



# Midterm Review Report

UNDP-GEF Project: Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, Sustainable Use, and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems (SECURE-Himalaya)

GEF Project ID: 9148

UNDP Project ID: 3298

**Country:** India

**Region:** Asia and the Pacific

**Focal Area:** Multi-focal area: Biodiversity, Land Degradation and Sustainable Forest Management (GEF-6)

**GEF Agency:** United Nations Development Programme

**Executing Agencies:** Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change  
Implementing partners are: State Forest Departments of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Union Territory of Ladakh; relevant line departments and community based organizations at each state; and other partners.

Date	Version	Comments
2 December 2022	01	First draft
29 December 2022		Final

# Document Review Sign-Off

This Midterm Review Report, version 1.0, dated 4 December 2022, for the UNDP-Supported GEF-Financed Full Size Project, **“Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, Sustainable Use, and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems (SECURE-Himalayas)”**, has been reviewed by the following signatories.

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Please also refer to **Annex 11** for the formal Midterm Review Clearance form to be signed by the Commissioning Unit and UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor.

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## PROJECT DETAILS:

<b>Project Name:</b>	Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, Sustainable Use, and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems (SECURE-Himalaya)	
<b>Project ID:</b>	UNDP PIMS ID: 3298	GEF Project ID: 9148
<b>Country:</b>	India	
<b>Region:</b>	Asia and the Pacific	
<b>Focal Area:</b>	Multi-focal area: Biodiversity, Land Degradation and Sustainable Forest Management (GEF-6)	
<b>Area Objective/Outcome:</b>	BD-1 Program 3; BD-4 Program 9; LD-2 Program 3; LD-3 Program 4; SFM-1 Program 1;  SFM-1 Program 2; SFM-3 Program 7	
<b>Funding Source:</b>	GEF Trust Fund	
<b>Implementing Agency:</b>	United Nations Development Programme	
<b>Implementation Modality:</b>	National Implementation Modality (NIM)	
<b>Executing Agencies:</b>	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change  State Forest Departments of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Union Territory of Ladakh; relevant line departments and CSOs at each state; and other partners	

## FINANCIALS:

<b>GEF Project Grant:</b>	USD 11,544,192
<b>Co-financing Government:</b>	USD 59,820,000 (in kind)
<b>UNDP:</b>	USD 1,000,000
<b>Total Cost:</b>	USD 72,364,192

## PROJECT TIMELINE:

<b>PIF Approval date:</b>	04 June 2015
<b>CEO Approval date:</b>	21 June 2017
<b>ProDoc Signature date:</b>	5 December 2017
<b>Project Start date:</b>	5 December 2017

<b>Project Period:</b>	7 years (84 months)
<b>Project Closing (Planned):</b>	5 Dec 2024

## MIDTERM REVIEW DETAILS:

<b>MTR Timeframe:</b>	March-July 2022 (delayed and extended till 31 December 2022)
<b>MTR Team:</b>	Eklabya Sharma, National Consultant and Evaluator Sudarshan Rodriguez, National Consultant and Gender and Community Development Specialist
<b>MTR Reporting Language:</b>	English

## **Acknowledgements:**

The MTR team would like to acknowledge the information and feedback provided by interviewed project stakeholders, including the officials from the project implementing partners, including Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India; UNDP India Office; State Forest Departments of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Union Territory of Ladakh; National Institutions engaged in the project; relevant line departments and community based organizations at each state; and other partners and local beneficiaries in the four States and six landscapes.

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## Executive Summary

The project is implemented as a multi-focal project under the GEF-6 in the National Implementation Modality by an Executing Agency namely the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MOEF&CC) of the Government of India. The Executing Partners include State Forest Departments of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and Union Territory of Ladakh; relevant line departments and CSOs at each state. An exhaustive list of partners includes 9 national government agencies; 4 national level NGOs; State level NGOs; Key research institutions for wildlife studies, conservation and on Himalayan landscapes and livelihoods; Private sector; Local communities; International and regional consortia; and media and communication agencies. UNDP acts as the GEF Implementing Agency. Basic information on the project timeframe and finances are presented in Table 1 below.

<i>Table 1: Project information table</i>			
<b>Project Title:</b>	<i>Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, Sustainable Use, and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems (SECURE-Himalayas)</i>		
<b>UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):</b>	3298	<b>PIF Approval Date:</b>	04 June 2015
<b>GEF Project ID (PMIS #):</b>	9148	<b>CEO Endorsement Date:</b>	21 June 2017
<b>Atlas Award ID:</b>	00091297	<b>Project Document (ProDoc) Signature Date (date project began):</b>	5 December 2017
<b>Atlas Output ID:</b>	00096606	<b>Duration</b>	7 years (84 months)
<b>Country:</b>	India	<b>Date National Project Manager hired:</b>	Q2 2018
<b>Region:</b>	Asia and Pacific	<b>Inception Workshop date(s):</b>	<b>Uttarakhand:</b> 27 July 2019  <b>Himachal Pradesh:</b> 19 Sept 2019  <b>Sikkim:</b> 25 July 2019  <b>Union Territory of Ladakh (previously states of Jammu &amp; Kashmir):</b> 19 Oct 2019
<b>Focal Area: GWP Child Project:</b>	Yes	<b>Midterm Review date:</b>	15 March - 30 November 2022
<b>GEF-6 Strategic Programs:</b>	<b>Multi-focal:</b> BD-2 Program 3 BD-4 Program 9 LD-2 Program 3 LD-3 Program 4 SFM-1 Program 1 SFM-1 Program 2 SFM-3 Program 7	<b>Planned closing date:</b>	5 Dec 2024
<b>Trust Fund:</b>	GEF Trust Fund	<b>If revised, proposed closing date:</b>	N/A
<b>Executing Agency:</b>	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change		
<b>Other executing partners:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- State Forest Departments of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Union Territory of Ladakh; relevant line departments and CSOs at each state.</li> <li>- An exhaustive list of partners and their corresponding roles articulated in Table 3 of the Project Document. These include 9 national government agencies; 4 national level NGOs; State level NGOs; Key research institutions for wildlife studies, conservation and on Himalayan landscapes and livelihoods; Private sector; Local communities; International and regional consortia; and media and communication agencies.</li> <li>- As part of the MTR, partners will be assessed against the role envisaged per the Project's original design.</li> </ul>		

<i>Table 1 Continued... Financial Information</i>		
<i>Source of Financing</i>	<i>Amount at CEO Endorsement US\$</i>	<i>Amount at MTR (June 2022) US\$</i>
GEF Trust Fund	11,544,192	9,850,031
<b>GEF Sub-Total</b>	<b>11,544,192</b>	<b>9,850,031</b>
UNDP	1,000,000	535,000
Government (in-kind)	59,820,000	22,165,000
NGO (in-kind)	N/A	N/A
Private Sector (in-kind)	N/A	N/A
<b>Co-Financing Sub-Total</b>	<b>60,820,000</b>	<b>22,700,000</b>
<b>Project Total Project Value</b>	<b>72,364,192</b>	<b>32,550,031</b>

## Project Description

The project aims to support Government of India's efforts to conserve snow leopard habitats of the four States and Union territories in the Indian Himalaya. The project was designed to promote biodiversity conservation and the welfare of the indigenous people in Himalayan high altitudes coinciding with the snow leopard's distribution in India. This was to be achieved by (i) generating scientific knowledge of ecology and society across the Indian high altitudes, (ii) striking partnerships with the local communities to design and implement local biodiversity conservation initiatives, including mitigation strategies for human-wildlife conflicts, (iii) promoting capacity development amongst local communities, the state forest departments, and young conservationists, to monitor and conserve high altitude biodiversity, (iv) work with the Government, NGOs and other partners to develop and implement a scientifically well informed, and socially responsible Project Snow Leopard, and (vi) spread awareness of India's high altitude biodiversity at local and national levels through conservation education.

The project is structured around four inter-related and mutually complementary components that are focused at addressing the barriers relating to unsustainable use of land and forests and limited options for alternative livelihoods, inadequate protection and management of areas outside protected area networks and limited wildlife monitoring and wildlife crime related deterrent systems. The four components are (1) Conservation of key biodiversity areas; (2) Securing sustainable community livelihoods; (3) Enhancing enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and related threats; and (4) Knowledge management and monitoring & evaluation.

The project identified six high altitude landscapes in India for implementation, namely, Changthang in Ladakh Union Territory; Lahul and Pangi in Himachal Pradesh State; Gangotri-Govind and Darma-Byans in Uttarakhand State; and Kanchenjunga-Upper Teesta Basin in Sikkim State.

The rationale for the selection of these project landscapes is multi-faceted and has followed a consultative process both at national and sub-national levels. To begin with, the selected project landscapes exhibit immense conservation values given the presence of the snow leopard, plethora of associated Rare Endangered and Threatened species of fauna and flora along with the provision of essential ecosystem services of global significance. Apart from this, another key factor has been the ongoing and complimentary efforts of the Government of India for wildlife conservation in the Indian Himalayan region comprising the states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. The most significant of these efforts is the flagship - Project Snow Leopard (launched in 2004). It was therefore envisaged that together with the ongoing efforts of the Project Snow Leopard in the remaining key biodiversity areas of the Himalayan region; the SECURE Himalaya project would ensure the conservation of the entire extent of snow leopard landscapes which is an estimated area of 1,29,000 km<sup>2</sup> within India. Ecosystem services provided by these high-altitude landscapes benefit large population living in both mountains and downstream areas.

Major challenges addressed by the project are: (a) Climate change impacts at high altitude landscapes; (b) Balancing conservation with development; (c) Unsustainable harvesting of natural resources; (d) Degradation of resources and

habitats is also diminishing the ecosystem services; (e) Habitat degradation and fragmentation negatively impact wildlife population and their ranges; (f) Limited options for communities for improving their livelihoods at high altitude landscapes; (g) Capacities of local communities and government staff are limited to face emerging challenges; (h) Government policies are not fully implemented on the ground, and mountain perspectives are not yet sufficiently considered in policies, plans and practices; (i) Conflicts among the neighboring countries limit the regional cooperation perspective for managing and sharing the benefits.

The ecosystem services and wildlife conservation such as that of snow leopard being implemented by the project is contributing to the missions and action plans of India, namely National Mission on Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystems, National Mission on Himalayan Studies, and National Action Plan for Climate Change. The Project also builds on the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation Program. At the national level, as part of the GSLEP, India has the National Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Priorities. The NSLEP is consistent with and complimentary to the Gol's national Project Snow Leopard, designed for all biologically important habitats within the snow leopard's range.

The project duration is 7 years, starting from 5 December 2017 and scheduled to close on 5 December 2024. Implementation is funded with a USD 11,544,192 GEF project grant and USD 60,820,000 of co-financing, contributed by Government of India and four State Governments and UNDP. About 73% of total funding was realized by the midterm review.

### **Purpose and Methodology**

The objective of the MTR was to gain an independent analysis of the progress midway through the project. The MTR focused on identifying potential project design problems, assessing progress towards the achievement of the project objective, and identifying and documenting lessons learned about project design, implementation, and management. Findings of this review will be incorporated as recommendations for enhanced implementation during the remaining period of the project's term. The project performance was measured based on the indicators of the project results framework and relevant GEF tracking tools. The MTR was an evidence-based assessment and relied on feedback from persons who have been involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project, as well as beneficiaries of project interventions, and review of available documents and findings of the field mission.

### **Project Progress Summary**

The project officially started in December 2017 and appointed National Project Manager in the first half of 2018. The inception workshops in all the four states were completed during the second half of 2019. The MTR was conducted nearly 4<sup>1/2</sup> years following the signature of the Project Document (5 December 2017), well beyond its natural mid-point. Factoring in delays at the outset, the MTR occurred 3<sup>1/2</sup> years following the last inception workshop held in the Union Territory of Ladakh (19 October 2019).

The project strategy remains highly valid, perhaps more so than at design, in the context of the Government of India (Gol), UNDP and GEF strategic priorities and focal areas. The contribution to and value-added of the project to national priorities and the Gol's centrally supported "Project Snow Leopard" and investment in high-altitude Himalayan ecosystems is noteworthy. Strong consensus seen that the snow leopard and its habitats are getting national attention.

It is evident that there has been a paradigm shift and deeper appreciation of a landscape approach, which has been internalized, by local park staff and communities alike. This is essential to realizing the core objective and focus on skills development, technology, empowerment, products, and services.

Ownership at the state level is exceptionally strong, although not uniform, while ownership at the national level can be improved going forward in the time remaining. Additional governance structures approved by the Project Steering Committee early on, such as National Technical Committee, are underutilized and not as active, while State-level Technical Committee(s) and Village Biodiversity, Conservation and Development Committees have been quite engaged and effective. These governance structures were not part of the original design. It is assessed that the Steering Committees can play an ongoing and active role in de-risking project and steering implementation towards key objectives.

Abundant examples have been recorded of livelihood and income-generating activities, which are starting to bear fruits and will contribute to environmental sustainability post-project. Confluence of seasonality of activities, lengthy reorganization process in the Union Territory of Ladakh in 2019, delays in financial disbursements and COVID-19 have collectively led to significant delays and bottlenecks in achieving results.

Given the dearth in baseline information, myriad studies were conducted to build up the information and knowledge base. As such, a strength of the project is an impressive inventory of 23+ biodiversity technical studies, landscape-level participatory management strategies and plans, collection of socio-economic and livelihood data, monitoring protocol (SPAI) launched and underpinned by strong investment in capacity building and citizen science at all landscapes.

Substantial area (double than end term target) is being managed following participatory approaches in six landscapes by the four states. Of the total around 30% is within the PA system. This is already a remarkable achievement.

Outcome 4 is a cross cutting component whose heavy lifting is still ahead. Fruition time would normally be in last 20 % of project lifecycle for consolidation of results. Information vs. knowledge and management vs. practice – should be part of the exit / transition (consolidation going forward).

Multiple stakeholders have noted that the breadth of and democratization of technical information generated by the project from remote areas is very useful.

Some disconnect was observed between issues of focus in the project design and scale of issues on the ground especially on the Component 3 - Human Wildlife Conflict.

While in absolute terms, the project is seen as a low volume-funding project, it has shown value because of linking livelihoods with conservation. At the village level, small amounts of funding have produced outsized results.

With some targeted course-correction, the project has all the hallmarks of and should be a foundational and legacy project for India and the region as it is quite unique in focusing on lesser-known region and lesser-known species like snow leopard.

Gender and Analysis Action Plan was prepared during the project design phase and implemented across all landscapes and states. A key component of the project is mainstreaming gender and social inclusion to ensure both women and men, and all social groups participate actively in conservation action and benefit equally from project interventions.

Strong adaptive management in transitioning from more traditional PA approaches to more inclusive landscape approaches has been observed. High degree of internalization among key stakeholders has been found.

According to available expenditure reports provided by the UNDP CO, a total of USD 8,409,676 of the GEF implementation grant of USD 11,544,192 have been incurred through project midterm, around 73%. The total budget for the project is USD 72.36 million of whose 84% (USD 60.82 million) is the cofinancing contribution. Cofinance from MOEF&CC, GoI is cash, UNDP is both cash and in kind, whereas all the four states implementing project activities on the ground contribute in kind. The cofinance tracking especially by the states is limited.

There have been five project implementation review (PIR) reports by midterm, started in 2019 and produced reports each year till the last one in 2022. The PIR 2022 assesses that the overall risk rating for the project is 'moderate'. Only one critical risk has been reported for the reporting period that is COVID-19.

## Midterm Review Ratings

MTR ratings and a summary of achievements are presented below in **Table 2**.

**Table 2: MTR ratings and achievement summary table**

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
<b>Project Strategy</b>	Not Rated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project strategy remains highly valid, perhaps more so than at design, in the context of the Government of India, UNDP and GEF strategic priorities/focal areas. The contribution to and value-added of the project to national priorities and the Gol's centrally-supported "Project Snow Leopard" and investment in high-altitude Himalayan ecosystems is noteworthy. Strong consensus that the snow leopard and its habitats are getting national attention;</li> <li>• Through local level consultations and field visits by the MTR national consultant team, it is evident that there has been a fundamental paradigm shift and deeper appreciation of a landscape approach which has been internalized by local park staff and communities alike. This is essential to realizing the core objective of <i>"promoting the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secures conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats, ensure sustainable livelihoods and community socio-economic benefits"</i>;</li> <li>• Palpable shift away from "how much money will I receive under the project" attitude, to a focus on skills development, technology, empowerment, products and services</li> <li>• The Project's Strategic Results Framework still has substantial shortcomings, was not revisited at critical junctures (Inception Phase) is missing some baselines altogether. Some indicators present a high and unnecessary monitoring burden;</li> <li>• Work planning is weakly results-based, as several activities not included in the strategic results framework are pursued, whereas some core activities lag behind schedule. At the same time, work planning is ambitious and shows high delivery.</li> <li>• Confluence of seasonality of activities, lengthy reorganization process in the Union Territory of Ladakh in 2019, delays in financial disbursements and COVID-19 have collectively led to significant delays and bottlenecks in achieving results in Annual Work Plans;</li> <li>• Given the dearth in baseline information, myriad studies had to be planned to build up the information and knowledge base. As such, a strength of the project is an impressive inventory of 23+ biodiversity technical studies, landscape-level participatory management strategies and plans, collection of socio-economic and livelihood data, monitoring protocol (SPAI) launched and underpinned by strong investment in capacity building / citizen science at all landscapes;</li> <li>• Multiple stakeholders have noted that the breadth of and democratization of technical information generated by the SECURE Himalaya project from remote areas is very useful;</li> <li>• Some disconnect between issues of focus in the project design and scale of issues on the ground (i.e., Human Wildlife Conflict);</li> <li>• Exit / transition planning underway which is best practice at MTR;</li> <li>• While in absolute terms, the project is seen as a low volume-funding project, it has shown value because of linking livelihoods with conservation. At the village level, small amounts of funding have produced outsized results;</li> <li>• With some targeted course-correction, the project has all the hallmarks of and should be a foundational and legacy project for India and the region as it is quite unique in focusing on lesser-known region/area and lesser-known species like snow leopard.</li> </ul>

<b>Progress towards Results</b>	Objective Achievement: <b>Satisfactory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Substantial area (double than end term target) is being managed following participatory approaches in six landscapes by the four states. Of the total around 30% is within the PA system. This is already a remarkable achievement.</li> <li>Abundant examples of livelihood and income-generating activities which are starting to bear fruit and will contribute to environmental sustainability post-project. The project is able to achieve target of 50% women among total beneficiaries.</li> <li>Institutional frameworks having representation of multi-stakeholders from different sectors have been observed in all landscapes. The project now should work on institutionalizing this framework by the State Governments for long-term benefits and sustainability.</li> <li>There is no formal baseline of snow leopard population, however estimated at 474 individuals. Efforts are being made to stabilize or increase populations in the four project states. However, more systematic approach needs to be adopted. Since the work on snow leopard is being done for the very time at this level the progress is noteworthy.</li> </ul>
	Outcome 1: <b>Moderately Satisfactory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant results on METT scores, illustrate the project has certainly improved management effectiveness. METT score improvement(s) at each landscape can be attributed to better technical facilities, infrastructure and skill enhancement;</li> <li>Flexibility demonstrated by the project and responding to needs articulated at the local level (i.e., waste management in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh; an NGO in Sikkim has an excellent waste management (zero waste manual, trainings) initiative under implementation in Yuksam, which ought to be leveraged as a model in other states;</li> <li>Strong investment in capacity through trainings bode well for the project going forward;</li> <li>Persistent concerns on the way some indicators are measured based on misalignment between reporting on what is transpiring on the ground versus requirements of some indicators (i.e., 1.3, as well as 1.4 and 1.5 vis-à-vis tCO2 sequestered over 30-year period);</li> <li>There is a need to redouble efforts and accelerate implementation of management strategies and plans, as well as planning for sustainability beyond project for next 2 years.</li> </ul>
	Outcome 2: <b>Moderately Satisfactory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At times, PIR narrative does not accurately describe the progress in alignment with requirements under the corresponding indicator (i.e., Indicator 2.1). What are the practices - such as rotational grazing and sustainable harvesting protocols of medicinal plants - are being used consistently across all landscapes to reach the end of project target;</li> <li>With respect to livelihood interventions under Indicator 2.2, gender and community participation is good. The MTR consultant team notes there would be a need for an incubation period of two seasons meaningful incomes and stability to accrue. In some cases, groups and CBOs formed require incubation and/or handholding. Livelihood and social enterprise incubator and accelerator with the state ought to be explored in the next 2 years and should also be encouraged post-project (e.g., state livelihood mission and other mechanism(s));</li> <li>With respect to Indicator 2.3, it is unclear what is community-based sustainable resource use and also possible overlap / duplication with Indicator 2.1 (2021 PIR notes 1326 number of community members trained and adopting community-based sustainable resource use);</li> <li>Going forward, focus should be on tracking and documenting “adoption” of community-based sustainable resource use;</li> <li>Concerns on whether homestays, nature guide, para-taxonomist, para-vets qualify as “community-based sustainable resource use (e.g., 2021 PIR reports 100 community members have been trained as nature guide, para-taxonomist and para-vets)?</li> <li>Gender disaggregated data is consistently being collected and efforts towards the inclusion of gendered participants has been made thus far;</li> <li>The MTR has found that efforts to recognize and use traditional community institutions in biodiversity conservation are encouraging. The full potential of this social capital must be harnessed, consolidated and strengthened. Their legal recognition and integration through BD Act have the potential of becoming good practice.</li> <li>The various community involvement and activities with women’s groups, self-help groups, BMCs, para-vets, para-taxonomists, Himal Rakchaks, ecotourism groups, homestays, Off Farm Producer Organization (OFPO) -Their capacities should be further built sharpened and incubated. The gender dimensions should be given special attention as well.</li> </ul>

