, 3.2 ha Zaysan: 786 ha, 1646 ha Zharkent: 453.4 ha, 189 ha Zhongar: No data, lack of monitoring capacity.	No net degradation area beyond baseline	>5% improvement over baseline	Reporting by targeted leskhozoes ( <i>Note: Baseline determined as per existing methodology and data (area of sanitary cutting and other technical activities), which is not comprehensively reflective of forest characteristics. An updated methodology for calculating forest degradation and</i>	- Forest degradation is not significantly worse than currently known - Forest degradation can be changed and documented within project lifetime - New threats do not emerge (or rate of impact of threats does not significantly change)

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
knowledge management systems supporting improved management of 12,652,400 ha of national forest territory <b>Outcome 2.3:</b> Integrated economic and environmental valuation of ecosystem services and SFM criteria and indicators embedded in decision making in natural resource management, through piloting of innovative sustainable economic development planning mechanisms					<i>deforestation will be determined at the inception phase and described in inception report.)</i>	
	10. Change in area of degradation in pasture and forest pasture landscapes bordering protected areas	Total: 0 ha with reduced degradation out of 73,000 degraded ha of pastureland	N/A ( <i>achievement of result not expected at mid-point</i> )	Total: 73,000 ha with reduced degradation	GEF-6 PMAT (Land Degradation) Tracking Tool, sheet 2 ("Project Context") cell C17.	- Implementation of improved pasture management planning leads to reduced degradation
	11. Area outside PAs with enhanced conservation management (PA corridors and buffer zones identified in district integrated management plans)	N/A (no conservation measures planned in targeted districts)	N/A ( <i>achievement of result not expected at mid-point</i> )	350,000 ha	GIS analysis of integrated management plan maps, validated by terminal evaluation	- District authorities are able and willing to apply and implement integrated management plans in other district land use planning policies and procedures
	12. Number of good practice models for private afforestation established in Kazakhstan	N/A (no models yet established by project)	Afforestation initiated in four pilot models with identified key partners	Two functional and replicable models demonstrated as feasible to meet key gaps in private afforestation regulatory framework: One private-sector based, and one community-based	Project documentation, assessment by terminal evaluation	- Potential private afforestation partners remain willing and interested based on terms to be defined for afforestation pilot models
	13. Degree to which policy and regulatory context for managing natural resources incorporates ecosystem services	No methodology for considering full cost-benefit of ecosystem services incorporated in natural resource management policy and regulatory framework	One TSA initiated	At least one regulation adopted at provincial or national level that recognizes and incorporates TSA methodology	Project documentation, assessment by terminal evaluation	- Piloting of TSA in Kazakhstan context is successful, and deemed valuable by stakeholders
<b>Component 3.</b> International cooperation and knowledge management <b>Outcome 3.1</b> Increased capacities of Kazakhstan to monitor its wildlife, ensure law enforcement and share knowledge.	14. Quality and coverage of snow leopard monitoring data in Kazakhstan as indicated by estimated accuracy and timeliness of national snow leopard population estimate	Latest population estimate 15 years prior (2001) with a 91% confidence level (lowest possible estimated population / highest possible estimated population, i.e. 100/110 = 91%)	Updated snow leopard population estimate for 2019	Publishing of annual population estimates with a 95% or greater confidence level	Annual national snow leopard monitoring database	- Accurately estimating snow leopard population can be done within a 12-month period - It is in the national interest to report an accurate level of snow leopard population on an annual basis