	Outcome 3: <b>Moderately Satisfactory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With respect to Indicator 3.1, evidence shows that three states do not seem to have threat or issues of wildlife crime and illegal trade in wildlife representing a material contextual change from the project's design. In the case of Sikkim, issues of wildlife crime were not recorded, however, there had been a few anecdotal evidences of incidences of capture and illegal trade going through the state. The awareness drive and vigilance promoted by the project seems good in curtailing these;</li> <li>• High risk of not achieving the scope of Outcome 3 if progress on indicator 3.2 is not accelerated in the time remaining. Consultations reveal that these are being taken up at the highest level within government through the Ministry of External Affairs and therefore, government timelines and urgency may not be synchronized with those of the project;</li> <li>• Wild Bear HWC conflict reported increase over years in 3 states which is linked to climate change where shortening of hibernation period and shortage of food source have been reported. Effectiveness of measures documented only in predator proofing corrals and few others with managing organic waste in army camps;</li> <li>• Every site need to create HWC management strategy and action plan that is grounded in context and is evidence-based in terms of its effectiveness.</li> </ul>
	Outcome 4: <b>Satisfactory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While this is a cross cutting component the heavy lifting is still ahead. Fruition time would normally be in last 20 % of project lifecycle for consolidation of results. Information vs. knowledge and management vs. practice – should be part of the exit / transition (consolidation going forward);</li> <li>• Regarding Indicator 4.1, there is good evidence - high altitude wetland management handbook, wildlife crime scene investigation manuals, state Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans. SPAI National initiative project funded the printing and design of publication;</li> <li>• For Indicator 4.2, there are many good practices, which have emerged in the project. Focus should be up-scaling/ replication in non-project areas. The MTR national consultant team validated instances of work on the ground, but currently not captured in documentation and reporting in PIR / QPR. E.g. Manuals of BMC, PBR being used other non-project sites. Some good practices reported in other outcomes can be brought into focus here e.g., Himal Rakshak and awards for them. Could expand Himal Rakshak's extension armed forces at Jawan level after initial orientation for tenure of 2-3 years and done every rotation of battalion;</li> <li>• With respect to Indicator 4.3, no baseline or framework for measuring "good awareness of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits". Awareness is 'a necessary but not sufficient indicator' for any change in human behavior (in this case conservation and sustainable use). The project must expedite the establishment of outstanding baselines in advance of the TE and ensure there is a consistent, uniform and robust methodology in place for measuring awareness.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Implementation and Adaptive Management</b>	<b>Moderately Satisfactory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong adaptive management in transitioning from more traditional PA approaches to more inclusive landscape approaches. High degree of internalization among key stakeholders;</li> <li>• Strong engagement and use of state and local-level governance - such as LLPUMs and community-based conservation institutions.</li> <li>• Ownership at the state level is exceptionally strong, although not uniform, while ownership at the national level can be improved going forward in the time remaining. For example, more representation from mid-level (as opposed to high-level) government officers. Some reconstitution of the Implementing Partner's role and contribution to the NPMU may be required and is currently being discussed by the MTR consultant team;</li> <li>• Additional governance structures requested/approved by the Project Steering Committee early on, such as National Technical Committee, are underutilized and not as active, while State-level Technical Committee(s) and Village Biodiversity, Conservation and Development Committees have been quite engaged and effective. These governance structures were not part of the original design;</li> <li>• Consensus that national Steering Committee needs to meet more often and go beyond its current role of a reporting and AWP approval body. Steering Committees must play an ongoing and active role in de-risking project and steering implementation towards key objectives.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<b>Moderately likely</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong likelihood of sustainability across all four UNDP-GEF measures of sustainability (financial, institutional / governance, socio-economic and environmental);</li> <li>• Financial delivery of the GEF fund is on target, but burn rate is high. On the other hand, certain activities have questionable cost efficiency and the direct contribution of the co-financing to the project remains questionable;</li> <li>• Ownership at the state level is exceptionally high where the MTR team envisaged continuity of project interventions beyond period.</li> </ul>



## Summary of Conclusions

The project strategy is to strengthen the enabling environment for achieving and sustaining effective management of high altitude landscapes (including existing PA's) enhancing conservation governance by local communities, and infusing initiatives that balance conservation with livelihoods.

The project officially started in December 2017. The MTR was conducted nearly four and half years following the signature of the Project Document (5 December 2017), well beyond its natural mid-point. Factoring in delays at the outset, the MTR occurred three and half years following the last inception workshop held in the Union Territory of Ladakh (19 October 2019).

The MTR was an evidence-based assessment, relying on feedback from individuals who have been involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project, and a review of available documents and findings made during field visits. The overall approach and methodology of the evaluation followed the guidelines outlined in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting midterm reviews of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects. Interviews were held with most of the project stakeholders during the MTR mission. Overall, the MTR team concluded that the information obtained during the desk review and field mission were sufficiently representative to enable an evaluation of progress made till the MTR.

Snow leopard landscapes and habitats in the high Himalaya provide immense ecosystem services and global goods. The project has brought good visibility and demonstrated importance of this high-altitude cat in India. Through the interventions of this project snow leopard has become widely known for its unrivalled importance at local, state, country and global levels. The project theme is unique, as the snow leopard being the endemic species exists only in the 12 countries in mountainous region of Asia. The project is also contributing to the objectives of Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP). A good visibility of the snow leopard and its associated habitat conservation has been crafted by the project on one hand and on the other demonstrated a successful landscape model.

The envisaged global environmental benefits stated in GEF-6 are seen as being delivered by the project. Improvements in protected area management effectiveness in terms of sustainability at the landscapes, restoration of pastures and forests in the degraded areas of landscapes, and sustainable forest management of high conservation value forests are either achieved/or are on track for the end term target. Objective level indicators on people benefitted from strengthened livelihoods interventions and institutional frameworks for conservation, benefits sharing from biodiversity and ecosystems and improved livelihoods are showing promising progress. Biological indicator warrants greater attention to reach the end term target. The coordination of multi-sector departments at the landscape level management committees has brought efficiency and effectiveness on the ground action but remains to be institutionalized to guarantee long-term impacts of the project.

The landscape approach adopted and targets for the project in high altitude areas of Indian Himalaya delivers integration of three strategic programmes of GEF-6, namely biodiversity, land degradation and sustainable forest management. There has been a good progress in the project in spite of the complexity of being implemented in extremely fragile high altitude landscapes. Even so, when considerable challenges had to be faced by the project team, governments and communities because of COVID-19 pandemic.

The project has significantly contributed to increase in METT scores of the PAs in the landscapes. The activities that helped in improvement of METT scores included scientific surveys/research on biodiversity aspects of PAs, strengthening capacities of park managers through providing equipment, trainings of law enforcement and overall management. The project also has contributed to policy making by contributing to developing framework, guidelines and SOPs. Important key biodiversity areas are in process of being designated as Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS) under the Biological Diversity Act. Site-specific actions by communities concerned restoration of degraded alpine pastures and subalpine forests especially on promoting rotational grazing and plantation of multi-purpose trees and shrubs. It is observed that the outcome one is on track for achieving the end term targets, however it needs broader institutionalization of the METT for long-term benefits.

Livelihood improvement through value chain enhancement by skill development, value addition, and marketing of produce are showing promising progress. The project selected mountain niches such as handloom and handicraft, eco-tourism and NTFP based value chains leading to mountain specific products. Waste management engaging local communities, rotational grazing, sustainable harvesting of NTFPs, community fodder banks and plantation of multipurpose species in fallow land has contributed to the restoration of degraded areas. It is seen that the above initiatives including nature-based products for livelihoods have been successfully linked with conservation initiatives, however such stories should be better documented and shared for outscaling.

Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) is minuscule or almost non-existent in majority of the landscapes and states. However, Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) has become considerable problem for the communities reporting mostly livestock and crop depredation. There has been some good progress in addressing HWC in Ladakh while limited effective interventions have been put in place in other states. Climate change has complicated the HWC issue, which needs better study,

analysis and strategy. The project should be giving more focused efforts on this outcome during the remaining period of time keeping in view longer-term solutions.

Capacity development, awareness raising, knowledge products development, community participation and ownerships of the project by the stakeholders are the hallmark of the project. These areas should be further strengthened and cross sharing of best practices across landscapes and states be enhanced. It would be good to see knowledge products, livelihood initiative successes and conservation balances well captured in stories that may be helpful at the end term evaluation especially for relating to the impacts.

The governance mechanism of the project is functioning effectively through the project board at the national level and also steering committees at the state and Union territory levels (steering committees in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Ladakh). At the ground level, integrated operationalization has been observed especially by Landscape Level Planning and Management Committees (LLPMCs) represented by the district administration, forest and other government line departments, community members and institutions including Panchayats, BMCs, Joint Forest Management Committees, Van Panchayats and community development organizations and NGOs. These committees at the national and state levels remain active and take strategic decisions on project implementation and provide guidance to PMU. Action on the ground is promoted in an integrated and participatory way with the guidance of LLPMCs. It is perceived that the project has developed a good governance mechanism connecting from the local to the state at the national levels. However, the fund flows to the states have been a major constraint that needs to be addressed on top priority.

Gender and social inclusion for mainstreaming gender, ascertaining barriers and addressing them, creating enabling environment, and involving them in CSOs and CBO institutions were done nicely by the project. The project teams have made extra efforts in focusing interventions on women and youth not only as beneficiaries but to make them an agent of change. The results are clearly visible in terms of capacity building, biodiversity conservation, livelihood improvement, economic opportunity and empowerment. In the final year of the project gender and social inclusion elements should receive more thrusts to ensure sustainability and institutionalization of the progress.

In the remaining one year of the project, activities showing triggers of potential impacts, should be consolidated. There are some promising livelihood and conservation activities, which need to be strengthened. The project should avoid starting new activities. Some emerging results across states and landscapes should be shared and exchanged among project teams, practitioners and policy makers.

Unfortunately, during the inception phase indicators and targets were not re-visited. Hence, there are number of issues regarding the indicators. It is essential for the terminal evaluation to unequivocally measure progress against the project's indicators. Therefore, it will be essential to revisit indicators flagged by the MTR as not being SMART. The project should ensure that monitoring strategies are uniform and communicated broadly and establish baselines where there are no clear indicators. The policy and regulatory mechanisms related to end of the project targets are poor and vaguely worded, which should be re-visited.

The GEF grant is significant, above USD 11 million, and cofinancing by MOEF&CC, UNDP and States Governments amounts to around USD 61 million. About 73% of GEF allocation has been utilized by the midterm review. Funds liquidation of GEF grant is in order whereas realization of cofinancing in some of the States (Sikkim and Ladakh) and MOEF&CC is far behind the schedule. The documentation of in-kind cofinancing seems insufficient. Therefore, immediate steps should be taken to better document in-kind contribution in monetary terms and follow up with realization of cofinancing on timely manner before the completion of the project.

This project is of great importance to the Indian Himalayan region as well as neighboring mountainous countries and snow leopard countries. This is unique being a first landscape project of its kind implemented by multiple states and many landscapes in fragile environments. The project has shown very good progress, it is in the right direction, and requires long-term implementation efforts for achieving impacts. UNDP, executing partner and state level implementing partners should explore the possibilities of the next phase.

## Recommendations

The MTR recommendations outlined below in **Table 3** have been formulated with the aim of improving project effectiveness and enhancing the likelihood that project results will be sustained after GEF funding ceases. In addition to these state wise recommendations are given in the main body of the report.

<b>Table 3: Recommendations table</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
1.	<b>Establish Snow Leopard “Cell” in the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Gov.</b> Snow leopard landscapes and habitats in the high Himalaya provide immense ecosystem services. The UNDP-GEF SECURE Himalaya project has brought good visibility and showed importance of this high-altitude cat in India. Now there is an opportunity to develop broader policies and strategies on snow leopard landscapes. The proposed “Cell” could work closely with the ‘Mountain Division’ of the Ministry. SECURE NPMU should be able to support the process of establishing the ‘Snow Leopard Cell’. The project should also capitalize and dovetail on timing associated with attention on other big cats (i.e., Renewal of the 10-year Tiger Recovery Programme / Year of the Tiger);	<b>MOEF&amp;CC, UNDP, NPMU,</b>
2.	<b>Focus on consolidation during the remaining project timeframe.</b> In the remaining period of the project life successful activities and those, which have shown triggers of potential impacts, should be consolidated. In the six landscapes and the states project has started some promising livelihood and conservation activities (see outcome indicators). These activities should be strengthened and avoid starting new ones.	<b>NPMU, SPMU, State Forest &amp; Wildlife Departments,</b>
3.	<b>Enhance cross learning and sharing between the landscapes and states.</b> Some emerging results across states and landscapes should be shared and exchanged among project teams, practitioners and policy makers. This should be done in the context of developing knowledge product covering all sites, and also keeping in view both upscaling and sustainability dimensions.	<b>NPMU, SPMU, State Forest &amp; Wildlife Departments,</b>
4.	<b>Accelerate the completion of CD Scorecards at MTR.</b> With the easing of COVID-19, it is imperative that the project attempt to complete the CD Scorecards to formally gauge whether or not the MTR target of institutional capacity having increased by 20% against the baseline value of 18 has been realized. Assessments done in 2019 are not a fair gauge of progress on this front.	<b>NPMU, SPMU</b>
5.	<b>Reduce human wildlife conflicts.</b> Efforts should be made to reduce Human Wildlife Conflict especially black bear in the lower elevations of landscapes in the three states. Climate change has impacted by shortening of the hibernation of black bear and related food scarcity inducing HWC. Strengthening food base for black bear in surrounding forests could be ones of the mitigating approaches in addition to other contemporary efforts. Along with this, certain successful efforts of the project such as the use of ANIDERS and predator-proof corrals, should also be upscaled and institutionalized.	<b>State Forest &amp; Wildlife Departments, SPMU, NGOs &amp; CBOs</b>
6.	<b>Promote alpine pastureland restoration and livestock germplasm.</b> In the remaining time the project can take the following measures: practice assisted natural regeneration, continue and strengthen traditional rotational (deferred) grazing practices, fodder banks, and engage herders in collecting seeds of forage species and discharging them in degraded alpine pastures. Because of inbreeding livestock genetic degradation is reported. Yak and pashmina degeneration have been mentioned. Germplasm exchange of these livestock between landscapes, states and sites can be achieved during the remaining time of the project.	<b>State Forest &amp; Wildlife Departments, Animal Husbandry Departments, SPMU, CBOs, Herders,</b>
7.	<b>Refining, value adding and marketing of livelihood products.</b> Promising nature based products like ecotourism destinations, handloom, wool and pashmina items, handicrafts, medicinal plants, traditional papers, horticultural produce etc. is being promoted by the project across landscapes. There is a need of improving the local skills for producing, refining, value adding and marketing of these products. Support of specialized institutions should be sought in these efforts. This will be most promising initiatives in the context of enhancing livelihoods, promoting conservation and sustainability at community level.	<b>SPMU, NGOs, Women Groups, CBOs, Private Sector Partners</b>
8.	<b>Enhance the capacities of institutions and human resources engaged in the project.</b> Institutions promoted, human resources trained and engaged in the project for both livelihoods and conservation will be the asset for continuity and sustainability. Women groups, self-help groups, BMCs, para-vets, para-taxonomists, Himal Rakshaks, ecotourism groups, homestays, front line Protected Area staff, local experts on HWC, snow leopard conservation centre (SLCC), Off Farm Producer Organization (OFPO) etc are some visible groups and capacities. Their capacities should be further built and sharpened. The gender dimensions should be given special attention.	<b>SPMU, NPMU, State Forest &amp; Wildlife Departments, NGOs</b>

9.	<b>Institutionalization of initiatives carried out and supported by SECURE.</b> There are some initiatives promoted, supported and initiated by the project. In the remaining time of the project these should be institutionalized at landscape, state and national levels. Good examples are SPAI, METT, Wildlife Database Centre – IT Interventions, Geographical Indicators (GI), Germplasm Bank, Zero Waste initiative in Sikkim by KCC, Mahila Mandals etc; para-vets, para-taxonomists, Himal Rakshaks, ecotourism groups, homestays, front line Protected Area staff, local experts on HWC, snow leopard conservation centre (SLCC), all of these will be tremendously important for long-term snow leopard conservation in the Himalaya. (linked to recommendation 11)	<b>State Forest &amp; Wildlife Departments, SPMU, NGOs &amp; CBOs</b>
10.	<b>Improved documentation of upscaling and co-financing.</b> Documentation should be improved especially for those activities, which are being up-scaled by outside project stakeholders and institutions including policy uptake. Currently, there are instances where efforts of the project are being upscaled at sub-national levels which have not been fully captured, documented and reported. Co-financing can be better reported taking all that is contributed by states and stakeholders at the landscape level. These should be well reflected in reporting at all levels.	<b>SPMU, State Forest &amp; Wildlife Department, NGOs</b>
11	<b>Enhance coordination and information flows.</b> Improvements can be made in flow of information, fund flows and increased coordination both ways from national to state to landscapes to districts. The role of NPO is extremely important whose dynamism should be enhanced. In the remaining period this is the most critical element in achieving the objectives and outcomes of the project.	<b>NPMU, SPMU, MOEF&amp;CC, State Forest &amp; Wildlife Departments</b>
12	<b>Restructuring of NPMU and SPMU will be required.</b> To optimize achieving the results in the remaining time of the project there will be a need of revisiting the staffing, roles and necessary changes be made in the NPMU and SPMU. Midlevel government official deputation to the project is a good option. It is felt that a full-time Project Manager should be appointed to strategically wrap up and streamline the sustainability efforts during the remaining time of the project. It is also recommended that monthly regimented face-to-face meetings commence between the NPMU and National Project Officer allocated by the Implementing Partner, for the remainder of the project to consolidate results and collectively troubleshoot operational issues.	<b>NPMU, SPMU</b>
13	<b>Revisit baselines and measurement of indicators in advance of the TE.</b> To ensure a strong overall rating it will be essential for the TE to unequivocally measure progress against the project's indicators. Therefore, it will be essential to revisit indicators such as 1.3, 1.4, 2.2, 3.2 and 4.3 flagged by the MTR as not being SMART, ensure that monitoring strategies are uniform and communicated broadly and establish baselines for those indicators where none exist. The indicator 4.1 on policy and regulatory mechanisms is poor and vaguely worded that should be improved MTR also recommends the team to re-visit the end of the project target.	<b>NPMU, SPMU</b>
14	<b>More frequent engagement of the National Project Steering Committee.</b> To foster greater ownership and appreciation of results, the Steering Committee should meet at least 2 times per year with one of those meetings to be held in the field to visualize results and be engaged at troubleshooting issues at the strategic / macro level.	<b>MOEF&amp;CC, NPMU</b>
15	<b>Follow up project in the landscape with a focus on climate adaptation</b> To address climate risks to management of conservation and livelihoods in the landscape it is important to supplement the project with activities focusing in climate adaptation strategies and interventions in the landscape.	<b>SPMU, State Forest &amp; Wildlife Department, NGOs</b>
16	<b>Make efforts on international agreements for transboundary cooperation.</b> The indicator 3.2 is at high risk of not achieving the end of the project target unless special efforts are made. MTR recommends the project to establish cooperation with regional organizations for developing international agreements for transboundary cooperation among Bhutan, China, India and Nepal.	<b>UNDP, MOEF&amp;CC, NPMU</b>

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

AWP	Annual Work Plan
BD	Biodiversity
BHC	Biodiversity Heritage Site
BMC	Biodiversity Management Committee
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CDRs	Combined Delivery Reports
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DFO	Divisional Forest Officer
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GoI	Government of India
GRES	Gender Results Effectiveness Framework
GSLEP	Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program
GWP	Global Wildlife Program
HCVF	High Conservation Value Forests
HWC	Human Wildlife Conflict
IWT	Illegal Wildlife Trade
KVK	Kendriya Vigyan Kendra
LD	Land Degradation
LLPMU	Landscape Level Project Management Unit
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAPs	Medicinal and Aromatic Plants
MIS	Management Information System
METT	Management Effectiveness Training Tool
MoEF&CC	Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change
MTR	Midterm Review
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NMHS	National Mission on Himalayan Studies
NP	National Park
NPMU	National Project Management Unit
NPO	National Project Officer
NPSC	National Project Steering Committee
NSLEP	National Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Priorities
NTC	National Technical Committee
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
PAs	Protected Areas
PIF	Project Information Form
PIP	Project Implementation Plan
PIRs	Project Implementation Reports
PMU	Project Management Unit
SAWEN	South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SHG	Self Help Group
SLCC	Snow Leopard Conservation Centre
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPAI	Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India
SPMU	State Project Management Unit
SPSC	State Project Steering Committee
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
TMI	The Mountain Institute
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNDP-CO	UNDP-Country Office
UNDP-IEO	UNDP-Independent Evaluation Office
UT	Union Territory
WLS	Wildlife Sanctuary

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the Review

The objective of the MTR was to gain an independent analysis of the progress mid-way through the project. The review focuses on project strategy, progress towards results, project implementation and adaptive management, and the likelihood that the envisaged global environmental benefits will be realized and whether the project results will be sustained after closure.