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
						- The project, along with other partner initiatives, can provide full national coverage for snow leopard monitoring
	15. Level of international cooperation and coordination with Kazakhstan border countries regarding illegal wildlife trade, biodiversity management in borderland protected areas, and snow leopard monitoring	No formal international agreement between Kazakhstan and neighboring countries related to snow leopard conservation	At least one regional meeting held related to cooperation and coordination for snow leopard conservation	International agreement between Kazakhstan and at least one bordering country under implementation regarding at least one of the below issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cooperation on law enforcement at border points regarding illegal wildlife trade</li> <li>- Illegal hunting by border guards</li> <li>- Data sharing on snow leopard monitoring</li> </ul>	Existence/absence of agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Political will exists between Kazakhstan and at least one bordering country to cooperate on snow leopard conservation</li> <li>- An agreement can be negotiated and adopted within the life of the project</li> <li>- Cooperation on snow leopard conservation presents the opportunity for a non-politically threatening issue for international cooperation</li> </ul>
<b>Cross-cutting: Gender mainstreaming during implementation</b>	16. Consistency of project gender mainstreaming approach with project plans	N/A – Project not under implementation; project design includes multiple elements designed to mainstream gender	Project gender mainstreaming action plan completed by end of 1 <sup>st</sup> year of project implementation	Gender mainstreaming carried out during project implementation, as indicated by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Board and local stakeholder working groups have gender balance and/or include a gender expert;</li> <li>Policies, laws, and regulations developed with project support include gender perspectives, as relevant</li> <li>Project events and activities (e.g. trainings) promote</li> </ol>	Monitoring via annual project reporting (PIR) by project team; Verification at mid-term review and terminal evaluation by independent external experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All relevant stakeholders support or are in accordance with gender mainstreaming efforts undertaken by the project</li> </ul>

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
				<p>gender balance among invited participants, as feasible</p> <p>d. Project education and awareness activities are developed and carried out incorporating gender perspectives, as relevant</p>		

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

**Note:** All of the STAP and GEF Council comments have been responded to in section A.1.3 of this document. The responses and explanation of adjustments is repeated in the table below for this Annex.

Components	Comments on the strategic focus	Strategic Adjustment
Whole Project / Overall Strategy	<p>STAP: STAP recommends strengthening the links between the activities, outputs, outcomes and the objective. For example, the problem statement (drivers and root causes of degradation) mixes minor issues (e.g. no census of snow leopards), with symptoms (e.g. land conversion) and causes (highly centralized governance, lack of property rights, economic growth); therefore, the concept does not provide a coherent cause-effect logic for how these are related. Similarly, the pathways whereby SFM/SLM indicators and data will be translated into ecosystem outcomes need to be developed in addition to the pathways linking protected areas, landscape management and snow leopard conservation that are needed to reach the objective. Articulating a theory of change in the project design can help address this issue, and strengthen the likelihood of achieving the proposed global environmental benefits. When developing the theory of change, the following issues should be addressed: i) involve stakeholders in the development of the theory of change; ii) explore whether the objective can be achieved through incremental changes (adaptation) to the social-ecological system, or whether transforming the system will be required; iii) develop impact pathways that are needed to achieve the changes required to meet the objective (step ii); and, iv) adjust the theory of change to capture learning, including learning that evolves through adaptive management. UNDP might consider using the Resilience, Adaptation Pathways and Transformation Assessment (RAPTA) to develop the theory of change, and identify options for adaptive management.</p>	<p>The project strategy and causal chain was significantly strengthened during the project development phase. The barriers to achievement of the desired normative status have been defined, and the project theory-of-change has been articulated in the Prodoc Section III Strategy. The project theory-of-change was developed based on consultation with stakeholders at the local level during site-visits during the project development phase, and regularly through consultations with national stakeholders. The project strategy and design was reviewed and feedback provided during a national project stakeholder validation workshop in June 2017. The project development team reviewed the RAPTA approach, and integrated elements of this approach into the project design phase to the extent feasible. It was not feasible to follow this process in its entirety because this approach was not built into the project PPG implementation plan, which was developed prior to the publication of the RAPTA approach, and consequently the PPG was not budgeted in-line with the needs of completing the RAPTA approach. However, the project development team found the RAPTA approach useful, particularly in relation to Monitoring &amp; Assessment, Learning, and Knowledge Management (as outlined in Chapter 3.7 of the RAPTA guidelines).</p>
	<p>STAP: STAP suggests reducing significantly the scope of the project initially, and expanding as experience is gained. For instance, the project might focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using the practical development of a protected area (or a small number of protected areas) to build the capacity of the protected area agency, strengthen guidelines, policy, and legislation on</li> </ul>	<p>The scope of the project has been carefully analyzed and assessed during the project development period. The project in fact builds directly on the experience from multiple previous related initiatives, including UNDP's extensive experience working with the Government of Kazakhstan to develop and strengthen the country's protected areas network. In addition, during the project development phase the project activities were carefully planned and sequenced to build on each other, initially starting small, and then scaling-up through replication based on initial experience.</p>