## 1.2 Scope and Methodology

The MTR was an evidence-based assessment, relying on feedback from individuals who have been involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project, and a review of available documents and findings made during field visits. The overall approach and methodology of the evaluation follows the guidelines outlined in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting midterm reviews of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects<sup>1</sup>.

The MTR mission was carried out over the period of 18 April to 13 May 2022. The mission itinerary is compiled in **Annex 1**, and key project stakeholders interviewed for their feedback are listed in **Annex 2**. A compilation of photographs taken during the MTR field mission is included in **Annex 3**.

Stakeholder consultation was done following various modes. There were field visits to three states and selected landscapes whereas virtual meetings and interviews were conducted for Ladakh. Field visits were used specially to interact with state and landscape level stakeholders. Number of activities and their effectiveness on the ground were comprehended following interaction with communities, CBOs, field officers and NGOs. Firsthand information from the communities were recorded during the field missions by the MTR team. Interactions and interviews were carried out covering government officials at the national, state and district levels. At the state level MTR team interviewed officers from other relevant line departments and District Collectors who were involved in the project implementation. Issues related to policy and sustainability were dwelt with senior officials of the government. Interviews also considered the design and governance issues at the highest level in the MOEF&CC, New Delhi and with senior officers at the state levels.

The MTR team completed a desk review of relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project progress reports, financial reports, and key project deliverables. A complete list of information reviewed is compiled in **Annex 4**.

As a data collection and analysis tool, an evaluation matrix (see **Annex 5**) was developed to guide the review process. Evidence gathered during the fact-finding phase of the MTR was crosschecked between as many sources as practicable, to validate the findings.

The PMU provided a self-assessment of progress towards results, using the project results framework template provided by the MTR team in the MTR inception report. The project results framework was used as an evaluation tool, in assessing attainment of project objective and outcomes (see **Annex 6**).

Cofinancing details were provided by the PMU and cofinancing partners and are summarized into the cofinancing table compiled as **Annex 7** to the MTR report.

The MTR team summarized the initial findings and recommendations of the MTR at the end of the mission on 28 July 2022 in a debriefing.

## 1.3 Structure of the Report

The MTR report was prepared in accordance with the outline specified in the UNDP-GEF MTR guideline. The report starts out with a description of the project, indicating the duration, main stakeholders, and the immediate and development objectives. The findings of the evaluation are broken down into the following categories:

- Project Strategy
- Progress towards results
- Project implementation and adaptive management
- Sustainability

The report culminates with a summary of the conclusions reached and recommendations, formulated to enhance implementation during the final period of the project implementation timeframe.

## 1.4 Gender and Social Inclusion

The report looked at the following elements of gender and social inclusion:

Gender analysis and action plan of the project that considered the roles and participation of men and women in biodiversity conservation, status and project interventions; made analysis of workload related to household management, conservation and livelihood and micro-finance activities; strengthening of women self-help groups and women engagement in village level committees; and capacity building of women groups. These were considered during field level interactions and community interviews.

Periodic review and monitoring of gender streamlining, gender mainstreaming, gender considerations while preparing the annual work plans and social inclusion in project activities were also considered by the MTR.

## 1.5 Rating Scales

Consistent with the UNDP-GEF MTR guidelines, certain aspects of the project are rated, applying the rating scales outlined in **Annex 8**.

Progress towards results and project implementation and adaptive management are rated according to a 6-point scale, ranging from highly unsatisfactory to highly satisfactory. Sustainability is evaluated across four risk dimensions, including financial risks, socio-economic risks, institutional framework and governance risks, and environmental risks. According to UNDP-GEF evaluation guidelines, all risk dimensions of sustainability are critical: i.e., the overall rating for sustainability cannot be higher than the lowest-rated dimension. Sustainability was rated according to a 4-point scale, including likely, moderately likely, moderately unlikely, and unlikely.

## 1.6 Ethics

The review was conducted in accordance with the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators, and the MTR team has signed the Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct Agreement form (**Annex 9**). The MTR team ensures the anonymity of the information shared by individuals who were interviewed and surveyed. In respect to the UN Declaration of Human Rights, results are presented in a manner that clearly respects stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.

## 1.7 Audit Trail

To document an "audit trail" of the evaluation process, review comments to the draft report will be compiled along with responses from the MTR team and documented in an annex separate from the main report. Relevant modifications to the report will be incorporated into the final version of the MTR report.

## 1.8 Limitations

The review was carried out over the period of March-July 2022, including preparatory activities, field mission, desk review and completion of the report, according to the guidelines outlined in the terms of reference (**Annex 10**).

A major issue was a health problem faced by the Team Leader (TL) causing delays and finally TL dropped out. Following which at a late stage one of the national consultants took over the charge to write the MTR. This has led to unprecedented delays and almost six months extension to the original timelines.

There were no other major methodological limitations as the MTR consultant team were able to speak with all the main stakeholders and obtain feedback, as well as digest key documentation. There were no limitations associated with language. Project documentation is in English and the most commonly used language in New Delhi is English, while in the field national consultants were conversant in regional languages. The three states, namely Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim were visited during the MTR mission. However, interviews and interactions for Ladakh were virtual with the MTR team.

Interviews were held with most of the project stakeholders during the MTR mission. Skype interviews were held with a few other stakeholders especially in remote areas of Himachal Pradesh who were unavailable to meet in person during mission.

Overall, the MTR team concludes that the information obtained during the desk review and field mission were sufficiently representative to enable an evaluation of progress made till the MTR.

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1 Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects, 2014, UNDP-GEF Directorate.

## 2 Project Description

### 2.1 Country, Environmental and Social-Political Context

#### Country Context

- India is the world's 8th most biodiverse region with 23% of the geographical area under forest and tree cover. It is a mega-biodiverse country having over 45,000 species of plants and 91,000 species of animals. The Indian Himalaya, Northeast India and Western Ghats primarily contribute to the mega-diverse status of the country.
- The Himalaya is one of the 36 global biodiversity hotspots. It stretches in an arc covering 3,000 kilometers of northern Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan and the northwestern and northeastern states of India; the Himalaya hotspot includes all of the world's mountain peaks higher than 8,000 meters. The Himalaya high altitude sub-alpine and alpine areas including that of the Indian part forms a major snow leopard habitat.
- The UNDP-GEF full-sized project “Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, Sustainable Use, and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems” (hereinafter interchangeably referred to as the UNDP-GEF SECURE Himalayas project or simply, the Project) focuses on endangered snow leopard as a unifying flagship species, its habitat and communities in the high-altitude landscapes of India. The project area encompasses both the Greater Himalaya and Trans-Himalayan ranges of the snow leopard in India. These areas are also the headwaters of many major rivers of Northern and Northeastern India, and form part of the high range Himalayan ecosystem, which have unique assemblages of flora and fauna.
- The snow leopard occupies the high mountains of twelve countries including India extending from the Hindu Kush in eastern Afghanistan and the Syr Darya through the mountains of Pamir, Tian Shan, Karakorum, Kashmir, Kunlun, and the Himalaya to southern Siberia, as well as the Russian Altai, Sayan and Tannu Ola mountains covering a total area of around 1.7 million km<sup>2</sup>.
- In recognition of the irreplaceable value of the snow leopard in natural and cultural heritage and an indicator of the health and sustainability of high mountain ecosystems, the twelve snow leopard nations adopted the Bishkek Declaration in 2013. As a signatory to the Bishkek Declaration, India has initiated a national flagship effort called “Project Snow Leopard” with the intent of safeguarding and conserving India's unique natural heritage of high-altitude wildlife populations and their habitats by promoting conservation through participatory policies and actions.
- The total habitat of globally endangered snow leopard (*Uncia uncia*) in India is around 75,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The Western and Eastern Himalayas (including Nepal) forms an important link between the Central Asian and East Asian populations of snow leopards, and serves as a vital corridor for the genetic interchange between these populations. The distribution of snow leopard in India includes the six-states/union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand in the Western Himalaya and Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh in the Eastern Himalaya. The SECURE Himalaya identified four high altitude landscapes in India for implementation of the project, namely, Changthang in Ladakh; Lahul-Pangi in Himachal Pradesh; Gangotri-Govind in Uttarakhand; and Kanchenjunga-Upper Teesta Valley in Sikkim.
- The ecosystem services and wildlife conservation such as that of snow leopard being implemented by the project should be contributing to the missions and action plans of India, namely National Mission on Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystems, National Mission on Himalayan Studies, and National Action Plan for Climate Change.

#### Environmental Context

- The Himalayan region represents a mosaic of diversity – a composite of innumerable human cultures and linguistic diversity including a number of tribal communities – and their relative seclusion and remoteness that has made them the last bastions of globally significant indigenous knowledge and cultural heterogeneity. More than 1000 living languages exist in the region that are threatened along with associated traditional knowledge systems.
- Likewise, the high altitudinal variations, ecological zones and associated climate regimes in the region have given rise to corresponding numerous unique ecosystems and biological communities of global significance. The region accounts for nearly 50% of the total flowering plants of India, of



which nearly 30% are endemic to the region; there are also over 675 edible plants and nearly 1,743 species of medicinal value. Most of these species are collected from the wild, and thus, the conservation of these is key to the survival of these species.

- With snow leopard's wide distribution, precarious conservation status, and immense aesthetic value, the snow leopard is considered the flagship species of high altitudes and an indicator species for Asia's high mountain ecosystems. As an apex predator, the snow leopard density is also an indicator of the health and status of other species. As the top predator in mountain ecosystems, snow leopards keep countless other animal and plant populations in balance as they prey on grazers. The snow leopard is listed under Appendix I (i.e., species threatened with extinction) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). It is also listed under Appendix I of the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), and was later elevated to 'requiring Concerted Action' in 2002 (Resolution 7.1). It is also listed as Endangered in the IUCN red list. The threatened snow leopard and its habitat restoration is an important conservation and development challenge for locals, states and countries in the region.
- The associated mammals such as Himalayan tahr (*Hemitragus jemlahicus*), Himalayan musk deer (*Moschus leucogaster*), blue sheep (*Pseudois nayaur*), Tibetan wild ass (*Equus kiang*) and many others, form a major wild prey for the snow leopard. High altitude snow leopard habitat degradation and diminishing ecosystem services of the landscapes are the main causes of declining status of the associated species. Challenges to manage these species are massive.
- Despite the immense biological, socio-cultural and hydrological values of the Himalayan ecosystems, especially the high-altitude ranges have not received adequate attention in terms of natural resources management and conservation from local, states and national governments. In many high altitudinal areas snow leopards, wild prey and their ecosystems face a variety of direct and indirect threats that vary in intensity and prominence.
- Key drivers of change in the region include migration, climate change, urbanization, globalization, population growth, and rapid land use transformation, in contexts where poverty and ecosystem degradation persist. The vast ice reserves are shrinking and accelerated glacial melting is complicating water availability in the mountains and downstream areas. The frequency and intensity of floods and droughts have increased, while rising commercialization and persistent rural poverty have led to degradation of forests, wetlands, and rangelands, thus endangering livelihoods and biodiversity. Livestock grazing in this highly fragile and dynamic region is the most pervasive land-use, in the absence of better livelihoods options for most local communities. The intensity and occurrence of grazing threats varies throughout the region but is still the most important threat to snow leopard habitat.
- Snow leopard habitat and its ranges are transboundary, therefore the cooperation among regional member countries is extremely important for restoration of habitat, reducing poaching and illegal trade, cross border illegal livestock grazing and human-wildlife conflict, and sustaining ecosystem goods and services for the locals, states, countries, region and globally.

### **Socio-Political Context**

- Geopolitically, the Himalayan region is very sensitive and border issues and conflicts among the neighboring countries are persistent problem.
- Indian Himalayan region is rich socio-culturally. More than one thousand living languages still exists, however immense threats to these languages also cause concern on losing the traditional knowledge systems.
- Ethnicity is high and their cultural richness provides opportunities for meeting the contemporary challenges.
- Mountain people are more vulnerable because of multi-dimensional poverty is high. Issues like energy needs, food insecurity, malnutrition, health problems, limited education facilities, smaller land holding size, not clear land tenure, access to resources and information are hindering development.
- Mountain people are vulnerable to climate induced disasters and community displacements have become critical issues in many areas including social unrest.
- A plethora of policies and acts cover natural resource use in the high ranges of Himalayan region. Of these, the most prevalent act is the Indian Forest Act (1878) and Indian Forest Policy (1894) passed and implemented during pre-independence period which initiated 'Forest Administration' and designation of various classes such as 'reserved', 'village/community' and 'protected forests' with a

view to regulate access to various forest resources and also generate revenue for the Governments. After independence, a number of acts and policies came into being from various sectors including agriculture, livestock husbandry, water and environmental protection and biodiversity conservation. Notable among them are Wildlife (Protection) Act (1972), Forest Conservation Act (1980), the Environment (Protection) Act (1986), National Forest Policy (1988) and National Environmental Policy (2006) to name a few. Simultaneously several other policies came into being at the national level, such as National Land use Policy (1988), Panchayati Raj Act 1992 (73rd amendment), National Livestock Policy (1996), National Agricultural Policy (2000), National Water Policy (2002), National Biodiversity Act (2002), Schedule Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers Act (2006), National Policy for Farmers (2007), National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy (2007) and Centrally Sponsored Fodder and Feed Development Scheme (2010).

## **2.2 Problems and Threats the Project Sought to Address**

- In most high altitudinal areas, the threat to snow leopards, wild prey and their ecosystems face a variety of direct and indirect threats that vary in intensity and prominence. Major problems such as habitat degradation and fragmentation are caused by unsustainable livestock grazing, high dependence of local communities on natural resources, pressures from unplanned economic and infrastructure development, selective removal of medicinal and aromatic plants, and illegal wildlife trade and wildlife crime.
- Most of the communities in the high-altitude areas largely depend on pastoralism. The degradation and loss of natural alpine meadows and sub-alpine habitats has been leading to an increased dependence of wild predators such as the snow leopard and the wolf on livestock. Natural prey species populations are dwindling, which is causing increased human-wildlife conflicts. Livestock depredation has been a prominent issue across the snow leopard range. The predation on livestock has resulted in retaliatory killing and has adverse impacts on snow leopard and other wildlife species especially in and around key wildlife migration corridors.
- In addition, the collection of firewood and timber, and wild medicinal and aromatic plants for local as well as commercial use has been impacting the forest ecosystems especially as a result of sustainable harvesting practices. Mostly medicinal and aromatic plants are marketed unprocessed. Therefore, the local collectors and producers don't benefit much, hence causing excessive exploitation. A large number of agro-pastoral and pastoral communities depend on biomass in the Himalayan region, and centuries of livestock grazing and associated fuel wood collection by herders around the timberline have led to the degradation of alpine habitats.
- In the Himalaya and project landscapes, incidences of poaching and illegal trade have increased. Major faunal species that are threatened due to illegal trading of wildlife parts are mainly the Himalayan black bear, Tibetan antelope, musk deer and to some extent the snow leopard. Many medicinal plant species and lichens are also threatened. Most of the medicinal plants are illegally traded. In addition, some of the major trading routes for illegal wildlife trade in India are through border areas in the high Himalayan range. Weak law enforcement, prosecution and lack of staff for anti-poaching makes wildlife crime prevention challenging that is further compounded by the remoteness and harshness of the Himalayan region.
- Climate change has been affecting high altitude landscapes significantly that are likely to impact the local livelihoods and biodiversity status of the region. The future impacts of climate change on these ecosystems that are also snow leopard habitats are unclear, and will vary across the range; however, it seems certain that there will be impacts at large.
- Melting glaciers as impacts of climate change is already affecting water availability and incidence of droughts. This is negatively disturbing pasture production, and hence reducing availability of forage for both wildlife and livestock.
- Limited planning and lack of enforcement of safe practices pertaining to tourism and recreation activities such as trekking, camping and skiing are on the increasing trend. Natural habitats of snow leopard, other endangered and prey species have been damaged by road construction. These are the enormous challenges for the project.
- Absence of awareness, institutional mechanisms and capacities to address climate change effects and ecosystem degradation has been the major constraints on action towards managing impacts and developing resilience.

Project Document articulates three primary barriers to the pervasiveness of the above-noted threats, overcoming them and impetus for which the Project was designed. These include:

- **Barrier 1:** Limited options of alternative livelihoods and current practices of unsustainable land and forest uses in wider landscape;
- **Barrier 2:** Limited capacity, knowledge and proven models for conserving wildlife species especially beyond protected areas;
- **Barrier 3:** Limited wildlife monitoring, wildlife crime and wildlife-livestock related deterrent systems;

## 2.3 Project Description and Strategy

### Project strategy:

In response to the aforementioned barriers and per the Project Document, the Project was designed to promote biodiversity conservation and the welfare of the indigenous people in Himalayan high altitudes coinciding with the snow leopard's distribution in India. This was to be achieved by (i) generating scientific knowledge of ecology and society across the Indian high altitudes, (ii) striking partnerships with the local communities to design and implement local biodiversity conservation initiatives, including mitigation strategies for human-wildlife conflicts, (iii) promoting capacity- development amongst local communities, the state forest departments, and young conservationists, to monitor and conserve high altitude biodiversity, (iv) work with the Government, NGOs and other partners to develop and implement a scientifically well informed, and socially responsible Project Snow Leopard, and (vi) spread awareness of India's high altitude biodiversity at local and national levels through conservation education.

The objective of the UNDP-GEF project is “to promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secures conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats, ensure sustainable livelihoods and community socio-economic benefits”. The Project is structured around four inter-related and mutually complementary Components that are focused at addressing the barriers relating to unsustainable use of land and forests and limited options for alternative livelihoods, inadequate protection and management of areas outside protected area networks and limited wildlife monitoring and wildlife crime related deterrent systems, as follows:

**Component 1: Conservation of key biodiversity areas.** This component hones in on the conservation of key biodiversity areas and their effective management to secure long-term ecosystem resilience, habitat connectivity and conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats will address the barrier related to limited capacity, knowledge and proven models for conservation of wildlife species, such as snow leopard beyond protected areas. Coinciding with Outcome 1, it focuses on developing working models of sustainable natural resource management at the landscape level to conserve snow leopard, wild prey and associated species and their habitats. It further supports capacity-building for planning, implementation and monitoring of the landscape management plans.

**Component 2: Securing sustainable community livelihoods.** The focus of this component is on securing sustainable community livelihoods and natural resource management in high range Himalayan ecosystems will support a three-pronged strategy to enhance existing livelihoods, promote alternate and new options of livelihood, support skill-based employment opportunities and improve community natural resources management so as to reduce direct pressures emanating from unsustainable resource use and promote community stewardship and partnership. Coinciding with Outcome 2, the principal focus is on preparing micro-plans, livelihood plans, and strategies focused on diversifying livelihood options and enhancing the value chain of select products. The focus sectors include eco-tourism, animal husbandry, agriculture, handicraft, medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) cultivation, and apiculture.

**Component 3: Enhancing enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and related threats.** The third component aims at enhancing enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and related threats the project will seek to develop and demonstrate effective wild life surveillance, monitoring, prevent retaliatory killings, prosecution and other deterrent systems and increase international cooperation through establishing cohesive linkages with global and regional conservation initiatives and networks, such as the Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP) and South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN). Coinciding with Outcome 3, hotspots and pathways of Illegal wildlife trade in the project landscapes are to be identified. Another central focus is the reduction of poaching and human-wildlife conflict.

**Component 4: Knowledge management and M&E.** The Project fourth component addresses gender

mainstreaming, monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management will ensure improved understanding and participation of key target groups from government agencies (decision makers and staff from key sectors), non-governmental organizations, farmer associations, water use associations and community groups, researchers and others, including in particular women and the most vulnerable segments of the population in the project management. Coinciding with Outcome 4, these focuses on replicating project knowledge and information, aiming to develop policies and knowledge products and increase community awareness.

### **Target States and landscapes in the Indian Himalayan Region:**

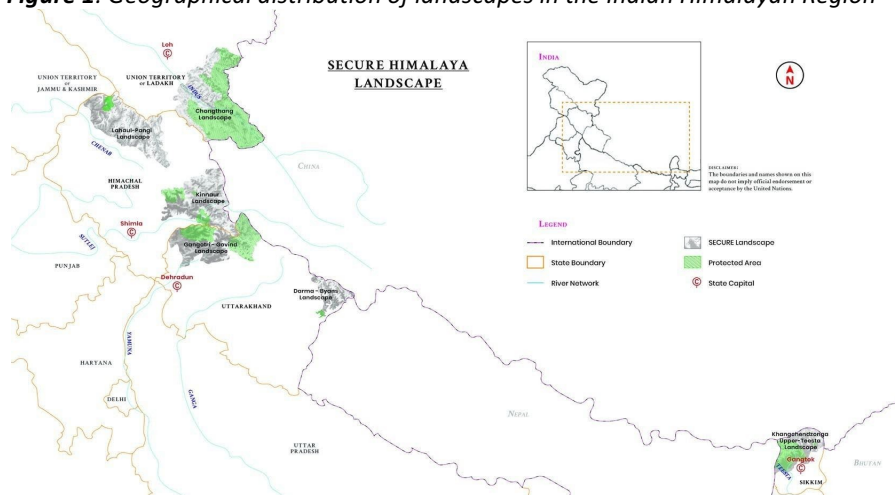
Per the Project's original design (Project Document, pp. 19-22), the target conservation landscapes were selected to conserve as much of the range of the snow leopard, as noted in Figure 1, and where opportunities exist to improve community stewardship and partnership.