Components	Comments on the strategic focus	Strategic Adjustment
	<p>protected areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing a pilot community land use project in the buffer zones of these protected areas, using an on- ground process to develop national guidelines and capacities. It is likely that Kazakhstan could quickly adopt and adapt a well-tested approach, such as the Namibian CBNRM initiative which combines tourism and hunting to incentivize local communities to rehabilitate habitat and protect wildlife, including endangered species;</li> <li>• developing a snow leopard conservation program that is linked to the above.</li> </ul> <p>In this way, the project develops communities-of-practice that learn by doing at field level, but are sufficiently connected at the national level to unlock barriers and institutionalize lessons and capacities. This approach might have more impact - start small and use pilot initiatives to identify and address root causes, barriers and opportunities.</p>	<p>This has been done particularly for activities where experience in the country may be more limited. For example, it is planned that under Output 2.1.4 related to integrated land and forest management plans at the district level the project will first carry out this activity in a single district, with the project team and stakeholders gaining experience related to the specific process for this output. The project will then more rapidly replicate this experience in the remaining five districts. A similar approach will be taken for the TSA activity, Output 2.3.1. In addition, the project activity related to the incentive-based forest ecosystem management partnership will be carried out with a similar approach: The small-scale field-based activities will be conducted initially (Output 2.1.3), and then the experience and lessons from these activities will be fed into a process for further development of national regulations and policy for public-private afforestation partnerships.</p>
	<p>STAP: 9. Additionally, STAP recommends defining the spatial scale of each intervention (e.g. community) and their relationships with the scales above (e.g. watershed); and below (e.g. household) to understand the full effect of the intervention. For example, the project intends to modify, or put in place, an enabling environment to engage widely communities and the private sector in ecosystem management in the wider landscape (Component 2). Understanding the links between scales will assist in analyzing the full effect of legislative and regulatory instruments and how they need to be modified in order to achieve the intended outcome.</p> <p>Analyzing cross scale interactions also will enable the project outcomes to be better linked to its parent program "Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation Program".</p>	<p>As part of the project development process the scale for each planned project output was defined, with the specific targeted areas identified. Additional information related to Component 2 is provided in this table below, but the scale of project activities in this activity are carefully defined. For example, the project activities related to the incentive-based forest ecosystem management partnership (Output 2.1.3) will be organized for four 50 hectare sites in three districts and two national parks. At the same time, work on the legislative and regulatory instruments (Output 2.2.4) drawing on the lessons from this activity will be undertaken at the national scale in order to facilitate scaling-up of the project experience. The project activity for developing integrated land and forest management plans (Output 2.1.4) will be undertaken at the district level in six districts. The scale of activities under Component 3 related to snow leopard conservation (e.g. monitoring, reporting, and landscape planning) have also been carefully defined, although the project is not actually formally linked to the Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem and Conservation Program.</p>
	<p>STAP: 8. For all three components, it will be important to describe in detail the social, economic, and biophysical aspects. This will determine the social-ecological structure and function of the target areas which will be important to integrating protected areas into the wider landscape (Component 1); identifying areas of potential conflict between biodiversity conservation and agricultural/livestock production activities (Component 1); enabling and engaging communities in</p>	<p>The social, economic and biophysical context of the project has been fully expanded on and included in the Prodoc. This information is briefly summarized in Section II. Development Challenge of the UNDP Prodoc, with significant additional information included in Prodoc Annexes (in order to limit the size of the Prodoc). Relevant annexes include: Annex F UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Protocol; Annex G. Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan; Annex H. Gender Analysis and Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan; Annex I. UNDP Risk Log; Annex K. Project Target Region Profiles; Annex L. Data and Maps of Targeted Project Regions; Annex M.</p>