Sites were defined during the PPG stage through a series of parameters and include different land-types, including state-owned and managed protected areas and reserve forests as well as community agricultural and grazing lands. Site criteria applied were:

- Landscapes dominated by high altitude rangelands under agro-pastoral or pastoral production systems between 3,000 – 6,000 meters in Western Himalayas and 3,000 – 7,000 meters in Eastern Himalayas;
- Landscapes of critical importance to snow leopard and prey species and those supporting rich and unique assemblages of flora and fauna, and natural vegetation types, and representing rich socio-cultural value;
- Landscapes containing a mosaic of protection, production and community use areas;
- Landscapes with potential for sustainable livelihood improvement;
- Accessibility and marketing potential for value addition services and products;
- Level of government and community interest and support for conservation and livelihood improvement;
- Landscapes that have not received much financial support in the past.

Six landscapes in the four states/Union Territories of the Indian Himalayan Region were selected for implementing the project, they are Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Ladakh. The selected landscapes are Changthang in Ladakh; Lahul and Pangi in Himachal Pradesh; Gangotri-Govind and Darma-Byans in Uttarakhand; and Khangchendzonga- Upper Teesta Landscape in Sikkim. The geographical distribution of these landscapes is shown in **Figure 1** as below:

**Figure 1: Geographical distribution of landscapes in the Indian Himalayan Region**



## **Landscape description**

**Changthang (Ladakh):** Changthang Plateau in the Upper Indus Landscape in Biogeographic Province 1B (Eastern Ladakh), with elevations ranging from 4,400 – 6,000 m. Consists of alpine dry scrub, desert steppe, marsh meadows and water bodies. The landscape is contiguous with Tibetan plateau. Key faunal assemblage comprises snow leopard, blue sheep, Argali, Tibetan gazelle, and Tibetan wolf. Historically used as rangelands by the nomadic pastoral community (Changpas) who rear yaks and pashmina goats. Tibetan refugees (herders) occupy some areas. Tourism in some lake basins has degraded wildlife habitat and natural pastures. Climate change and extreme climatic events have caused mortality of livestock during severe winters and resulted in scarcity of drinking water in many areas.

**Lahul-Pangi (Himachal Pradesh):** This landscape forms the upper catchment of Chandrabhaga (Chenab) river and is flanked by Pir Panjal and Greater Himalayas in the south and north respectively. The mean elevation ranges from 3,000 – 5,500 m. The landscape area harbors scattered sub-alpine conifer forests dominated by *Juniperus semi-globosa*, *Pinus wallichiana*, *Cedrus deodara* and *Betula utilis*. Alpine dry and moist scrub and Alpine mixed pastures also occur in the landscape. The snow leopard, brown bear, Asiatic black bear, blue sheep, Himalayan ibex, Himalayan tahr and Himalayan musk deer are the characteristic mammalian fauna. The higher altitudes of Kinnaur district especially the alpine areas adjacent to Spiti and Raksham Chitkul represent important wildlife habitat, biocorridors and junctions of biogeographic provinces. Heavy livestock grazing by local pastoralists (Pangwals) and migratory pastoralists (Gaddi), excessive collection of high value medicinal plants and human-wildlife conflicts especially crop raiding by Asiatic black bear are serious problems. There is considerable dependence of local communities on the bio-resources of Seichu – Tuan Wildlife Sanctuary. The lack of alternate livelihood opportunities for the local communities is a key issue.

**Gangotri-Govind (Uttaranchal):** This landscape lies in the upper catchments of river Ganges and Yamuna. Upper parts of Gangotri National Park lies in the cold arid region while outer flanks of Gangotri as well as Govind represent cool temperate and sub-alpine forests, alpine moist meadows and glaciated, extremely rugged and broken areas. Altitude of the landscape ranges from 3,000 to over 6,000 m. Mixed conifer forests of blue pine, deodar and birch are in subalpine areas. Within Gangotri landscape there are riverine scrub and dry alpine scrub that are replaced by alpine desert steppe towards interiors of Gangotri National Park. Much of the alpine zone in Govind landscape is dominated by moist alpine scrub and moist meadows. Typical faunal assemblages in this landscape include snow leopard, Himalayan must deer, blue sheep, goral, and black and brown bear. The Darma-Byans valleys of Pithoragarh District represent alpine habitats of tremendous biological wealth that lie in the Kailash trans-boundary landscape and harbors good populations of high altitude fauna including snow leopard. This valley will be included in baseline surveys, conservation awareness, community-based monitoring and trans-boundary collaborative activities. Major land use practices in this landscape include religious pilgrimage and tourism in Gangotri – Gaumukh area, seasonal grazing by migratory livestock in parts of Gangotri and Govind National Parks, commercial extraction of high value medicinal plants, extraction of timber and fuel wood in outer fringes of Govind Wildlife Sanctuary, and livestock grazing and lopping for fodder in parts of Govind National Park.

**Kanchenjunga-Upper Teesta Valley, (Sikkim):** The landscape extends from Kanchenjunga national park in western part of Sikkim and upper catchment of Teeta and the Tso Lhamu plateau in the north. Valleys of Lachen and Lachung are included in this landscape. Altitudinal range of this landscape is from 3,000 to over 7,000 m. Khangchendzonga and the upper catchment of Teesta river represent some of the pristine temperate broadleaf and mixed conifer forests with rich understory vegetation dominated by bamboos which form excellent habitat for red panda, Himalayan must deer, Asiatic black bear and serow. Alpine habitats in the western part of the landscape are narrow and more rugged and harbor snow leopard. Sikkim plateau (Tso Lhamu) represents one of the smallest biogeographic provinces in India, characterized by presence of Tibetan elements such as Tibetan gazelle, Argali sheep and Tibetan wild ass. Key conservation issues include extraction of high value medicinal plants including caterpillar mushroom, degradation of habitats in some pockets especially in the Tso Lhamu plateau and lack of adequate livelihood opportunities for the marginal communities.

## **2.4 Implementation Arrangements**

The project is being implemented under a national implementation modality (NIM), with UNDP as the GEF implementing agency. The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change is the executing agency. Other partners in the states and landscapes are: State Forest Departments of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Union Territory of Ladakh; relevant line departments and CSOs at each state; and other partners

The project organization chart included in the project document is presented below in **Figure 2**. There are two parts of the organogram – first National Project Management and Technical Unit, whereas the second State and Landscape Project Management Units. Two sub figures provide more details of national and state parts.

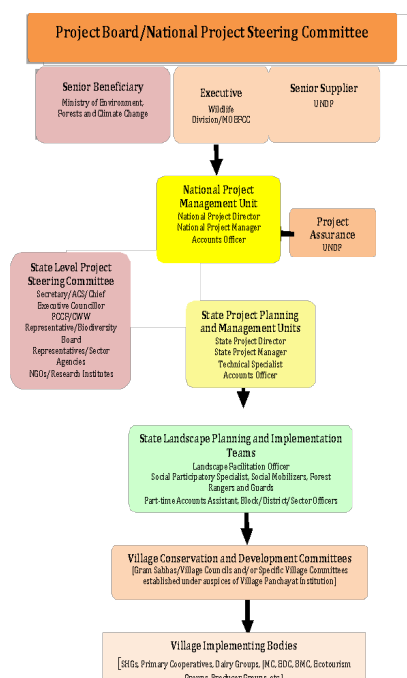
National Steering Committee is the highest strategic decision-making body headed by Inspector General of Forest – Wildlife with members from other relevant ministries and technical institutions and UNDP. Compositions of the State Steering Committee are senior officials from Forest Departments, other relevant state government departments and

institutions. Project assurance was to be delivered by the UNDP Country Office and the UNDP Asia and Pacific Regional Center.

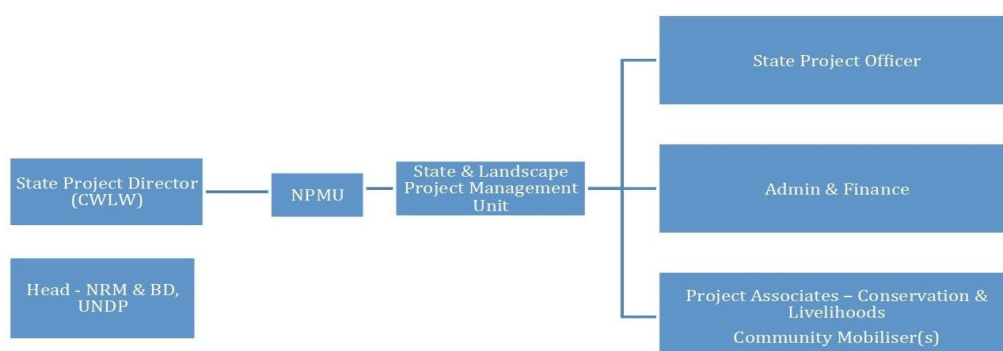
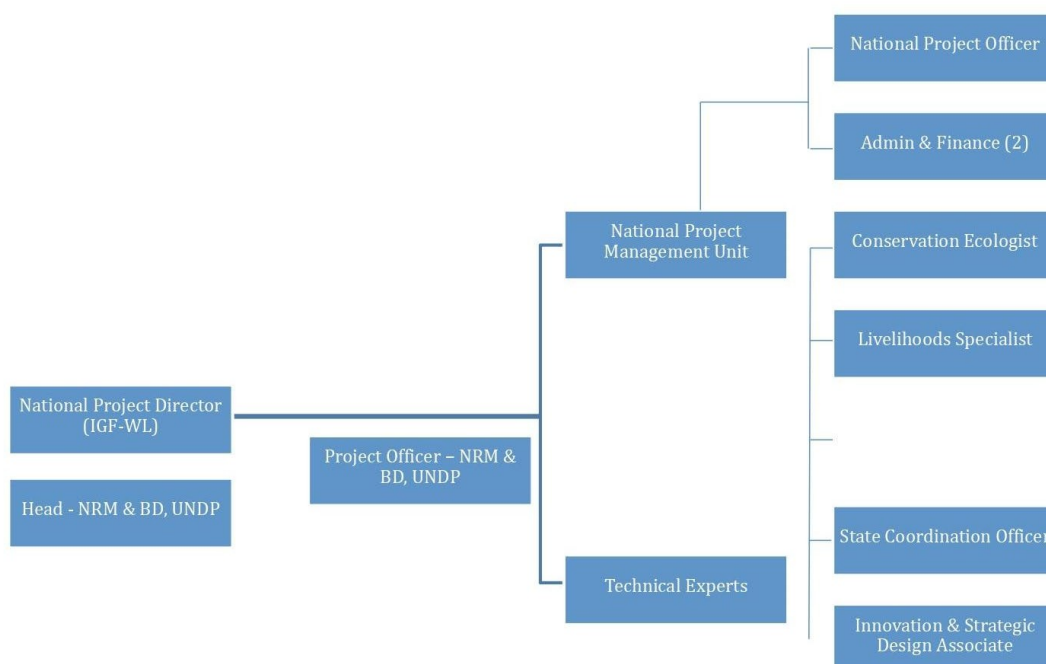
As with previous UNDP-GEF projects, the implementation modality is a full-support NIM, meaning that apart from their project assurance role, UNDP is responsible for recruitment and contracting of project staff, conducting procurement services, providing financial and auditing services and appointing independent financial auditors and evaluators.

As responsible parties, SPMUs prepare annual work plans and all reports and the NPMU will consolidate these documents at the national level for approval of the National Steering Committee. State level plans and reports are approved by State Steering Committees first before sending to NPMU. Annual project implementation review (PIR) reports and project expenditures are finally approved at the National Steering Committee.

**Figure 2: Project organizational chart (taken from of the project document page 76)**



A)



## 2.5 Project Timing and Milestones

### Project Milestones:

Preparation Grant Approved (PIF approved):	04 June 2015
Project Approved for Implementation:	21 June 2017
Start Date (project document signed by government of India):	5 December 2017
Project Inception Workshop: Uttarakand (27 July 2019); Himachal Pradesh (19 September 2019); Sikkim (25 July 2019); and Ladakh (19 October 2019)	
Midterm Review:	March-Dec 2022
Closing Date (Planned):	5 December 2024

The project identification form (PIF) was approved on 4 June 2015, and following the project preparation phase, the project obtained approval for implementation by the GEF CEO on 21 June 2017. The official start date of the project is 5 December 2017, the date when the Government of India signed the project document. The project inception workshops were held at all the four states in the second half of 2019.

The MTR was conducted over the period of March-July 2022, however writing part was delayed because the Team Leader dropped out on health issues, and the revised planned closing date is 31 December 2022.

## 2.6 Main Stakeholders

The main stakeholders for the project and their expected roles and responsibilities were outlined in the stakeholder analysis included in the Project Document and augmented during the stakeholder involvement discussions held during the project inception workshop in May 2016. The project stakeholders are listed below in **Table 4**.

**Table 4: Project stakeholders**

Stakeholder Group	Description
Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MOEF&CC) and its Wildlife Division	MOEFCC is the focal point for implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in India. Responsible for wildlife, forestry and climate change policy in the country and for coordination across State Governments in these areas. The units under MOEFCC are the Mountain, Biodiversity and the Wildlife Divisions. MoEF&CC supports the climate change resilience and adaptation risk management with the relevant state departments and with the National Biodiversity Authority. The project is anchored in the Wildlife Division of MoEF&CC
State Forest and Wildlife Departments (SF&WD)	The State Forest and Wildlife departments are responsible for all forest and wildlife protection related activities and the interface between National and State level programs. The project is anchored in the Wildlife Division of State Forest and Wildlife Departments of project states
National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)	A statutory, autonomous body that facilitates regulatory and advisory function for the Government of India on issues of conservation, sustainable use of biological resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of biological resources.
State Biodiversity Boards of UT of Ladakh, J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim	State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) are to be established under Section 22 of the BD Act. The specific roles are (i) Advise the State Governments, subject to guidelines issued by the Central Government, on matters relating to conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of utilization of biological resources, (ii) Regulate by granting approvals or otherwise request for commercial utilization or bio-survey and bio utilization of any biological resource by Indians and (iii) Perform such other functions as necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act or as prescribed by the State Governments.
Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, Delhi	A statutory body established by the Government of India under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to combat organized wildlife crime.
Ministry/Department of Agriculture (MOA)	MOA is responsible for the development and implementation of the agriculture related management plans in the country. The department of agriculture at the state and district level are responsible for coordinating with local authorities for improvements in agriculture
State Medicinal Plant Board/ National Medicinal Plant Board	Responsible for coordination of matters relating to medicinal plants, including policies, strategies for conservation, sustainable harvesting, cultivation, research and development, marketing, etc.
District Administrations	The district administrations are critical links between the national, state and local level for implementation of projects, especially looking at community engagement as well as specifics of the local landscape.
ITBP, Indian Army	The Indian Army, ITBP and other paramilitary forces are responsible for the security and defense of the country.
Wildlife Institute of India (WII)	A premier institute and research center for wildlife studies and conservation.
NGOs across Sikkim, Ladakh, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh (Khanchendzonga Conservation Committee, ATREE, WWF India, MLAS, Echostream, SELF HELP Society, CEVA-RES, SAVE Changthang etc.)	NGOs in this region are working for conservation and wildlife, livelihood, water conservation and climate change mitigation, renewable energy, education and awareness, traditional knowledge and social enterprise



GBPIHED – Almora (HQ) and Sikkim, ICIMOD, GBPUAT, CAZRI, KVK- SKUAST, Center, Nyoma, HAREC, HFRI, HBT - a CSIR institute; FRI – Dehradun, Zoological Survey of India, Traffic India ICLEI South Asia, The Energy and Resource Institute (TERI),	Key national research centers on Himalayan environment and development issues at a national level, intergovernmental level - looking at climate change impacts, assisting mountain people, horticulture, animal husbandry and agriculture, sustainable and innovative technology for people's livelihood as well as biodiversity conservation
National Institute of Public Finance and Policy	
Government line department Animal Husbandry Department, Tourism, Public Health, Agriculture, Rural Development, Special Area Development Authority, Keylong, State Rural Livelihood Missions, Police and Custom etc.)	State level departments responsible to implement relevant government schemes
Snow Leopard Trust and the Nature Conservation Foundation; Snow Leopard Conservancy.	The SLT and the NCF are actively engaged in India's Project Snow Leopard and are also implementing a livelihoods and conservation project in the Upper Spiti region of Himachal Pradesh.
NABARD / NABFINS, Microfinance /Micro insurance/Micro pension, NGO-MFI like Sanghamitra, Sutluj Jal Vidhut Nigam Ltd.	Promoting sustainable and equitable agriculture and rural prosperity through effective credit support, related services, institution development and other innovative initiatives, as well as providing Microfinance services and promoting livelihoods and enterprises
Local communities in Ladakh, Uttarakhand Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh Agro-pastoral, women and youth, pilgrims, Village communities within National Parks, agro-based, animal husbandry, tourism and handicraft activities, Community based organisations	Primary users of the landscape and key target group for all components of the project. Communities living in the fringe village as well as in remote areas where intervention has been less
SAWEN, International NGO's, Government agencies	International consensus on biodiversity conservation, and climate change, policy cooperation and information exchange
Ministry of Information and broadcasting, Ministry of External Affairs, National Television and Radio network, Private Communication Agencies, Media – Print and TV at state and national level	Dissemination of information and awareness about the project at national and regional level through mainstream channels, television, print, festivals, press and direct institutional arrangements, and addressing communication gaps related to stakeholders as well as general public.

## 3 Findings

### 3.1 Project Strategy

#### 3.1.1 Project Design

The multifocal area project was approved under the GEF-6 replenishment cycle and aligned to Objective 1 and 4 biodiversity (BD) focal area strategy, Objectives 2 and 3 of the land degradation (LD) focal area strategy, and Objectives 1 and 3 of the sustainable forest management (SFM) focal strategy:

- **Objective BD-1:** Improve Sustainability of Protected Area Systems;
- **Outcome 2:** Improved management effectiveness of protected areas; **Indicator 2:** Protected area management effectiveness score.
- **Objectives BD-4:** Mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes: **Outcome 2:** Sector policies and regulatory frameworks incorporate biodiversity considerations; **Indicator 2:** The degree to which sector policies and regulatory frameworks incorporate biodiversity considerations and implement the regulations.
- **Objective LD-2:** Generate sustainable flows of forest ecosystem services, including sustaining livelihoods of forest dependent people; **Outcome 2:** Improved forest management and/or restoration; **Indicator 2:** Land area under sustainable forest management and/or restoration practices.
- **Objective LD-3:** Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape; **Outcome 1:** Support mechanisms for SLM in wider landscapes established; **Indicator 1:** Demonstration results strengthening cross- sector integration of SLM; **Outcome 3:** Increased investments in integrated landscape management; **Indicator 3:** Increased resources flowing to INRM and other land uses from diverse sources.
- **Objective SFM-1:** Maintained Forest Resources: Reduce the pressures on high conservation value forests by addressing the drivers of deforestation; **Outcome 1:** Cross-sector policy and planning approaches at appropriate governance scales, avoid loss of high conservation value forests. **Indicator 1:** Area of high conservation value forest identified and maintained; **Outcome 2:** Innovative mechanisms avoid the loss of high conservation value forest; **Indicator 2:** Number of incentive mechanisms to avoid the loss of high conservation value forests implemented.
- **Objective SFM-3:** Restored Forest Ecosystems: Reverse the loss of ecosystem services within degraded forest landscapes; **Outcome 1:** Integrated landscape restoration plans to maintain forest ecosystem services are implemented at appropriate scales by government, private sector and local community actors, both women and men; **Indicator 1:** Area of forest resources restored in the landscape, stratified by forest management actors.

With regard to the biodiversity focal area strategy, Outcome 1.2 under Objective BD-1 has rightly focused on improving METT scores. However, in the six landscapes there are large areas not within the protected area management systems. Therefore, resources available from these areas for community will certainly reduce pressures in protected area system. This strategic linkage should be captured, quantified, and reported.

The theory of change, TOC, (**Figure 3**) clearly identified mid-term impacts and long-term impacts. Keeping in view of the time required for long-term impacts the current project cycle may be just able to show triggers but not achieve the long-term impacts. Therefore, sustainability of initiatives after the project ends is critical to achieve long term impacts.

Combinations of the biodiversity, land degradation and sustainable forest management objectives and outcomes are excellent approach to be integrated in landscape approach. However, careful analysis on integration and overlaps in achieving the outcomes has to be further developed. Livelihoods is a major intervention in Component 2 therefore nature based solutions, environmentally sustainable entrepreneurship and balancing conservation with economic activities for bigger conservation goals have to be conceived. The intention is clear as outlined in TOC but how this balancing will be achieved is not yet clear from the design.