Components	Comments on the strategic focus	Strategic Adjustment
	ecosystem restoration activities such as reforming land tenure, timber and non-timber markets, improved pasture management (Component 2); and revise hunting and tourism practices (Component 3), and will guide the identification of which of these many proposed interventions are the highest priority.	Legislation and Policy Context; Annex P. Baseline Market Study on Potential for Private Afforestation; Annex Q. The Situation of HCVF in Kazakhstan; and Annex R. Forest Context, and Forest Policy and Administration in Kazakhstan.
	STAP: STAP recommends defining a multi-stakeholder plan that is built on a stakeholder analysis. This will be important because the project will work across sectors and scales, which increases the chances that diverse knowledge and governance arrangements will exist. Accounting for these issues is important for achieving the project outcomes that focus on strengthening landscape approaches for ecosystem management. Additionally, the stakeholder analysis and plan will assist with understanding which stakeholders should be engaged, at what stage and for what purpose(s) (e.g. to achieve what outputs and outcomes). A well functioning stakeholder plan will also be important to deliver knowledge among stakeholders and to establish a learning framework for the project. Currently, this information is not described in the PIF.	The project stakeholder analysis was reviewed and updated during the project development phase, and a project multi-stakeholder engagement plan has been included as Annex G to the Prodoc. In addition, the 3 <sup>rd</sup> component of the project has been more fully developed to include activities supporting knowledge management and learning amongst stakeholders.
	Germany: Our analysis yields the impression that the project, as detailed in the PIF, is focusing on three very different and not directly interlinked complexes of ecosystems in five large mountain systems, three river deltas and one desert region, i.e. nine large project regions. Therefore, Germany recommends, in line with the STP comment, considering possible increases in terms of effectiveness and efficiency of the proposed project by limiting the project intervention on fewer ecosystem types and project regions.	The project is focusing on three major regions (East Kazakhstan Province, Almaty Province, and South Kazakhstan Province) covering four mountain areas (Altai, Zhongar Alatau, North-Central Tien Shan, and West Tien Shan), and two major watersheds (Ile River basin, Syr Darya River basin). During the project development phase the scope of the project was carefully reviewed, and strategic decisions were taken to ensure that the scope of project activities remained as tightly focused as possible for efficiency and effectiveness. For example, a decision was made to exclude field sites located in Kyzylorda Province, in order to limit the number of government entities involved in project activities.  Although the geographic focus of the project is large, the scope of the project will be efficient because A.) The forest and forest-pasture ecosystems targeted are by and large under the institutional mandate of a single government entity, the Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture; and B.) The project primarily focuses on forest ecosystems, which are covered by a single legal and policy framework. Even though floodplain forests are ecologically different than alpine forests, their management is governed by the same institutional and policy framework.
	Germany: Germany requests a revision of the data and information presented in the preparation of the final project document. For sake of clarification we list a few items	The Prodoc has been fully reviewed by national experts to confirm all data presented. In particular, since the PPG an external analysis of Key Biodiversity Areas was completed for the region (CEPF's Ecosystem Profile for the