## Midterm Review Report, 2022

Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, Sustainable Use, and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems (SECURE-Himalaya) UNDP PIMS ID: 3298; GEF Project ID: 9148

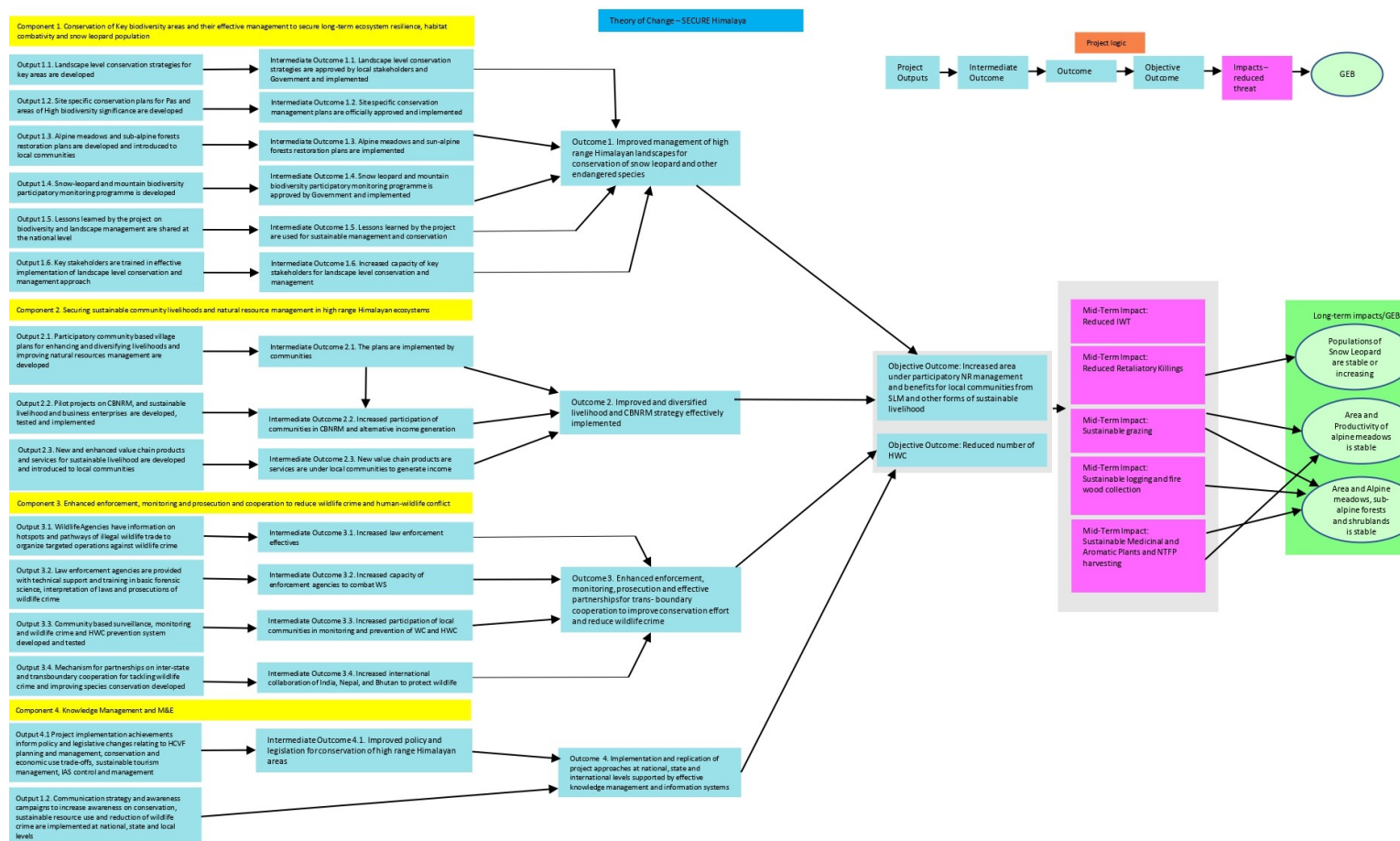


Figure 3: Theory of Change

### 3.1.2 Results Framework

As part of this midterm review, the project results framework for the project was assessed against “SMART” criteria, to evaluate whether the indicators and targets were sufficiently specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. With respect to the time-bound criterion, all targets are assumed compliant, as they are set as end-of-project performance metrics.

#### **Project Objective:**

There are five indicators at the project objective level, as described below in **Table 5**.

**Table 5: SMART analysis of project results framework (project objective)**

Indicator	Baseline	Mid-Term Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
			S	M	A	R	T
Project Objective: To promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secures conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats, ensure sustainable livelihoods and community Socio-economic benefits							
Mandatory Indicator 1.3.1 Area of sustainable management solutions at sub-national for conservation of snow leopard, wild prey and associated species and habitats, sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem services	Approximately 30,000 – 40,000 hectares (parts of Kanchenjunga National Park and Gangotri National Park) managed effectively	At least 200,000 hectares managed using participatory approaches	Y	Y	?	Y	Y
Mandatory Indicator 1.3.2 Number of additional people benefiting from strengthened livelihoods through solutions for management of natural resources and ecosystem services	0 (Baseline of households participating in alternative livelihoods and sustainable resource management will be established through the village microplanning process)	At least 500 households are directly benefiting from improved and alternative livelihoods and incomes (50% of the 2,500 beneficiaries would be women)	Y	Y	?	Y	Y
Mandatory indicator 2.5.1 Extent to which Institutional frameworks are in place for conservation, sustainable use, access and benefit sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems and improved livelihoods	0 (Current institutional arrangements do not facilitate significant coordination across multi-sectors and multiple actors)	Multiple use landscape frameworks agreed with key stakeholders and under review for official approval	Y	Y	Y	Y	?
Biological Indicator. Status of snow leopard populations in four project states	Estimated at 474 individuals	Snow leopard baselines validated	Y	Y	?	Y	?
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green (Y): SMART criteria compliant; Yellow (?): questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red (N): not compliant with SMART criteria							

There are three mandatory indicators at the objective level, which are critical for conservation of landscapes and sustaining ecosystem services, sustainable livelihoods and institutional frameworks. The smart criteria for the first two indicators namely conservation and livelihoods are questionable of achievability. Likewise, for institutional frameworks it shows similar concern. Situation for biological indicator pertaining to snow leopard population is questionable. Therefore, these need to be reviewed and aligned.

With respect to Objective Indicator 1.3.2 the baseline of zero (0) households participating in alternative livelihoods is incorrect. There were households and villages benefiting from livelihood activities at project baseline time.

#### **Outcome 1: Improved management of high Himalayan landscapes for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services**

There are five indicators established for the Outcome 1, as described below in **Table 6**.

**Table 6: SMART analysis of project results framework (Component 1)**

Indicator	Baseline	Mid-Term Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
			S	M	A	R	T
Improved management of high Himalayan landscapes for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services							
Indicator 1.1 Improved management effectiveness of protected areas and biological rich areas in alpine and sub-alpine landscape	Changtang WLS (22) Govind Pasu WLS (25), Gangotri NP (35) Khangchenjunga NP (29), Seichi Tuan WLS (13), Shingba Rhododendron WLS (16)	10 points increase of METT scores of 06 PAs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
1.2 Improved institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring of multiple use landscapes. UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline score of 18	Score 18	20% increase	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Indicator 1.3 Reduced pressure and prevented degradation of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forests	Approximately 700,000 ha of alpine meadows under unsustainable grazing with	Reduced grazing pressure on 700,000 ha by at least 10% and prevented degradation in around	?	?	?	Y	?

	average 75 livestock units/km2 and forests around villages lack sustainable management arrangements	2,000 ha of sub-alpine forest under community-based management					
Indicator 1.4 Extent of degraded alpine pastures/rangelands and sub-alpine forests under sustainable management regimes	Approximately 40,000 ha of alpine pastures and 2,000 ha of sub-alpine forests under continued degradation through overuse	At least 5,000 ha alpine pastures and 500 ha sub-alpine forests under sustainable regeneration regimes	N	N	N	Y	N
Indicator 1.5 Area of High Conservation Value Forests under improved management	High Conservation Value Forests (dispersal corridors, biodiversity rich areas and buffer areas) lack appropriate management regimes	HCVFs identified and management regimes established	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green (Y): SMART criteria compliant; Yellow (?): questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red (N): not compliant with SMART criteria							

Among the five indicators of Outcome 1, three indicators namely 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4 are questionable in terms of achievable in SMART criteria. The indicator 3.1 on reduced pressure and prevention of degradation of meadows shows similar situation. However, extent of degradation in alpine pasture putting back under sustainable regeneration regime is not SMART. More attention needs to be given on this indicator during the remaining period of the project.

**Outcome 2: Improved and diversified sustainable livelihood strategies and enhanced capacities of community and government for sustainable natural resources management and conservation to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems**

There are three indicators for Outcome 2 (see **Table 7**).

**Table 7: SMART analysis of project results framework (Component 2)**

Indicator	Baseline	Mid-Term Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
			S	M	A	R	T
Improved and diversified sustainable livelihood strategies and enhanced capacities of community and government for sustainable natural resources management and conservation to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems							
Indicator 2.1 Extent of land under sustainable natural resources management practices	0 (Currently sustainable land management natural resources practices at the village level are absent or limited)	At least 2,000 ha under sustainable natural resources management practices.	Y	Y	?	Y	Y
Indicator 2.2 Average percentage increase in community incomes from sustainable livelihood, natural resource management and business activities (calculated for each community)	Baseline to be established in Year 1 during village micro-planning	10% increase in average incomes from sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management and business activities. (At least 40% of beneficiaries are women)	Y	?	?	Y	Y
Indicator 2.3 Number of community members trained, adopting community-based agricultural, agro-pastoral, natural resource management and livelihood activities.	0 (currently training at the community level is limited and sector specific.) and limited effort at comprehensive training that integrates the multiple dimensions of managing resources across the different sectors and for multiple use.	At least 1000 community members trained and have adopted community-based sustainable resource use, agro-pastoral, agricultural and other sustainable livelihood activities and have benefitted socio-economically.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green (Y): SMART criteria compliant; Yellow (?): questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red (N): not compliant with SMART criteria							

Overall, for Outcome 2 all the indicators with baseline and midterm look SMART except average percentage increase in community incomes from sustainable livelihood. Capacity development indicator could capture trainings received from other sources if such capacity building complementing to project outcome.

### **Outcome 3: Enhanced enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and human-wildlife conflict**

There are three indicators for Outcome 2 (see 8).

**Table 8: SMART analysis of project results framework (Component 3)**

Indicator	Baseline	Mid-Term Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
			S	M	A	R	T
Enhanced enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and human-wildlife conflict							
Indicator 3.1 Number of community members actively volunteering in security monitoring and surveillance	0 (There is no coordinated program for community participation in surveillance and monitoring of wildlife crime)	50 community members actively engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions (At least 20% women) to serve as deterrent to wildlife crime	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Indicator 3.2 Number of international agreements for enhancing trans-boundary cooperation between China, Nepal, Bhutan and India	0 (a number of trans-boundary plans exists, but coordination is limited)	At least 2 agreements	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Indicator 3.3 Annual Number of human-wildlife conflicts leading to livestock and crop losses and retaliatory killings of wildlife	Baseline will be developed in Year 1	Atleast 20% decrease HWC	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green (Y): SMART criteria compliant; Yellow (?): questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red (N): not compliant with SMART criteria							

The indicator 3.2 on number of international agreements seemed over ambitious and not SMART. Project can break this indicator to smaller agreements that are achievable in the time frame of the project.

### **Outcome 4: Improved knowledge and information systems for promotion of landscape conservation approaches**

There are three indicators for Outcome 4 (see 9).

**Table 9: SMART analysis of project results framework (Component 4)**

Indicator	Baseline	Mid-Term Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
			S	M	A	R	T
Improved knowledge and information systems for promotion of landscape conservation approaches							
Indicator 4.1 Number of policy and regulatory mechanisms for improved management of high Himalayan areas provisioned	0 (A number of areas where policy reform is required exists).	Key policy recommendations discussed and agreed with key stakeholders	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Indicator 4.2 Number of project best practices used in development and implementation of other conservation initiatives	0 (A few best practice publications etc., but the project will make efforts for additional project specific lessons to be documented).	A majority of best practice and lessons identified and under documentation	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Indicator 4.3 Percentage of participating households aware of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits	Baseline to be established in Year 1 through micro planning process.	20% of participating households have good awareness of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits	?	?	Y	Y	Y
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green (Y): SMART criteria compliant; Yellow (?): questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red (N): not compliant with SMART criteria							

The three indicators for Outcome 4 are SMART, however for the last indicator efforts have to be made to modify to show more compliance to the criteria especially on specific and measurable attributes.

### 3.1.3 Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion Analysis

The UNDP social and environmental screening process (SESP) was carried out as part of the project design phase, and the results showed that the project is rated as MODERATE to LOW risks. One of the moderate risk concerns the development of landscape conservation management plans for the four landscapes might cause some restrictions on the access and use of the alpine forests and pastures by local communities. The second moderate risk is that the project preparation indicates that there are indigenous people who live in the project areas and may be affected by the project, unless specific actions are taken to include them in the benefits of the project. Limited screening was undertaken during project implementation to ensure that indigenous people participated and benefitted from livelihood, value addition and sustainable harvest and grazing practices. Considering these risks in management measures and AWP preparations practiced mitigation. Gender and Analysis Action Plan was prepared during the project design phase and implemented across all landscapes and states. A key component of the project is mainstreaming gender and social inclusion to ensure both women and men, and all social groups participate actively in conservation action and benefit equally from project interventions. The project strategies have been gender targeted corresponding to the Midterm indicators and targets. It has shown potential and trends of also being gender responsive and gender transformative to some extent.

Gender and social inclusion considerations while developing Annual Work Plans were mainstreaming gender, ascertaining barriers and addressing them, creating enabling environment, and involving them in CSOs and CBO institutions.

Three examples that demonstrated gender mainstreaming and social inclusion by the project as observed during the field missions are given below:

- In Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh over 60 Biodiversity Management Committees comprising of members from different social groups ensured participation of at least 30% women in the constitution of the committees. Training and capacity building exercises are in progress for these Biodiversity Management Committees.
- The project, in association with the State Biodiversity Boards (SBB) of Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim, have trained a cadre of 50 para-taxonomists, with an emphasis on enrollment of women, to assist the SBBs and the Forest and Wildlife Departments in monitoring key wildlife species and documentation of biodiversity in high-altitude landscapes.
- Increased capacity of Community Based Organizations that are led by women through participatory rural appraisals for the development of village level micro-plans, thereby reducing the gap of women's participation in decision-making processes at the village level. An all women Biodiversity Management Committee formed in Ladakh to promote women's participation in decision-making and management of natural resources.
- In Uttarakhand, a young female community mobiliser/ UNV in the Landscape team mobilized and inspired female youth to come forward to training as nature, mountaineering and trek guides and encouraged them to adopt it as a livelihood option. This is a major gender shift considering local cultural norms and has the potential to be gender transformative and must be encouraged.

The project teams have made extra efforts in focusing interventions on women and youth not only as beneficiaries but to make them an agent of change. The results are clearly visible in terms of capacity building, biodiversity conservation, livelihood improvement, economic opportunity and empowerment as reported in the 2022 PIR.

In the project landscapes of all the four states, roles traditionally played by various social groups and women in natural resource management and biodiversity are vital. Project's focus on this component is critical in achieving the midterm and end project targets. Overall during the midterm review this component has been assessed to be positive and moving in the right direction. However, efforts should be made to achieve this across all outcomes and at objective level too.



## 3.2 Progress towards Results

### 3.2.1 Progress towards achievement of Global Environmental Benefits

Progress towards achievement of global environmental benefits under the GEF-6 biodiversity (BD), land degradation and sustainable forest management (SFM) focal areas is summarized below in Table 10.

**Table 10: Midterm assessment of progress towards global environmental benefits**

Focal Area /Outcomes/Indicators	Project end targets	Midterm status	MTR Assessment
<p><b>Objective BD-1:</b> Improve Sustainability of Protected Area Systems; <b>Outcome 1:</b> Improved management effectiveness of protected areas; <b>Indicator 1:</b> Protected area management effectiveness score.</p> <p><b>Objectives BD-4:</b> Mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes; <b>Outcome 2:</b> Sector policies and regulatory frameworks incorporate biodiversity considerations; <b>Indicator 2:</b> The degree to which sector policies and regulatory frameworks incorporate biodiversity considerations and implement the regulations.</p>	<p>Average increase by at least 30 points in METT from current PAs baselines below:</p> <p>Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary (22), Seichu Tuan Wildlife Sanctuary (13), Govind National Park &amp; Wildlife Sanctuary (25), Gangotri National Park (35), Khangchendzonga National Park and Biosphere Reserve (29), Shingba Rhododendron Wildlife Sanctuary (16)</p>	<p>Average increase in METT from current PAs baselines is as follows:</p> <p>Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary (61), Seichu Tuan Wildlife Sanctuary (60), Govind National Park &amp; Wildlife Sanctuary (55), Gangotri National Park (64), Khangchendzonga National Park and Biosphere Reserve (69), Shingba Rhododendron Wildlife Sanctuary (60)</p>	Achieved
<p><b>Objective LD-2:</b> Generate sustainable flows of forest ecosystem services, including sustaining livelihoods of forest dependent people; <b>Outcome 2:</b> Improved forest management and/or restoration; <b>Indicator 2:</b> Land area under sustainable forest management and/or restoration practices.</p>	<p>Approximately 40,000 ha of degraded alpine meadows restored and under improved vegetative cover</p> <p>Approximately 2,000 ha of sub- alpine forests under community management regimes</p>	<p>1084 ha of degraded alpine meadows restored and under improved vegetative cover</p> <p>Approximately 588.94 ha of sub- alpine forests under community management regimes</p>	On Track
<p><b>Objective LD-3:</b> Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape; <b>Outcome 1:</b> Support mechanisms for SLM in wider landscapes established; <b>Indicator 1:</b> Demonstration results strengthening cross- sector integration of SLM;.</p>	<p>Approximately 30% of the 8,000 - 10,000 HHs (i.e. 2,400-3,000 HHs) participating in sustainable natural resources and livelihood practices adopting SLM practices</p>	<p>Approximately 646 households participating in sustainable natural resources and livelihood activities adopting SLM practices</p>	On Track
<p><b>Objective LD-3:</b> Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape; <b>Outcome 3:</b> Increased investments in integrated landscape management; <b>Indicator 3:</b> Increased resources flowing to INRM and other land uses from diverse sources.</p>	<p>Approximately 10,000 ha of land under sustainable land management practices</p>	<p>Approximately 513.35 ha of land under sustainable land management practices</p>	On Track
<p><b>Objective SFM-1:</b> Maintained Forest Resources: Reduce the pressures on high conservation value forests by addressing the drivers of deforestation; <b>Outcome 1:</b> Cross-sector policy and planning approaches at appropriate governance scales, avoid loss of high conservation value forests. <b>Indicator 1:</b> Area of high conservation value forest identified and maintained; <b>Outcome 2:</b> Innovative mechanisms avoid the loss of high conservation value forest; <b>Indicator 2:</b> Number of incentive mechanisms to avoid the loss of high conservation value forests implemented.</p>	<p>60,000 ha of high value forests and 20,000 ha of Biodiversity Heritage Sites managed for conservation outcomes</p>	<p>4,39,432 ha of high conservation value areas identified (outside PAs) and 2,776 ha area under improved management for conservation (outside PAs)</p>	On Track



<b>Objective SFM-3:</b> Restored Forest Ecosystems: Reverse the loss of ecosystem services within degraded forest landscapes; <b>Outcome 1:</b> Integrated landscape restoration plans to maintain forest ecosystem services are implemented at appropriate scales by government, private sector and local community actors, both women and men; <b>Indicator 1:</b> Area of forest resources restored in the landscape, stratified by forest management actors.	Approximately 2,000 ha of degraded sub-alpine forests restored and brought under sustainable forest management practices	Approximately 2210 ha of degraded sub-alpine forests restored and brought under sustainable forest management practices	Achieved
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Improvements in protected area management effectiveness in terms of sustainability at the six target landscapes have already achieved end of the target. The restoration of degraded forest landscape midterm target is also already achieved. With respect to the envisaged global environmental benefits under the Land Degradation focal area, the project is on target to achieve all the three indicators in most of the landscapes. In 'Sustainable Forest Management' especially area of high conservation value forest has been identified and maintained in most of the landscapes. In cases of programmes that are on target or track efforts should put in developing partnerships with complementary government and other projects to reach to a scale during the remaining time of the project.

### 3.2.2 Progress towards Objective and Outcomes Analysis

Project effectiveness was evaluated by assessing achievement of the project objective and outcomes according to the agreed performance metrics included in the project results framework.

<b>Objective: To promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secures conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats, ensure sustainable livelihoods and community socio-economic benefits</b>	
Progress towards achieving the project objective is rated as:	Satisfactory

Progress towards achievement of the project objective is rated as **satisfactory**, as summarized below in **Table 11**.