Components	Comments on the strategic focus	Strategic Adjustment
	to illustrate our concerns: The PIF mentions a number of species listed on the IUCN Red List. A cross-check of the conservation status of these species should be undertaken to focus activities on rare and threatened species. It should be verified if the mentioned species' habitats do match with the project regions.	"Mountains of Central Asia" hotspot). Information related to this KBA analysis has been included in the Prodoc, highlighting the fact that all of the KBAs in Kazakhstan identified for the Mountains of Central Asia hotspot are covered by the project.
	Germany: Germany believes it is a necessary precondition for successful implementation of the proposed project to have a realistic estimation of the possible level of co-financing and scope of the project. The final project document should therefore explain in sufficient detail the envisaged co-financing of the proposed GEF-project by the Government of Kazakhstan in its additionality to funding of ongoing programs as well as its feasibility in the light of the status of relevant programs and the overall budgetary situation.	The project's co-financing was confirmed during the project development phase, and the co-financing commitment letters accompany the Prodoc.
<i>Component 1: Improved representation of globally important forest biodiversity and improved management of protected conservation-important forests.</i>	Germany: Germany would like to underline the importance of increasing the quality of protected area management and governance for achieving positive impacts on biodiversity conservation. We consider this an extremely important dimension of Aichi Target 11. We therefore request that the final project document builds upon a thorough analysis of these issues and elaborates clearly on envisaged improvements of management quality of protected areas.	<p>The importance of protected areas management and governance has been further detailed and emphasized in the project design. Component 1 of the project now represents activities solely focused on expanding and strengthening the protected area network of Kazakhstan, and this component is budgeted for \$2.55 million USD. The project will focus on existing protected areas covering 2.19 million hectares, and it is planned that the project will help catalyze new protected areas covering an additional 2.53 million hectares.</p> <p>A protected areas capacity needs assessment was completed as an input to the project design activities, and is included as Annex O to the Prodoc. This capacity needs assessment was primarily based on the key input of a survey of PA staff in Kazakhstan. The survey was completed by 709 PA staff from five different level of managerial responsibility during the survey period in February 2017. The survey design drew on international standards for PA competences developed by IUCN experts. The standards covered 125 competences in 10 categories and at four levels.</p> <p>In addition, as part of the GEF project development process the project was required to completed baseline PA Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool assessments of all protected areas targeted by the project, as part of the GEF biodiversity focal area tracking tool. The METT scores for the targeted PA have been used as an indicator in the project results framework, and the target values for increasing METT scores specified as project results targets. This issue is further emphasized by the fact that the project will also pilot for the first time in Kazakhstan the recently developed IUCN Green List Standard for protected areas; the achievement of one PA in Kazakhstan meeting the Green List standard is also included as a results target in the project results framework.</p>
<i>Component 2:</i>	STAP: STAP recommends researching	During the project development phase relevant experiences

Components	Comments on the strategic focus	Strategic Adjustment
<p><i>Better integration of forest PAs in wider landscape, including enabling environment for sustainable management of conservation-important ecosystems.</i></p>	<p>what similar conservation/integrated economic and environment management approaches have worked elsewhere, particular in Central Asia. Learning from past, or on- going, projects (including other projects in the parent program) will strengthen the evidence used to design the project and underpin the sustainability of the proposed activities. For example, the project developers might look into the lessons and successes on creating an enabling environment for community and private investments (output 2.2.2) in South Africa and Namibia, two countries with extensive experience on these issues.</p>	<p>from other similar approaches in Kazakhstan and within the region were reviewed and experiences integrated into the project design. For example, the wide experience of the CACILM initiative was reviewed; many of the stakeholders involved in this project have also been involved with these previous initiatives. As another example, the project design draws on the experience of a sustainable land management project (also a UNDP-GEF project) in the Suusamyr Valley of neighboring Kyrgyzstan.</p>
	<p>STAP: For the activities on ecosystem restoration and ecosystem valuation (Component 2), more information, and analyses, will be needed. Specifically, it will be important to detail how ecosystem valuations will translate into land use incentives, and outcomes in Kazakhstan.</p>	<p>This relates most directly to Outcome 2.3 of the project, which aims to apply the Targeted Scenario Analysis approach to forest management issues in Kazakhstan. This project element has been further significantly developed during the project planning phase. The initial step will be conducting at least one TSA analysis on a key forest management issue, which will be followed according to the TSA guidelines. Considering that there is no previous experience applying this tool in Kazakhstan the project will rely on some international technical expertise to develop the approach. During the project development phase a feasibility assessment of potential scenarios was conducted, and is included as an annex to the Prodoc. Based on the results of the TSA, the resource management plans targeted will be revised to improve the management of forest or other relevant resources. For example, one likely scenario for TSA application relates to the management of water resources from the Moinak hydropower facility, which is upstream from Charyn River National Park. The hydropower facility was recently constructed, and the water regulation regime has not yet been optimized for ecological requirements. The project will work with the hydropower authority to identify the management regime that is most optimum to meet economic and ecological requirements for the downstream riparian forest ecosystem, which includes the rare Sogdian Ash (<i>Fraxinus sogdiana</i>), which has been negatively impacted by the reduced water regime since the hydropower facility was built. Following the experience of the TSAs in Kazakhstan, the project will also work to integrate this approach into relevant regulatory frameworks, and to build capacity within Kazakhstan to implement the TSA approach in the future.</p>
	<p>STAP: Additionally, for component 2 the project developers could consult the following paper that characterizes the socioeconomic and agro-environmental challenges on recultivating abandoned croplands. The paper also focuses on the trade-offs between carbon stocks and biodiversity conservation, which might be useful information for designing the project. Meyfroidt, P., et al. "Drivers, constraints</p>	<p>Thank you for this input, as it is highly useful to have suggestions regarding the most recent scientific research on these important issues. This scientific article was reviewed, for relevance potential inputs to the project design. Overall the article was determined to be of relatively low relevance, as the project is not working on arable land, but rather on pastureland. In addition, the project's approach to ecosystem restoration is to support and facilitate natural restoration processes by implementing community-based sustainable land management approaches. The project's</p>