**Table 11: Progress towards results, project objective**

Indicator	Baseline	Midterm Project Target	Midterm status	End-of-Project target	MTR assessment
	2017		July 2022	Dec 2024	
Mandatory Indicator 1.3.1 Area of sustainable management solutions at sub-national for conservation of snow leopard, wild prey and associated species and habitats, sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem services	Approximately 30,000-40,000 hectares (parts of Kanchenjunga National Park and Gangotri National Park) managed effectively	At least 200,000 hectares managed using participatory approaches	This indicator appears to be on track to meeting the end-of-project target of at least 1,600,000 hectares effectively managed through participatory approaches based on progress articulated in 2021 PIR progress report. The effectiveness in management has been where large areas under PA are being included in the project landscape. Community engagement is enhanced targeting the end of the project indicator.	At least 1,600,000 hectares effectively managed through participatory approaches	Achieved
B. Mandatory Indicator 1.3.2 Number of additional people benefiting from strengthened livelihoods through solutions for management of natural resources and ecosystem services	0 (Baseline of households participating in alternative livelihoods and sustainable resource management will be established through the village micro- planning process)	At least 500 households are directly benefiting from improved and alternative livelihoods and incomes (50% of the	Already benefitting 1219 households including 692 women, therefore Midterm target level has been exceeded. However, there are risks to meeting the ambitious end-of- project target of 2,500 households [12,500 beneficiaries – 50% women]. Strategy should be developed to have clear plans for each of the landscapes and states.	At least 2,500 households directly benefit through improved livelihood and incomes (50% of the 12,500 beneficiaries would be women)	Achieved

C. Mandatory indicator 2.5.1 Extent to which Institutional frameworks are in place for conservation, sustainable use, access and benefit sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems and improved livelihoods	0 (Current institutional arrangements do not facilitate significant coordination across multi-sectors and multiple actors)	Multiple use landscape frameworks agreed with key stakeholders and under review for official approval	Significant investment has been made in management planning and enabling governance structures at state and local level. These frameworks shared, validated and are in process of institutionalization. The midterm Target Achieved.  Gender especially role and participation of women in livelihood activities were observed. Women were considered as key stakeholders at the landscape level.	All four multiple use landscapes have official multi-stakeholder, multi-sector coordination and governance mechanisms that facilitate convergence of planning, manpower and financial resources for conservation, sustainable use and improved livelihood benefits	<b>Achieved</b>
D. Biological Indicator. Status of snow leopard populations in four project states	Estimated at 474 individuals. There is no formal baseline.	Snow leopard baselines validated	Snow leopard baselines validated. There is no formal baseline established, therefore, this indicator is at risk of not being achieved.  Remedial action required and target can be achieved.	Stable or increase snow leopard populations in the four project states	<b>On track</b>

As discussed in Section 3.1 of this MTR report, the MTR team considers that area of sustainable management solutions (indicator 1.3.1), number of additional people benefitted from strengthened livelihoods interventions (1.3.2) and institutional frameworks for conservation, benefits sharing from biodiversity and ecosystems and improved livelihoods (indicator 2.5.1) have achieved the midterm targets. However, Biological indicator shows that it is on track and needs some more attention during the remaining time of the project. Hallmark is coordination of multi-sector departments at the landscape level management committees bringing efficiency and effectiveness on the ground action.

<b>Outcome 1: Improved management of high Himalayan landscapes for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services</b>	
<b>Progress towards achieving Outcomes 1 is rated as:</b>	<b>Moderately Satisfactory</b>

Progress towards achievement of Outcome 1 is rated as **moderately satisfactory**, as outlined below in **Table 12**.

**Table 12: Progress towards results, Outcome 1**

Indicator	Baseline	Midterm Project target	Midterm status	End-of-Project target	MTR assessment
	2017		July 2022	Dec 2024	
<b>1.1</b> Improved management effectiveness of protected areas and biological rich areas in alpine and sub-alpine landscape	Changtang WLS (22) Govind Pasu WLS (25) Gangotri NP (35) Khangchenjunga NP (29) Seichi Tuan WLS (13) Shingba Rhododendron WLS (16)	10 points increase of METT scores of 06 PAs	Changtang WLS (22 => 61 = 177%) Govind Pasu WLS (25 => 55 = 120%) Gangotri NP (35 => 64 = 82.75%) Khangchenjunga NP (29 => 69 = 138%) Seichi Tuan WLS (13 => 60 = 361%) Shingba Rhododendron WLS (16 => 60 = 275%) = AVERAGE INCREASE OF 146%. <u>End of Project Target</u> is already achieved.	Average increase by at least 30 points in METT from current PA baselines	<b>Achieved</b>

<p><b>1.2 Improved institutional capacities for planning implementation and monitoring of multiuse landscape level plans as measured by UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard</b></p>	<p>Limited institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring of multiple use landscapes. UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline score of 18</p>	<p>20% increase</p>	<p>So far 1166 Govt staff including middle and frontline staff including 146 women, trained thru' various trainings and exposure visits of management of PAs, law enforcement and other aspects of conservation.</p> <p>In Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh over 60 Biodiversity Management Committee comprising of members from different social groups ensured 30% women members.</p> <p>Observed significant investments in capacity across all landscapes and can infer achievement of target but Capacity Development Scorecard should be updated. Target Achieved pending GEF CD Scorecard results. Otherwise this indicator will be noted as only Partially Achieved at MTR</p>	<p>Increase of institutional capacity as measured by a 50% increase in UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline value</p>	<p><b>On track</b></p>
<p><b>1.3 Reduced pressure and prevented degradation of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forests</b></p>	<p>Approximately 700,000 ha of alpine meadows under unsustainable grazing with average 75 livestock units/km<sup>2</sup> and forests around villages lack sustainable management arrangements</p>	<p>Reduced grazing pressure on 700,000 ha by at least 10% and prevented degradation in around 2,000 ha of sub-alpine forest under community-based management</p>	<p>Approximately 4,190 ha of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forests brought under community management aiming to promote sustainable grazing practices and resource use.</p> <p>Notwithstanding distribution of cooking stoves and restoration plans, grazing pressure still appears to be a problem in some of the landscapes based on consultations in the field. Indicator Partially Achieved at MTR - unclear whether or not there is a consistent and harmonized strategy to measure progress based on narratives within progress report. However, reduction in cattle number and dependency on livestock is decreasing resulting from diversification of the livelihoods of communities in the landscapes. Indirect strategy of livelihoods diversification is already reducing grazing pressure.</p> <p>This needs to be addressed to achieve the end target.</p>	<p>Reduced grazing pressure on 700,000 ha of alpine meadows by at least 20% (from 75 to 60 livestock units/km<sup>2</sup>) and prevented degradation in around 10,000 ha of subalpine forest under community-based management resulting in projected 0.46-0.50 and 0.31- 0.36 m tCO<sub>2</sub> /30 year period sequestered and avoided respectively.</p>	<p><b>On track</b></p>
<p><b>1.4 Extent of degraded alpine pastures/rangelands and sub- alpine forests under sustainable management regimes</b></p>	<p>Approximately 40,000 ha of alpine pastures and 2,000 ha of subalpine forests under continued degradation through overuse</p>	<p>At least 5,000 ha alpine pastures and 500 ha sub-alpine forests under sustainable regeneration regimes</p>	<p>Approximately 1484 hectare of alpine pastures and 2208 hectare of subalpine forests have been covered under sustainable regeneration regime.</p> <p>Restoration strategies developed but actual restoration activities must be accelerated to achieve ambitious target of 40,000 hectare alpine pastures and</p>	<p>40,000 hectares alpine pastures and 2,000 hectares sub-alpine forests under sustainable regeneration regimes resulting in projected 0.16 -0.18 and 0.42 - 0.05 m tCO<sub>2</sub> /30 year period sequestered and avoided respectively.</p>	<p><b>On track</b></p>

			2,000 hectares sub- alpine forests under sustainable regeneration regimes. Project also not calculating tCO <sub>2</sub> /30 year period sequestrated and avoided.  <u>At high risk of not being achieved.</u> Remedial action(s) required but can be achieved with partnerships with other programmes.  End term target of the indicator seems ambitious for the Alpine ecosystems		
1.5 Area of High Conservation Value Forests improved management	High Conservation Value Forests (dispersal corridors, biodiversity rich areas and buffer areas) lack appropriate management regimes	HCVFs identified and management regimes established	HCVFs identification progress and area targets well underway, exceeding Midterm and even End of project targets In all of the landscapes there has been efforts for newly designated key biodiversity areas, .	(a) Reduced direct pressure on at least 60,000 ha covering at least 18 newly designated and managed key biodiversity areas, including 30,000 ha of HCVFs to ensure connectivity and species conservation resulting in projected avoided 1.38- 1.47 m tCO <sub>2</sub> over 30 year period  (b) Reduced direct pressure on at least 20,000 ha of moist and dry alpine areas and sub alpine forests managed as Biodiversity Heritage Sites <sup>43</sup> resulting in projected avoided 0.46 – 0.49 m tCO <sub>2</sub> over 30- year period	Achieved

In review of the Outcome 1, the most significant improvements between baseline figures and the midterm assessment were for METT scores (indicator 1.1). The indicator 1.5 on area of HCV forests has exceeded the midterm project targets. However, other three indicators (1.2, 1.3. and 1.4) dealing with institutional capacities and degradation of alpine meadows and forests are on track requiring additional efforts to upscale some of the initiatives to reach the end targets.

The project has significantly contributed to increase in METT scores of the PAs in the landscapes. A number of activities such as scientific surveys/research on biodiversity aspects of PAs, strengthening capacities of park managers through providing equipment, trainings of law enforcement and overall management. The central and state government contributed co-finance from various schemes (IDWH, CAMPA) to strengthen PAs at the project sites.

The project has contributed to policy making by contributing to developing framework, guidelines and SOPs. For example, a model framework and SoPs for developing management plan of high-altitude wetlands. Wetland Division of MoEF&CC has notified this. The common framework and guidelines for preparation of landscape management strategy and plans were developed in consultation with central line ministries, State Governments, technical agencies and subject matter experts.

Important key biodiversity areas (High Conservation Value Areas, high altitude wetlands and BHS) were identified and efforts are being made to designate 07 sites as BHS under the Biological Diversity Act. Site-specific actions for restoration of degraded alpine and subalpine forest were undertaken by engaging community groups. The key activities included promotion of rotational grazing in the pastures of Gangotri landscape by BMC, plantation of multi-purpose trees and shrubs species in landscape of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. The centre and state government has also contributed to restoration activities (soil and moisture conservation, invasive species removal, afforestation etc.) through co-finance.

Besides, a number training and capacity building programmes conducted for the frontline staff of forest and line departments and community-based institutions on various aspects of conservation. MTR team suggests updating capacity building scorecard.

The improved management of high altitude landscapes were accomplished through strong commitment of Forest Departments and Wildlife Divisions of the states. Community participation in conservation also helped in

accomplishing these results. Some of the bottle necks were inaccessibility and short period of field work in high altitude areas. The fragility of landscapes like harsh winter hindered the progress in many of the sites.

<b>Outcome 2: Improved and diversified sustainable livelihood strategies and enhanced capacities of community and government for sustainable natural resources management and conservation to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems</b>	
<b>Progress towards achieving Outcomes 2 is rated as:</b>	<b>Moderately Satisfactory</b>

Progress towards achievement of Outcome 2 is rated as **moderately satisfactory**, as outlined below in **Table 13**.

**Table 13: Progress towards results, Outcome 2**

Indicator	Baseline	Midterm Project target	Midterm status	End-of-Project target	MTR assessment
	2017		July 2022	Dec 2024	
<b>2.1</b> Extent under sustainable natural resources management practices	0 (Currently sustainable land management natural resources practices at the village level are absent or limited)	At least 2,000 ha under sustainable natural resources management practices.	A total of 2712 ha managed including sustainable natural resources management practices, reducing grazing, sustainable agriculture, self-help group women sustainable harvest of sea-buckthorn, community fodder bank, irrigation management, community nurseries and trial development with eco-tourism concept.  Indicator Partially Achieved at MTR. Focus has been brought recently on actions taken and more attention should be given on what actions will incrementally deliver 10,000 ha under sustainable natural resources management practices by the project's operational closure.	At least 10,000 ha under sustainable natural resources management practices	<b>On track</b>
<b>2.2</b> Average percentage increase in community incomes from sustainable livelihood, natural resource management and business activities (calculated foreach community)	<i>Baseline to be established in YR1 during village micro-planning</i>	10% increase in average incomes from sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management and business activities. (At least 40% of beneficiaries are women)	Baseline not formally established at inception and therefore, difficult to gauge progress at this juncture. Notwithstanding, the project has invested in a range of interventions and pilots with select beneficiaries towards enhancing incomes through diversified livelihood options (eco- tourism, natural fibre based handloom and handicraft development, skilling) value addition and market chain development. Special consideration was given by engaging women for income generation activities. Household level socioeconomic surveys were conducted in a number of landscapes and should be used to extrapolate a baseline before the TE.  Looking at the PIR July 2022 this indicator can be assessed as on target.	30% increase in average incomes from sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management and business activities (At least 40% of beneficiaries are women)	<b>On track</b>
<b>2.3</b> Number of community members trained, adopting community-based agricultural, agro-pastoral, natural resource management and livelihood activities.	0 (currently training at the community level is limited and sector specific.) and limited effort at comprehensive training that integrates the multiple dimensions of managing resources across the different sectors and for multiple use.	At least 1000 community members trained and have adopted community-based sustainable resource use, agro-pastoral, agricultural and other sustainable livelihood activities and have benefitted	A total of 2074 community members including women were trained as per PIR 2022.  Target Achieved and exceeded at MTR. Training observed as one of the project's core strengths.	At least 2,500 community members trained and adopting community-based sustainable resource use, agro-pastoral, agricultural and other sustainable livelihood activities and receiving detectable conservation and livelihood benefits	<b>Achieved</b>

		socio-economically.			
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The indicator 2.3 on community members participating in community-based agriculture, agro-pastoral systems, NRM and livelihoods through capacity building interventions of the project has reached the midterm target. However, other two indicators, 2.1 and 2.2 even if on track needs to strengthen activities to increase extent of sustainable NRM practices and increase in community income.

With regards to indicator 2.2, value chain enhancement work related to livelihoods activities focused on skill development (for example refined skills for handloom), value addition (enhanced quality of product again example of handloom can be taken), and marketing of produce/products. The project targeted 1219 beneficiaries/households including women. The project engaged with handloom and handicraft, eco- tourism and NTFP (nettle fibre, seabuckthorn) based value chains. The communities in the landscape were affected by COVID 19 for almost 2 years therefore the speed of income generation activities were hindered. The project facilitated buyer seller meet and promoted their participation in state and national level fairs and exhibition.

Various pilots such as waste management engaging local communities in Gangotri landscape and Yuksom of Sikkim, rotation grazing, sustainable harvesting of NTFPs, community fodder banks and plantation of multipurpose species of fallow land has contributed restoration of areas under natural resource management regime.

Much of the accomplishments in livelihood activities were possible because of engagement of local communities in income generating activities especially in many initiatives women were actively engaged. The major cause of slower progress was COVID-19 related lock down. Much of the local products were targeted for tourists but tourism negatively impacted by the pandemic.

<b>Outcome 3: Enhanced enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and human-wildlife conflict</b>	
<b>Progress towards achieving Outcome 3 is rated as:</b>	<b>Moderately Satisfactory</b>

Progress towards achievement of the Outcome 3 is rated as **moderately satisfactory**, as outlined below in **Table 14**.

**Table 14: Progress towards results, Outcome 3**

Indicator	Baseline	Midterm Project target	Midterm status	End-of-Project target	MTR assessment
	2017		July 2022	Dec 2024	
<b>3.1</b> Number of community members actively volunteering in security monitoring and surveillance	0 (There is no coordinated program for community participation in surveillance and monitoring of wildlife crime)	50 community members actively engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions (At least 20% women) to serve as deterrent to wildlife crime	Midterm Target Achieved. In the 2021 by the MTR time, meeting reports recorded 42 community members (all males) engaged in surveillance and monitoring of wildlife/crime and conservation issues. In the Q1 2022 progress report it was noted 45 officers from different enforcement agencies participated in an interagency coordination meeting, with high demand for training on core issues. End of project target of 200 community members engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions realistic, although gender dimension of 20% women is not likely.  In Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim 50 para-taxonomists were trained, with emphasis on women enrollment	200 community members actively engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions (At least 20% women) to serve as deterrent to wildlife crime	<b>Achieved</b>



<b>3.2</b> Number of international agreements for enhancing trans-boundary cooperation between China, Nepal, Bhutan and India	0 (a number of transboundary plans exists, but coordination is limited)	At least 2 agreements	At high risk of not being achieved. Remedial action(s) and acceleration required achieving at least 3 trans- boundary agreements effective and collaborative implementation.	At least 3 trans-boundary agreements effective and collaborative implementation	<b>Not on target</b>
<b>3.3</b> Annual number of human wildlife conflicts leading to livestock and crop losses and retaliatory killings of wildlife	Baseline will be developed in Year1	At least 20% decrease HWC	Field consultation during the MTR showed a lot of effective measures were undertaken. Indicator Partially Achieved at MTR. Context has changed since the project's original design. Since indicators haven't been revisited/revised attention should be given on smart monitoring of this indicator.	At least 50% decrease in HWCs	<b>On track</b>

The indicator 3.1 have achieved the midterm targets, while indicator 3.3 is on track. There is a need to put efforts in addressing HWCs to reach end of the project target. There is a very high risk that indicator 3.2 on international agreements for enhancing transboundary cooperation among regional member countries is likely remaining unachieved.

Human Wildlife Conflict strategies and SOPs prepared are implemented. The project has used technological interventions for conflict mitigation as pilots in the high conflict zones. For example, the predator proof corrals constructed in Ladakh have reported zero cases of conflicts. In Ladakh, appointment of honorary wildlife wardens for monitoring and surveillance in Changthang landscape seems working. The community volunteers (Himal Rakshaks) and rapid response teams engaged by the Forest Department in Sikkim for monitoring and surveillance are good examples of community active participation in conservation.

Active participation and voluntary contribution of local communities for addressing HWC worked quite well, however limited workable options available in addressing the HWC still remains a big constraint.

<b>Outcome 4: Improved knowledge and information systems for promotion of landscape conservation approaches</b>	
<b>Progress towards achieving Outcome 4 is rated as:</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>

Progress towards achievement of the Outcome 4 is rated as **satisfactory**, as outlined below in **Table 15**.

**Table 15: Progress towards results, Outcome 4**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Midterm Project target</b>	<b>Midterm status</b>	<b>End-of-Project target</b>	<b>MTR assessment</b>
	<b>2017</b>		<b>July 2022</b>	<b>Dec 2024</b>	
<b>4.1</b> Number of policy and regulatory mechanisms for improved management of high Himalayan areas provisioned	0 (A number of areas where policy reform is required exists)	Key policy recommendations discussed and agreed with key stakeholders	Target Achieved in spite of poor and vaguely worded midterm target. 4 policy mechanisms being targeted towards the achievement of the End of project target are: (i) snow leopard enumeration protocol; (ii) high altitudewetland management handbook for managers; (iii) wildlife crime scene investigation manuals; and (iv) state biodiversity strategies and action plans.	3 policy recommendations officially approved and implemented	<b>Achieved</b>
<b>4.2</b> Number of project best practices used in development and implementation of other conservation initiatives	0 (A few best practice publications etc., but the project will make efforts for additional project specific lessons to be documented)	A majority of best practice and lessons identified and under documentation	Solid and exemplary demonstration and piloting of new practices in high- altitude ecosystems, originating from needs assessments, and disseminated using a variety of mediums. MTR Target Achieved.	10 best practices documented, disseminated and up-scaled in non-project areas	<b>Achieved</b>

4.3 Percentage of participating households aware of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits	Baseline to be established in Year 1 through micro-planning process	20% of participating households have good awareness of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits	There is no question that the project has engaged in significant awareness raising, advocacy and targeted behaviour change leading to an internalization of key concepts. However, without an established baseline and uniform measurement of awareness, this indicator is at high risk of not being achieved. MTR team revisited to see the attempts to tackle this, therefore the target is taken as achieved.	50% of participating households have good awareness of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits	<b>Achieved</b>
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This outcome is very much performing well across all landscapes. All the three indicators have reached the midterm targets and likely to reach the end of the project targets.

The project has supported the government of India in organizing national and international days by providing content and knowledge material. A number of existing and new best practices emerged from the project has been documented and shared with larger mass. Some of them has been replicated in other project landscapes.

The accomplishments of the results were mainly because of active knowledge emphasis of the project where a number of institutions were engaged during the inception. These studies are seen highly valuable by the agencies in the states. There is a knowledge ownership of this project by many institutions nationally for their contribution in developing baselines and assessments creating visibility of the project at the state and national levels.



### 3.2.3 Project Outputs

Progress towards delivery of project outputs is discussed below.

#### **Component 1:**

**Improved management of high Himalayan landscapes for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services**

**Output 1.1: Landscape level management strategies that integrates biodiversity, ecosystem services, climate mitigation, sustainable community resource use and socio-economic considerations are developed, discussed with stakeholders and supported**

- Landscape management strategy and plan prepared for each landscape. This covers, extent of landscape, LULC, important biodiversity areas, state of degradation, threats specific to sectors, livelihoods, status of IWT, HWC and stakeholders.
- Sectoral strategy and plan developed include, baseline and monitoring indicators, resource mobilization strategy, governance mechanism for implementation.
- Institutional framework prepared as NPSC, SPSC, LLPMU for monitoring are used.

**Output 1.2: Site specific participatory management plans for PAs, and other Key Biodiversity Areas designed and tested under community governance, management and enforcement regimes**

Key biodiversity sites identified as High Conservation Value Areas, Biodiversity heritage Sites, Medicinal Plant Conservation and development Areas, wildlife corridors and high-altitude wetland. Mapping of status, threats, priorities, action plan, guideline and SOPs prepared for implementation of plans.