Components	Comments on the strategic focus	Strategic Adjustment
	<p>and trade-offs associated with recultivating abandoned cropland in Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan". Global Environmental Change 37 (2016) 1-15.</p> <p>STAP: Additionally, STAP recommends drawing on best practice of community rhino/wildlife management in Namibia for output 3.</p> <p>Germany: The conservation of ungulates through sustainable hunting and the inclusion of forest users should be explicitly addressed in the final project document as well as the direct involvement of local communities in the management and use of game species as well as the illegal trade in Saxaul. In line with the STAP review, we recommend adopting and adapting "a well-tested approach, such as the Namibian CBNRM initiative", including pilot projects for community-based wildlife management. Experiences from German Development Cooperation in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Pakistan could inform this process.</p>	<p>work in this regard is expected to have benefits for biodiversity, climate change, and land degradation.</p> <p>During the PPG phase a feasibility assessment was conducted to consider the possibility of piloting a community-based wildlife management scheme based on a community-operated sustainable hunting enterprise, akin to the experience in Namibia. It was determined that this approach would not be effective or efficient based on the conditions and context of the trophy hunting sector in Kazakhstan. The feasibility assessment is included as an annex to the Prodoc. Kazakhstan has a well-developed professional trophy hunting sector, with numerous commercial trophy hunting companies. There is not a sufficient cost-benefit for developing a community-based hunting enterprise that could compete with existing commercial hunting companies in order to be self-sustaining. The impact for biodiversity would be minimal within the wider context of Kazakhstan, while the investment required would be significant. Local people are already employed by the existing hunting companies, and therefore do have a financial interest in ensuring healthy wildlife populations. In addition, there is currently not an adequate regulatory framework for the development of such community-based enterprises; facilitating this would require a revision of the national wildlife management and hunting sector laws, in order to designate hunting concession territories available to be managed by communities. Further, the major threat to wildlife in terms of poaching is from "outsiders" (often politicians or businessmen) who come from the cities to the remote areas, and who now have the technological capacity from GIS and satellite images to guide themselves in the field. Therefore, it was determined that the most effective strategic approach for this output would be to support the improved enforcement and awareness of existing hunting regulations, and cooperate with hunting companies to ensure sustainable management of wildlife in hunting concession territories that neighbor PAs. In addition the project will work to revise wildlife management guidelines as necessary to ensure ecologically sound management of wildlife in the hunting sector. This approach aligns with other ongoing efforts by UNDP and the FWC to improve wildlife management in Kazakhstan. The project will work to support strengthening the economic benefits to communities from trophy hunting enterprises, such as through increasing the share of revenue that local communities receive from hunting, as per the model and experience that has been implemented in neighboring Kyrgyzstan, where local communities receive 25% of revenues from hunting enterprises in their jurisdiction. This approach does not preclude the wider set of project activities to address other types of threats to wildlife, such as the need for sustainable land use plans.</p>

Components	Comments on the strategic focus	Strategic Adjustment
<i>Component 3: International cooperation and knowledge management.</i>	STAP: Component 3 as it stands is currently very broad, seeking to achieve outcomes on law enforcement, tourism and hunting management, ecological monitoring, and cross-border participation. A less ambitious focus is more likely to be successful.	The scope of Component 3 has been further tightened to focus on knowledge management and coordination, and ensure that the project is not overambitious within this component. The project does not currently include tourism and hunting management activities under this output. The central strategic approach under this component relates to the conservation of snow leopards, within the broader context of sustainable pasture and forest management. Insufficient knowledge management and coordination among stakeholders are key barriers to snow leopard conservation in Kazakhstan, and the project will seek to at least partially address these barriers. This requires coordination amongst law enforcement authorities that are responsible for enforcing wildlife laws, including border control guards. Since all of Kazakhstan's snow leopard populations are transboundary, the project will also support coordination on snow leopard conservation issues with the neighboring countries.
	STAP: 10. STAP recommends building a knowledge management and learning component into the project, or linking it to the program learning. It can benefit the monitoring and assessment of the project and program.	The project has further developed the knowledge management and learning activities under Component 3 of the project, in line with STAP comments, primarily under Output 3.1.4. The project takes a multi-pronged approach to the knowledge management and learning element of the project. At an overarching level, the project design includes stakeholder education and awareness activities that will target key issues, such as the implementation of NTFP sustainable use regulations and hunting regulations. The project also includes a number of activities related to knowledge management regarding snow leopard conservation activities, such as the establishment of a virtual snow leopard research and monitoring center, to coordinate and aggregate snow leopard monitoring data from across the country. The project expects to leverage this data into publishing an annual "State of the Snow Leopard" report. Further, considering that Kazakhstan's snow leopard populations are transboundary populations with neighboring countries, the project includes a target of establishing an MoU with at least one neighboring country on sharing snow leopard monitoring data. The project includes other important knowledge management and learning activities, such as training programs for PA staff, forestry staff, and natural resource management authorities that will showcase the project's experiences and lessons. The project also includes an activity for the publication of good practice guidelines and lessons for forest managers, pasture managers, and wildlife managers.
	Germany: Germany is skeptical at this point in time that the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation Program could be parent programs. According to our information the Snow Leopard (SL) only inhabits mountain grasslands. The final project document should therefore elaborate on the interlinkage between the components focusing on forest and woodland ecosystem types and the Component III focusing on snow leopard which remains not fully	Thank you for highlighting this point. This is correct; the project is in fact not formally linked to the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation Program (GSLEP) in relation to GEF funding and programmatic approach. The project does include elements that are directly linked technically (e.g. international snow leopard monitoring standards) to and coordinated with the GSLEP, but there is no formal linkage. For instance the project will work to support implementation of Kazakhstan's National Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation Program (NSLEP), and through this process will contribute to the GSLEP