**Output 1.3: Alpine meadows and sub-alpine forest restoration plans are developed and introduced to local communities to improve biological connectivity and habitat productivity**

- Sites/areas identified, threats due to over-grazing, degraded areas, over extraction of resources for fuel, fodder, MAPs and degradation determined and implementation initiated.
- Developed restoration plans and actions (grazing management, community fodder banks, energy efficient drives for space heating, cooking, sustainable harvesting and management of MAPs, harvesting protocols, and these are used.

**Output 1.4: Biodiversity participatory monitoring for Snow leopard and associated species is developed and tested**

Snow leopard enumeration protocol, manuals on monitoring of flora and faunal diversity developed. Participatory biodiversity monitoring undertaken engaging frontline staff, community institutions and youth (i.e. para-taxonomist)

**Output 1.5: Capacity development for key government staff and community members for long-term effective conservation of biodiversity developed and implemented**

Stakeholder mapping and capacity need assessment conducted for government staff and community members. Capacity development framework developed and training of Government staff and community members on various conservation and livelihood issues imparted

#### **Component 2:**

**Improved and diversified sustainable livelihood strategies and enhanced capacities of community and government for sustainable natural resources management and conservation to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems**

**Output 2.1: Participatory community based village plans for enhancing and diversifying livelihoods and improving natural resources management are developed**

Village micro-plans/livelihood plans, livelihood strategy for all the landscape prepared and under implementation. Biodiversity management committee, van panchayat, and farm and non-farm producer organizations were formed and strengthened. These have helped in enhancing and diversifying livelihood options and adopting sustainable management of natural resources.

**Output 2.2: Pilot projects on sustainable community based natural resources management, and sustainable livelihood activities are supported; and**

**Output 2.3: New and enhanced value chain products and services providing ecologically sustainable livelihood are developed and implemented by local communities**

Pilot project supported to strengthening value chain of handloom /handicraft value chain, ecotourism, NTFP

(nettle, seabuckthorn,) Bee keeping, GI registration of unique products

### **Component 3:**

#### **Enhanced enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and human-wildlife conflict**

##### **Output 3.1: Wildlife Agencies have information on hotspots and pathways of illegal trade to organize targeted operations against wildlife crime**

- State wise flora and faunal species in trade prepared, Hotspots and trade routes of IWT identified, Species and hotspot of HWC mapped, identified different stakeholders and agencies, developed and used training manuals on legal provisions
- Strategy and actions to mitigate IWT and HWC have been developed. Demonstration of technological interventions to combat HWC was carried out.

##### **Output 3.2: Law enforcement agencies are provided with technical support and training to increase capacity for combating wildlife crime**

- Wildlife Management Information System (MIS) established in Wildlife Division of Uttarakhand
- Technical support provided and conducted trainings for combating wildlife crime

##### **Output 3.3: Community based surveillance, monitoring and wildlife crime and conflict prevention system developed and tested**

- 59 community members engaged in surveillance and monitoring of wildlife/crime and conservation issues. Among these 30 community wildlife wardens (recognized as Himal Rakshaks) conduct regular patrolling, biodiversity monitoring and control of forest fire in Khanchondzonga National Park and Khanchondzonga Biosphere Reserve in Sikkim.
- Pilots on addressing HWCs and mechanism to surveillance demonstrated.

### **Component 4:**

#### **Improved knowledge and information systems for promotion of landscape conservation approaches**

##### **Output 4.1: Project implementation achievements inform policy and legislative changes for conservation of high range Himalayan areas**

The project has significantly contributed to the preparation of management framework, guidelines and SoPs for overarching objective of conservation and sustainable management of high Himalayan areas. This include, support in finalization and launch of Snow leopard enumeration protocol, model framework and guidelines for high altitude wetlands, manuals on wildlife crime scene investigation and preparation of State Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans are the key policy documents/inputs

##### **Output 4.2: Communication and gender strategies and awareness campaigns to increase awareness on conservation, sustainable resource use and reduction of wildlife crime, and mainstream gender in promotion of community-based conservation developed and implemented at national, state and local levels**

Communication and gender strategies prepared and implemented. Over 500 community stakeholders are made aware on conservation, sustainable NRM, wildlife conservation, mitigation of illegal trade and human wildlife conflict through focused group discussions, participation in landscape level fairs and festivals, street theatre and a series of workshops with school students across project landscapes.

### 3.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

**Project Implementation and Adaptive Management is rated at: Moderately Satisfactory**

#### 3.3.1 Management Arrangements

The governance mechanism of the project is functioning effectively through the project board at the national level and also steering committees at the state and Union territory levels (steering committees in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Ladakh). These committees remain active and take strategic decisions on project implementation and provide guidance to PMU.

Institutional frameworks with representation of multi-sector/multi-stakeholders constituted in all the project landscapes at all levels. At the national level, National Project Steering Committee (NPSC) was constituted in 2018 with the objective of providing strategic direction and guidance for implementation of the project. The National Technical Committee (NTC) constituted to provide technical guidance to the project to ensure that project outcomes are achieved in timely manner.

The State/ UT Project Steering Committees have been constituted in all project states and UT to oversee, guide the implementation and mobilize convergences with existing Govt. programmes and explores opportunities for resource mobilization. Another institutional setup is State Technical Committees to provide guidance at the state level. The committee has representation of technical institutions and experts working in the Himalayan region for conservation, improved management and sustainable livelihoods.

At the landscape level, Landscape Level Planning and Management Committees (LLPMCs) have been established in all project landscapes with representation from the district administration, forest and other government line departments, community members and institutions including Panchayats, BMCs, Joint Forest Management Committees, Van Panchayats and community development organizations and NGOs.

Work planning is weakly results-based, as several activities not included in the strategic results framework are pursued, whereas some core activities lag behind schedule. At the same time, work planning is ambitious and shows high delivery.

**Table 16: National Project Steering Committee meetings and key decisions**

NPSC meeting	Date (s)	Key decisions
1 <sup>st</sup> meeting	10 Jan 2018	Establishment of PMU at national, state and landscape level, Fund flow mechanism,
2 <sup>nd</sup> meeting	26 March 2018	approval of AWP 2018
3 <sup>rd</sup> meeting	9 oct 2018	Approval of assignments for establishing baseline, multi-year work plan, participation in GWP conference
4 <sup>th</sup> meeting	June 3-4, 2019	Approval of AWP 2019-20
5 <sup>th</sup> meeting	November 6, 2019	Revised AWP of Uttarakhand, HP and Sikkim approved
6 <sup>th</sup> meeting	July 16, 2020	AWP 2020-21
7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting	July 20, 2021	Review of project progress
8 <sup>th</sup> meeting	Sept 30, 2021	AWP 2021-22
9 <sup>th</sup> meeting	July 20, 2022	Sharing of early findings of MTR of the project and approval of AWP 2022-23

#### **GEF Implementing Agency: UNDP**

The UNDP country office (CO) in New Delhi has provided extensive assistance to the project, firstly through fully supporting MOEF&CC in the implementation of the project. A joint national project management unit (NPMU) was established by MOEF&CC and UNDP CO. In each of the states Forest Departments and UNDP established the state project management units (SPMU), which were supported by landscape level teams.

Technical advisory services have been delivered by the UNDP-GEF regional technical advisor (RTA) based in Bangkok. The RTA provides as needed strategic support to the project team and provides feedback to the project implementation review (PIR) reports.

There has been four project implementation review (PIR) reports prepared: 2019 through 2022. The PIR reports

provide informative summaries of progress made, with inputs by key project implementation partners.

#### **Lead Implementing Partner: MOEF&CC**

Under the fully supported NIM arrangements, MOEF&CC has essentially taken the project execution function. The NPMU staff members have UNDP contracts and the shared service functions, including procurement, M&E and financial administration are housed at the UNDP country office. The project manager has shared her time between the UNDP office and the NPMU office. NPMU staff are based full time and placed at the project office next to the Ministry – this is an important decision towards better engaging the with MOEF&CC officials.

The Additional Director General of Forest, Wildlife, of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MOEF&CC) chairs the NPSC meetings. The Inspector General of Forest (IGF), Wildlife Division is the National Project Director (NPD) and also serves as Member Secretary/Convener for the Committee. National Project Officer is placed in MOEF&CC and closely works with the ministry.

The project is being implemented in four states and union territories of Indian Himalaya. State/Union Territories implementing partners include Forest Departments, Wildlife Divisions as coordinating function with other departments. At the landscape level District Magistrate chairs the landscape level committees where relevant line departments are members.

### **3.3.2 Finance and Cofinance Financial Expenditures:**

The cut-off date for project midterm review was 31 July 2022. According to available expenditure reports provided by the UNDP CO, a total of USD 8,409,637 of the GEF implementation grant of USD 11,544,192 have been incurred through project midterm, around 73%, as shown below in **Table 17**.

**Table 17: Project expenditure through midterm - till July 2022**

S.No.	Financial Year	Budget (as per Pro-doc)(in INR/USD)	Expenditure Incurred (in INR/USD)
1.	2017-18	6,95,45,000 (927,267)	1,43,10,000 (190,800)
2.	2018-19	15,80,60,000 (2,107,467)	16,61,83,200 (2,215,776)
3.	2019-20	14,71,75,000 (1,962,333)	15,70,43,025 (2,093,907)
4.	2020-21	16,32,40,000 (2,176,533)	13,51,52,475 (1,802,033)
5.	2021-22	12,52,30,000 (1,669,733)	14,03,25,825 (1,871,011)
6.	2022-23 (till July 2022)	9,40,93,440 (1,254,579)	1,76,33,250 (235,110)
7.	2023-24	5,07,50,000 (676,6667)	--
Total		INR 80,80,93,440 /USD 1,15,44,192	INR 63,07,22,775 /USD 8,409,637

**Note:** Foreign Exchange Rate taken for the above calculations is USD 1 = INR 75

#### *Project Allocation in USD (Component-wise) as per Pro-doc*

Component	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Total
Component 1	354,000	775,000	525,000	579,000	378,000	292,000	180,000	3,083,000
Component 2	357,500	670,000	992,000	1,194,000	940,000	687,000	292,500	5,133,000
Component 3	94,000	528,000	308,000	326,000	252,000	198,000	97,000	1,803,000
Component 4	133,000	193,000	185,500	141,000	127,000	76,000	120,500	976,000
Project Management	55,000	92,000	92,000	92,000	92,000	91,192	35,000	549,192
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>993,500</b>	<b>2,258,000</b>	<b>2,102,500</b>	<b>2,332,000</b>	<b>1,789,000</b>	<b>1,344,192</b>	<b>725,000</b>	<b>11,544,192</b>

#### *Project expenditure in USD through midterm till July 2022 (component wise)*

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Project Management	9405	64238	229426	132594	-101675*	-196*	333,791

Component 1	174	897560	765727	1126494	110592	71733	2,972,279
Component 2		677499	306610	416648	1303566	89838	2,794,161
Component 3		203550	211051	154733	751710	59080	1,380,124
Component 4	183221	371930	581093	-28436*	-193182*	14655	929,282
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>192,800</b>	<b>2,214,776</b>	<b>2,093,907</b>	<b>1,802,033</b>	<b>1,871,011</b>	<b>235,110</b>	<b>8,409,637</b>

\* Note: It may be noted that the negative figures in the sheet are due to the necessary reversals made in the system, for aligning the expenditures made for select project activities with their respective project components and associated budgets.

Financial delivery of the GEF fund is on target, but burn rate is high. On the other hand, certain activities have questionable cost efficiency and the direct contribution of the co-financing to the project remains questionable.

Timely materialization of co-financing by some lagging states will have helped in improving both the outcomes and showing potential pathways for sustainability.

A strong financial control has been established that allow the project management to make informed decisions regarding the budget at any time, and allow for the timely flow of funds and the payment of satisfactory project deliverables.

Planned and allocated resources have been used more or less in line for all components. Actual expenditures component 2 on livelihoods is only around 58%. This is a major concern that needs to be considered urgently.

The project demonstrates due diligence in the management of funds, including annual audits by UNDP and also for Indian Government organizations by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India.

#### **Financial Audits:**

UNDP engaged a third party to perform the spot check for the funds transferred to the Government agencies. Regular financial spot checks and audits have been made of Government agencies. The funds are released to the States as Grants-in Aid. The MoEF&CC, after due concurrence of its Integrated Finance Division, issued a sanction order comprising several directions and conditions to the State Governments for transferring of funds, as Grants-in-Aid (General) from the Ministry to the State Governments. The Sanction Order indicated detail activities to be implemented under the project. These activities were as per the Annual Work Plans submitted by the respective State Governments after the due approval by the National Project Steering Committee (NPSC). Spot checks were performed to assess the accuracy of financial records for cash transfers to RPs, status of the programme and whether there have been any significant changes to applicable internal controls.

Spot check of the Grants-in-Aid funds released to the State were done to check if the expenditure was in line with the sanction order and AWP. Besides, Government of India also conducts CAG audits regularly.

The 2021 financial checks and audits for the State Governments implementing the SECURE Himalaya project and 2020 for WWF showed no major discrepancies.

#### **Cofinancing:**

The total budget for the project is USD 72.36 million of whose 84% (USD 60.82 million) is the cofinancing contribution. Cofinance from MOEF&CC, GoI is cash, UNDP is both cash and in kind, whereas all the four states implementing project activities on the ground contribute in kind. The realization of the cofinance from the parties by the project till the midterm was only 37% (**Annex 7**).

The cofinance tracking especially by the states is limited and special attention needs to be taken in recording the contribution more accurately in the remaining period. Cofinancing by Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh states are as per the target. Contributions from MOEF&CC, Sikkim and Ladakh are low than overall average; therefore special efforts have to be made with these agencies to realize the timely contribution.

### **3.3.3 Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems**

The M&E of the project is being undertake in compliance with UNDP and GEF specific requirements. The estimated cost for implementation of the M&E plan, as recorded in the project document, is USD 432,000, which 3.7% of the GEF grant, however total M&E budget is 770,000 including cofinancing which brings allocation to merely 1%. This level of resources allocated for M&E is considered by the MTR team to be very low for the entire project activities. However, M&E budget contribution from GEF grant has balanced the monitoring activities to considerable extent.

The consolidated version of the project document contains the breakdown of the M&E plan and budget. The project is

being supported by a M&E Officer, a member of the PMU. The project results as outlined in the project results framework has been monitored six monthly and annually by the PMU (jointly by both NPMU and SPMU) to ensure the project effectively achieves these results.

The NPMU with support of SPMU conduct day-to-day project management and regular monitoring of project activities, results and risks. A MIS has been developed by NPMU to track and monitor the results against the indicators and target. The annual work plans based on the multi-year work plan has annual output targets to support the efficient implementation of the project. The project steering committee and technical/review committee also assess the performance of the project through conducting review meetings of technical agencies, state government and other implementing partners

The UNDP Country Office supports and guide the PMU as needed, including through conducting field missions., submission of GEF PIR and the independent mid-term review. UNDP also conduct the monitoring of the project through quarterly and annual reporting and conduct independent audits. The UNDP Country Office also ensured that the standard UNDP and GEF M&E requirements are fulfilled. Some of the key M&E related requirements fulfilled by the project are, conducting inception workshop, financial audit, GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR), monitoring of environmental and social risks, and corresponding management plans, Project Board meetings, supervision missions and submission of mid-term GEF Tracking Tool.

Tracking tools: The GEF Tracking Tools were used to monitor global environmental benefit results. The project is applying tracking tools and core indicator for focal areas namely biodiversity (BD), land degradation (LD) and sustainable forest management (SFM). The UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor and the UNDP-GEF Directorate provided additional M&E and implementation quality assurance and troubleshooting support as needed.

#### **3.3.4 Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships**

The project included a wide range of consultations during the PPG stage. Initial stakeholder analysis during the PIF stage was followed up with consultation during the PPG stage in terms of the design of the project. Consultations were undertaken at the four landscape sites and with the state governments addressing both institutional stakeholders in the context of their statutory involvement in the project, and more broadly for non-governmental stakeholders including natural resource dependent communities.

A number of stakeholder workshops were conducted in the landscape sites to obtain the perspective of the different stakeholders, and validation workshops were held, to discuss the project design and reach general consensus on project outcomes, outputs, activities and institutional arrangements for the project.

The Stakeholder Involvement Plan (SIP) was developed with a purpose of the project is the long-term sustainability of the project achievements, based on transparency and the effective participation of the key stakeholder. Stakeholders at national, state, district and local levels including relevant federal ministries; state agencies, local communities (livestock herders, forest communities and nomadic pastoralists), forest research institutions, NGOs, CSOs and others are partners in the project implementation.

Stakeholder involvement is guided by the objective of the project to promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secures conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats, ensures sustainable livelihoods and community socio-economic benefits. MOEFCC has been instrumental in establishing collaborative links with central and state forest and wildlife departments and other stakeholders. State Forest Departments and Wildlife departments are coordinating with state level stakeholders, local level NGOs and community-based organizations.

Mechanisms and strategies developed for stakeholder involvement ensured that the relevant shareholders receive and share information and provide their inputs in the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of project initiatives and play a role in sustaining the initiatives during and after the closure of the project.

Stakeholder groups across landscapes and states and at the national level are quite complex and the MTR team feels that stakeholder coordination and partnership is going on well. The MTR team feels that these partnerships should be seen as steps for sustainability and continuity of initiatives started by the project beyond the project life. The project strategies have been gender targeted corresponding to the Midterm indicators and targets. It has shown potential and trends of also being gender responsive and gender transformative to some extent.

#### **3.3.5 Reporting**

There have been four project implementation review (PIR) reports by midterm, started in 2019 and produced reports each year till the last one in 2022. The PIR 2002 assess that the overall risk rating for the project is 'moderate'. Only one critical risk has been reported for the reporting period that is COVID-19 (two waves from April – July 2021 and then January – February 2022). No grievances / complaints have been reported by the communities and other stakeholders

from any of the landscapes. Taking into account project's intervention on combatting IWT/poaching, there are potential risks of human rights violation arising from arrest of poachers and criminals of IWT, which, needs closely monitoring. To prepare and respond to future risks from zoonotic diseases, the project supported the green recovery initiative of UNDP India CO by demonstrating One Health Approach in the two landscapes of Sikkim and Uttarakhand. This is a good initiative that could be scaled up in other states and landscapes.

The internal rating in the 2022 PIR report for the expectation that the project will achieve its global environment objective and yield global environmental benefits was "satisfactory". The implementation progress (IP) was also rated as "satisfactory" in 2022. And the overall risk rating was "moderate". The MTR team feels that the IP rating and the overall risk rating in the 2022 report were realistic.

### **3.3.6 Communications**

The project developed a communications plan, which is being implemented in conjunction with other project activities. The communications plan takes a three-pronged approach, focused on engaging government and policy stakeholders, civil society, and local community members. The project has been producing information from key programmes and projects that strengthened policy and enhanced community welfare, simplified data and scientific information. These enabled wider understanding of complex environmental inter-linkages, and helped in incorporating innovative communication tools, emerging platforms and technologies for wider impact and action.

Its observed projects engaged with government and policy stakeholders by hosting side events at the CMS COP 13 and at the UNCCD COP 14. Additionally, the project supported the First National Protocol to for Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India at the 4<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting of the Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection (GSLEP) Program.

Furthermore, assignments for establishing baselines have generated more than 50 research papers and articles contributing to scientific knowledge base in high-altitude Himalaya. Engagement with local community members has been through various activities on key environmental days, along interactive sessions with village heads, panchayat leaders, and Biodiversity Management Committees. The initiative has also trained local video and radio fellows from the project landscapes to better inform and update their communities on sustainability and conservation. The project is also providing communications support to establish market linkages and for capacity building in livelihood enhancement activities.

Social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, have been utilized to generate content that highlight the activities and achievement of the project, and create awareness for a wider audience.

### 3.4 Sustainability

Sustainability is generally considered to be the likelihood of continued benefits after the GEF funding ends. Under GEF criteria each sustainability dimension is critical, i.e., the overall ranking cannot be higher than the lowest one among the four assessed risk dimensions.

#### Overall sustainability rating:

**Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Moderately likely**

#### Supporting Evidence:

- Improved management effectiveness was observed in six target landscape conservation areas and sustained ecosystem services
- On track to achieve sustainable landscape management including PA management targets
- Continued donor funding (e.g., GEF; State Governments and Government of India including complementary funding from national projects likely to be continued beyond period life)
- Community conservation areas a cornerstone of the tourism development
- Increased engagement of local communities in income generation and conservation activities
- Strengthened enabling environment, e.g., landscape management training, conflict resolution, addressing HWCs
- Reduced pressures on natural resources and ecosystems and threatened species in target conservation landscapes
- Good collaboration with complimentary projects and programs of Government of India implemented in these states
- Limited cross-learning among the project partners and project sites
- Capacity shortcomings of community based organizations in the target conservation landscapes
- Long-term impacts of climate change

The establishment of six landscape scale target areas, which demonstrated the integration of biodiversity conservation, sustainable resource use and a three-pronged strategy to enhance existing livelihoods, promote alternate and new options of livelihood and support skill-based employment opportunities through integrated and participatory planning approaches are highly innovative for mountain regions in India that has provided a benchmark for future roll-out. Participatory and integrated planning for the establishment of landscape management strategies, involving both key public and private sector partners as well as local communities is a new approach, as would the development of business plans identifying sustainable livelihood and value chain products and services. Furthermore, piloting model community governance and management of alpine natural pasture and forest lands have been operated through suitable incentive mechanisms to ensure community involvement in planning, decision making and management, selecting and working on potential options for income generation through sustainable NTFP harvesting, processing and value addition, and availing opportunity of alternative income generation activities. In addition, the project supported innovative community-based enforcement models as a means to supplement the lack of adequate government enforcement staff in the inaccessible high Himalayan regions. The project has built on and tried to replicate proven “best practices” from the region and significant numbers of ‘best practice packages’ have been developed and shared among stakeholders.