Components	Comments on the strategic focus	Strategic Adjustment
	coherent in the PIF.	<p>objective of securing 20 snow leopard landscapes by 2020. A large share of the project activities will be focused within the two national priority snow leopard landscapes in Kazakhstan, the Zhongar Alatau, and the North-Central Tien Shan.</p> <p>In terms of the ecosystems targeted, the project focuses on the conservation and sustainable management of forest and forest-pasture ecosystems. A new output was added to Component 3 of the project, relating to the targeted implementation of Kazakhstan's NSLEP, and in particular the development of snow leopard landscape management plans. This will facilitate the broader linkage of activities under Component 3 with the activities under Component 1 and Component 2, while simultaneously supporting the linkage to the international GSLEP target of securing 20 snow leopard landscapes by 2020.</p> <p>The project is designed as an integrated biodiversity-SFM/SLM project, with the underlying primary biodiversity conservation theme related to the conservation of snow leopards. The primary habitat for snow leopards is alpine pasture ecosystems with little or no tree cover, but there is new research emerging related to snow leopards that highlights their seasonal use of forest ecosystems – primarily related on the fact that snow leopard prey species move to lower elevations during the winter period. For example, camera trap monitoring in Almaty Reserve (one of the key project PAs in the North-Central Tien Shan, with an estimated 22 snow leopards that make use of the reserve territory) has shown that snow leopards can be found in sub-alpine zones from November to mid-April, and tracks of snow leopards have been recorded as low as elevations of 1,300 m (with visual presence validated by camera traps down to 1,420 m). In this ecosystem the forest zone begins at 1,200 m and extends up to 2,900 m, with some stands of Tien Shan fir (<i>Picea schrenkiana</i>) being found at even higher elevations. Therefore it is clear that intact and well-managed mountain forest and forest pasture ecosystems can have an important role to play for healthy snow leopard populations, particularly during the critical winter period.</p>
	Germany: The use of DNA markers for the SL monitoring program by at least 4 research institutions and 1 laboratory should be reconsidered in the light of possible cooperation with already established and experienced research institutions. Germany recommends to carefully evaluating alternative, cost effective solutions in the further development of this project.	<p>This activity has been reviewed further, and has been slightly scaled back in ambition. The project plans to conduct a feasibility assessment of national laboratories, with the goal of using existing national laboratory capacity if feasible. However, at the same time, the project expects to work with some of the same international partners that have already been active in snow leopard conservation in the region, including genetic laboratories in France, and snow leopard monitoring software partners in the UK.</p> <p>During the project development phase it was determined that the use of DNA markers for snow leopard monitoring can be useful for limited specific purposes. At the current state of technological development DNA analysis cannot yet reliably assess familial relationships between snow leopards, or other complex information. However, the presence of snow leopards <u>can</u> be reliably determined through DNA analysis, for example, in comparison to other species. Therefore the project will limit its reliance and</p>

Components	Comments on the strategic focus	Strategic Adjustment
		investment in this promising but not yet fully developed technology.

# ANNEX C: STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION ACTIVITIES AND THE USE OF FUNDS<sup>14</sup>

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

PPG Grant Approved at PIF: 150,000 USD			
<i><b>Project Preparation Activities Implemented</b></i>	<i><b>GETF/LDCF/SCCF/CBIT Amount (\$)</b></i>		
	<i><b>Budgeted Amount</b></i>	<i><b>Amount Spent To date</b></i>	<i><b>Amount Committed</b></i>
Component A: Technical Review	10,000.00	10,000.00	
Component B: Institutional arrangements, monitoring and evaluation	100,000.00	87,580.00	12,420.00
Component C: Financial planning and co-financing investments:	20,000.00		20,000.00
Component D: Validation workshop	5,000.00		5,000.00
Component E: Completion of final documentation	15,000.00	11,978.00	3,022.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>150,000.00</b>	<b>109,558.00</b>	<b>40,442.00</b>

<sup>14</sup> If at CEO Endorsement, the PPG activities have not been completed and there is a balance of unspent fund, Agencies can continue to undertake the activities up to one year of project start. No later than one year from start of project implementation, Agencies should report this table to the GEF Secretariat on the completion of PPG activities and the amount spent for the activities. Agencies should also report closing of PPG to Trustee in its Quarterly Report.  
GEF6 CEO Endorsement /Approval Template-August2016

**ANNEX D: CALENDAR OF EXPECTED REFLOWS** (if non-grant instrument is used)

Provide a calendar of expected reflows to the GEF/LDCF/SCCF/CBIT Trust Funds or to your Agency (and/or revolving fund that will be set up)

*Not applicable.*