Number of initiatives under this project both on conservation and livelihoods are complementing to state and national programmes. It is likely that much of the project activities could be continued beyond the project life with these funding sources’ support. This project being a unique model of combining conservation with livelihoods have received high importance from the state governments, which is a good sign for sustainability. The project should utilize this opportunity for bridging the activities beyond the project life. Livelihood related activities are likely to be continued beyond the project life in long-term perspectives. However, in the final year of the project efforts should be made to strengthen nature based entrepreneurship (like eco-tourism, mountain nature herbal and food products, wool, etc) related activities that ensures both conservation and development.

The second dimension of sustainability is human and institutional capacity development and institutionalizing these developed skills and roles in management systems of the six project landscapes. The project has invested much on these dimensions, which should be further developed. The institutionalization dimension at all levels should be strongly considered in the exit strategy.

Overall, the likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure is rated as **moderately likely**. The following sections include considerations across the four sustainability risk dimensions, including financial, institutional



and governance, socioeconomic, and environmental

### 3.4.1 Financial, and Institutional and Governance Risks to Sustainability

The project is building the capacity of government departments particularly the Forest and Wildlife Departments and private sectors like entrepreneurs and the local communities to work in participatory and integrated ways. By involving these stakeholders in conservation and livelihood investment planning, and clearly defining their roles and responsibilities, the project has built the alliances for conservation and sustainable use of the high Himalayan resources that is expected to continue to operate after the end of the project. This work at landscape level ensures environmental and socio-economic sustainability through improved institutional capacity, policies and legislation. The project has endured some new business models for landscape conservation, livelihood and value chains recognize the full range of environmental ecosystem services provided by India's high Himalayan ecosystems. Implementation of such models through carefully developed business plans is leading to a diversification of funding based on sources such ecotourism, NTFPs and other government programmes. The project shows some triggers of higher sustainability for across high altitude landscapes in the Indian Himalayan region. It is seen that the financial and institutional sustainability of PAs are better ensured when the focus is on management of threats at the broader landscape level, particularly those that emanate from outside PA boundaries.

Value chain products and services have been selected in the landscapes that are linked to unique resources available in these locations. The project has in many cases created marketable products and solutions that are not only economically sustainable, but also ecologically sustainable and do not over-exploit natural resources. The hallmark of the approach was to develop new entrepreneurship and work with existing entrepreneurs, ensuring economic sustainability at the heart of the project. These were achieved by the support systems provided by the project and complementary funding. The project supported (1) carefully tailored training and capacity building for enhancing the skills of the producers, (2) provided initial seed capital for setting up basic tools and equipment, (3) developing market linkages, programs and channels, (4) identified and trained local entrepreneurs and enterprises, and finally (5) developing and supporting village level institutions and implementation plans.

Project's governance mechanism is functioning effectively through the project board at the national level and also four steering committees at the state level (3 state and 1 Union Territory level steering committees in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Ladakh). These committees remain active and take strategic decisions on project implementation and provide guidance to PMU. There is no risks on governance at present, however there is uncertainty of continuity of institutional mechanism established by the project especially communication between states and MOEF&CC on high altitude landscapes after the end of the project. This continuity issue should be specifically strengthened during the remaining time of the project.

In summary, the institutional framework, materialization in-kind cofinance and financial risks associated with achieving and sustaining effective landscape management in Indian Himalayan region remain relevant, and a rating of **moderately likely** is applied to this dimension of project sustainability.

### 3.4.2 Environmental and Socioeconomic Risks to Sustainability

The project is on track to meet the envisaged high altitude landscape conservation targets. On the basis of the Environmental and Social screening process undertaken during the design of the project, it is clear that the project has not caused any adverse impacts to habitats, ecosystems and ecosystem services.

Some project activities have been undertaken within or adjacent to critical habitats and environmentally sensitive areas, including legally protected areas. However, these do not involve changes to the use of lands and resources that have adverse impacts on habitats, ecosystems and livelihoods. The project activities have not posed risks to endangered species and introduction of invasive alien species. The harvesting of non-timber forest products (mushrooms, medicinal plants and other products) is carried out in an ecologically friendly and sustainable manner. The Project has not generated any adverse trans-boundary and global environmental concerns.

The project has not been involved in temporary or permanent physical displacement or land acquisition or access restrictions or even the physical relocation. It has not exacerbated land tenure arrangements and community based property rights/customary rights to land, territories and/or resources. The Forest Departments have not imposed any restrictions on access and use of natural resources, however a collective decision-making process amongst the community members supporting alternative livelihoods was adopted. Grievance redress mechanisms have been put into place to facilitate the resolution of any conflict related to resource use and access. Tribal and vulnerable groups in the landscapes are fully involved in decision-making in terms of resource use, livelihood and income generation activities and conservation action.

The project has not resulted in significant greenhouse gas emissions nor would enhance climate change. The project has

not negatively impacted the social and environmental vulnerability to climate change. The project is not involved large-scale infrastructure development. Mountains especially the Himalayan region are hotspots of impacts of climate change. Much of emissions outside the region and globally are causing more impacts in alpine and high altitude areas. Therefore much of the activities of the project need to align towards achieving climate change adaptation during the remaining period of the project, for example livelihoods to focus on nature based products and solutions. The potential consequences and uncertainties associated with long term climate change impacts is likely to diminish sustainability, therefore adaptation becomes critical.

Considering the factors outlined above, the environmental and socioeconomic dimension of project sustainability is rated as **moderately likely**.

## 4 Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

### 4.1 Conclusions

The project strategy is to strengthen the enabling environment for achieving and sustaining effective management of high altitude landscapes (including existing PA's) enhancing conservation governance by local communities, and infusing initiatives that balance conservation with livelihoods.

The project officially started in December 2017. The MTR was conducted nearly four and half years following the signature of the Project Document (5 December 2017), well beyond its natural mid-point. Factoring in delays at the outset, the MTR occurred three and half years following the last inception workshop held in the Union Territory of Ladakh (19 October 2019).

The MTR was an evidence-based assessment, relying on feedback from individuals who have been involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project, and a review of available documents and findings made during field visits. The overall approach and methodology of the evaluation followed the guidelines outlined in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting midterm reviews of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects. Interviews were held with most of the project stakeholders during the MTR mission. Overall, the MTR team concluded that the information obtained during the desk review and field mission were sufficiently representative to enable an evaluation of progress made till the MTR.

Snow leopard landscapes and habitats in the high Himalaya provide immense ecosystem services and global goods. The project has brought good visibility and demonstrated importance of this high altitude cat in India. Through the interventions of this project snow leopard has become widely known for its unrivalled importance at local, state, country and global levels. The project theme is unique, as the snow leopard being the endemic species exists only in the 12 countries of the Himalayan region, Tibetan Plateau, Tien Shan Mountains, Mangolia and Central Asia in the world. The project is also contributing to the objectives of Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP). A good visibility of the snow leopard and its associated habitat conservation has been crafted by the project on one hand and on the other demonstrated a successful landscape model.

The envisaged global environmental benefits stated in GEF-6 are seen as being delivered by the project. Improvements in protected area management effectiveness in terms of sustainability at the landscapes, restoration of pastures and forests in the degraded areas of landscapes, and sustainable forest management of high conservation value forests are either achieved/or are on track for the end term target. Objective level indicators on people benefitted from strengthened livelihoods interventions and institutional frameworks for conservation, benefits sharing from biodiversity and ecosystems and improved livelihoods are showing promising progress. Biological indicator warrants greater attention to reach the end term target. The coordination of multi-sector departments at the landscape level management committees has brought efficiency and effectiveness on the ground action but remains to be institutionalized to guarantee long-term impacts of the project.

The landscape approach adopted and targets for the project in high altitude areas of Indian Himalaya delivers integration of three strategic programmes of GEF-6, namely biodiversity, land degradation and sustainable forest management. In spite of the complexity of the project being implemented in extremely fragile high altitude landscapes across three states (Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim) and one union territory of Ladakh, there has been a good progress in the project. Even so, when considerable challenges had to be faced by the project team, governments and communities because of COVID-19 pandemic.

The project has significantly contributed to increase in METT scores of the PAs in the landscapes. The activities that helped in improvement of METT scores included scientific surveys/research on biodiversity aspects of PAs, strengthening capacities of park managers through providing equipment, trainings of law enforcement and overall management. The project also has contributed to policy making by contributing to developing framework, guidelines and SOPs. Important key biodiversity areas are in process of being designated as Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS) under the Biological Diversity Act. Site-specific actions by communities' concerned restoration of degraded alpine pastures and subalpine forests especially on promoting rotational grazing and plantation of multi-purpose trees and shrubs. It is observed that the outcome one is on track for achieving the end term targets, however it needs broader institutionalization of the METT for long-term benefits.

Livelihood improvement through value chain enhancement by skill development, value addition, and marketing of produce are showing promising progress. The project selected mountain niches such as handloom and handicraft, eco-tourism and NTFP based value chains leading to mountain specific products. Waste management engaging local communities, rotational grazing, sustainable harvesting of NTFPs, community fodder banks and plantation of multipurpose species in fallow land has contributed to the restoration of degraded areas. It is seen that the above

initiatives including nature-based products for livelihoods have been successfully linked with conservation initiatives, however such stories should be better documented and shared for outscaling.

Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) is minuscule or almost non-existent in majority of the landscapes and states. However, Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) has become considerable problem for the communities reporting mostly livestock and crop depredation. There has been some good progress in addressing HWC in Ladakh while limited effective interventions have been put in place in other states. Climate change has complicated the HWC issue, which needs better study, analysis and strategy. The project should be giving more focused efforts on this outcome during the remaining period of time keeping in view longer-term solutions.

Capacity development, awareness raising, knowledge products development, community participation and ownerships of the project by the stakeholders are the hallmark of the project. These areas should be further strengthened and cross sharing of best practices across landscapes and states be enhanced. It would be good to see knowledge products, livelihood initiative successes and conservation balances well captured in stories that may be helpful at the end term evaluation especially for relating to the impacts.

The governance mechanism of the project is functioning effectively through the project board at the national level and also steering committees at the state and Union territory levels (steering committees in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Ladakh). At the ground level, integrated operationalization has been observed especially by Landscape Level Planning and Management Committees (LLPMCs) represented by the district administration, forest and other government line departments, community members and institutions including Panchayats, BMCs, Joint Forest Management Committees, Van Panchayats and community development organizations and NGOs. These committees at the national and state levels remain active and take strategic decisions on project implementation and provide guidance to PMU. Action on the ground is promoted in an integrated and participatory way with the guidance of LLPMCs. It is perceived that the project has developed a good governance mechanism connecting from the local to the state at the national levels. However, the fund flows to the states have been a major constraint that needs to be addressed on top priority.

Gender and social inclusion for mainstreaming gender, ascertaining barriers and addressing them, creating enabling environment, and involving them in CSOs and CBO institutions were done nicely by the project. The project teams have made extra efforts in focusing interventions on women and youth not only as beneficiaries but to make them an agent of change. The results are clearly visible in terms of capacity building, biodiversity conservation, livelihood improvement, economic opportunity and empowerment. In the final year of the project gender and social inclusion elements should receive more thrusts to ensure sustainability and institutionalization of the progress.

In the remaining one year of the project, activities showing triggers of potential impacts, should be consolidated. There are some promising livelihood and conservation activities, which need to be strengthened. The project should avoid starting new activities. Some emerging results across states and landscapes should be shared and exchanged among project teams, practitioners and policy makers.

Unfortunately, during the inception phase indicators and targets were not re-visited. Hence, there are number of issues regarding the indicators. It is essential for the terminal evaluation to unequivocally measure progress against the project's indicators. Therefore, it will be essential to revisit indicators flagged by the MTR as not being SMART. The project should ensure that monitoring strategies are uniform and communicated broadly and establish baselines where there are no clear indicators. The policy and regulatory mechanisms related to end of the project targets are poor and vaguely worded, which should be re-visited.

The GEF grant is significant, above USD 11 million, and cofinancing by MOEF&CC, UNDP and States Governments amounts to around USD 61 million. About 73% of GEF allocation has been utilized by the midterm review. Funds liquidation of GEF grant is in order whereas realization of cofinancing in some of the States (Sikkim and Ladakh) and MOEF&CC is far behind the schedule. The documentation of in-kind cofinancing seems insufficient. Therefore, immediate steps should be taken to better document in-kind contribution in monetary terms and follow up with realization of cofinancing on timely manner before the completion of the project.

This project is of great importance to the Indian Himalayan region as well as neighboring mountainous countries and snow leopard countries. This is unique being a first landscape project of its kind implemented by multiple states and many landscapes in fragile environments. The project has shown very good progress, it is in the right direction, and requires long-term implementation efforts for achieving impacts. UNDP, executing partner and state level implementing partners should explore the possibilities of the next phase.

## 4.2 Lessons Learned

Some lessons learned identified during the MTR include:

– **Technical reports and studies ought to be leveraged rigorously by the projects that develop them during implementation:** The project invested heavily in carrying out studies in all the states and landscapes. The study reports

are an immense source of information and knowledge and have the potential of creating a new baseline for India's high-altitude ecosystems. These reports have been reviewed and discussed at the states and national levels by the Technical Committees. The findings of these reports can be utilized more rigorously in achieving the objectives and targets of the project. It is through the careful curation of information that knowledge and practice emerge;

– **Better analysis and application of Management Effectiveness Training Tool (METT) for enhancing the project performance:** METT scores improved in all the project landscapes. It helped in strengthening monitoring, building capacities in management, improved knowledge of PA staff and updating resource inventories. Impacts of METT should be better analyzed and results can be utilized towards implementing more effective conservation measures. This can happen through broader institutionalization of the METT tools themselves;

– **Upscaling of innovations across landscapes and states, and documentation of upscaling need to be improved:** Innovations have been observed across landscapes and states, and they have great potential for upscaling. Some examples of innovations are (1) Wildlife Database Centre and IT interventions in Uttarakhand, (2) Para-taxonomist in Uttarakhand, para-vets and Himal Rakshaks in Sikkim, (3) Ecotourism and livelihood related unique innovations across landscapes. These innovations have great potential for upscaling across landscapes and states. There are some upscaling of project results by others however either they have not been recorded or under reported. Needs special attention during the remaining phase of the project.

– **Transboundary cooperation target indicator can be achieved by aligning to initiatives in the region:** The project had envisaged partnership with SAWAN which has not materialized yet. There are other transboundary initiatives at least in two SECURE project landscapes (Uttarakhand and Sikkim) where ICIMOD has been promoting cooperation among India, Nepal, Bhutan and China. SECURE can look at these opportunities in remaining period of the project. Closer cooperation with these can pay dividends towards achievement of Indicator 3.2.

– **Improvising and adjusting decisions at state and national levels to address issues related to inaccessibility and seasonality of the project landscape:** Annual Work Plan (AWP), fund release and activities need to look at adversities like inaccessibility and seasonality. Decisions, adjustments and internalization should be made in formalities and procedures to facilitate full speed activities during favorable time of the year. This is critical in all landscapes especially Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh;

– **Fund flows to the states are found to be the major obstacles:** All the states and landscapes have faced immense problems for not getting timely fund flows. The nodal Ministry, UNDP and States must revisit and optimize the fund flow and improve the mechanisms during the remaining time of the project. This is critical for the success of the project (especially for critical areas which are found to be lagging and must be accelerated) and for securing the sustainability of the initiatives of SECURE project;

– **Greater integration and inclusiveness could have been achieved at the national and state levels:** The UNDP-GEF SECURE Himalayas project has received importance and ownership because of value addition in capacities for designing and implementing together livelihoods and conservation activities. At the district levels integration is visible. However, for co-financing and holistic approaches in landscapes integration at the national and state levels could be enhanced. It is too late for the project to change now, but in future such initiatives should consider wider membership of ministries and departments both at the national and state levels. At state levels it would have been better for 'Planning and Development Department' to take active role while the Forest/Wildlife departments lead;

– **Ownership enhancement of the project at all levels is critical for sustainability:** The frequent meeting of National and State Steering Committee at least 2-3 times a year can be helpful, with at least one meeting per year held in the field. Furthermore, projects should leverage existing national, state and local governance structures. Greater engagement of Technical Committees both at National and State levels can ensure sound evidenced based action and integration. Greater engagement of NPMU by national implementing partner can enhance ownership and promote effective project implementation in the states and landscapes, and in monitoring and reporting of the project. Delay in State and National SC meetings and approvals of AWP's in time sensitive and seasonality sensitive project like this create major hurdles for performance and delivery.

– **Stronger and more explicit linkages with flagship species:** There was a missed opportunity in one of the sites in Sikkim to make more tangible and explicit links with snow leopard habitat. As demonstrated in other landscapes, linkages to flagship species have the potential for generating excitement and investment through myriad government schemes.

– **To enhance chances of sustainability, projects ought to leverage existing governance:** This includes reviving local governance systems and committees towards sustainable conservation and biodiversity - retrofitting them and finding purpose - and by creating social capital that is likely to endure and transcend the scope and time horizon of any individual project.

- **Transition and knowledge management plans are key to institutionalization and converting information to knowledge:** Exit plans should not be equated with the end of project implementation and must be discussed early. It is imperative that post-MTR significant time and effort goes into formulating an exit plan articulating how products and services will be supported post-project, as well as ensuring that technical studies and reports do not sit idle and are leveraged to their full capacity. This requires consolidation of results and incubating and accelerates, especially at the local level.
- **Breaking out of silos is essential for engineering paradigm shifts:** Intersectionality and dependencies between Outcomes and Outputs have neither been thought through nor sufficiently addressed; it is essential to find common threads for a multiplier effect.
- **Climate change as a risk:** Though not a focus /mandate of this project, climate change may pose a environmental and socio economic risk to the project landscape.

### 4.3 Recommendations

Specific recommendations and responsible organizations for each of the recommendations are given in details in **Table 3**. In addition, common recommendations of actions across states & landscapes and specific to each state are provided below.

In the remaining one year of the project, activities showing triggers of potential impacts, should be consolidated. There are some promising livelihood and conservation activities, which need to be strengthened. The project should avoid starting new activities. Some emerging results across states and landscapes should be shared and exchanged among project teams, practitioners and policy makers.

Unfortunately, during the inception phase indicators and targets were not re-visited. Hence, there are number of issues regarding the indicators. It is essential for the terminal evaluation to unequivocally measure progress against the project's indicators. Therefore, it will be essential to revisit indicators flagged by the MTR as not being SMART. The project should ensure that monitoring strategies are uniform and communicated broadly and establish baselines where there are no clear indicators. The policy and regulatory mechanisms related to end of the project targets are poor and vaguely worded, which should be re-visited. Gender and social inclusion elements in the project implementation should receive more thrusts.

Project management could optimize its resources and enhance implementation for which some staff restructuring will be necessary. Improvements should be made on information exchange, fund flows and better coordination between national, state, landscapes and district levels. The role of NPO and NPMU is extremely important whose dynamism should be enhanced to address these issues. In the remaining period this is the most critical element in achieving the objectives and outcomes of the project.

Conservation activities across states and landscapes are well placed for results and impacts, however livelihoods linking with conservation should be further strengthened. Income generation from alternative livelihoods and adaptation to climate change related activities should be targeted more in the final year of the project. Sustainability in terms of continuing the activities of the SECURE Himalaya by the states shows great promises, therefore the efforts should be made to organize and institutionalize them. Lessons learned in the project as presented by the MTR is important to build the project performance in the remaining period of the project.

#### Common Recommendation of Actions across States and Landscapes

- NPMU should work closely with SPMU and MOEF&CC to address the issues of fund release. Bottlenecks have to be eased and facilitate the funds flow to states.
- SPAI should update snow leopard population census to see any change in population, which can be implied as project's attribution to snow leopard conservation.
- METT in all states and landscapes should be pursued to institutionalize by the State Authorities. Impacts of METT should be better analyzed and results can be utilized towards implementing more effective conservation measures.
- Impress Forest Departments of Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh to use the SLCC concept. An approach of outscaling from Uttarakhand landscapes to other landscapes.
- High altitude rangeland (pastures) management could use dispersal of seeds of selected valuable species by motivating the herders. Easiest and cost effective method of rangeland restoration.
- Bear and monkey (langur in Uttarakhand) are the main animals for HWC. This should be addressed more effectively using appropriate approaches by each of the states. Project may promote discussion of Wildlife Division and local communities to address this issue.

- Promote the good work of convergence of multiple departments to address issues of landscape started by SECURE Himalaya. The tourism department, rural development department, forest department, animal husbandry, panchayats, district offices etc. Some states are doing well in this like Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. Sikkim and Ladakh may emphasize on this. This is most critical for sustainability or continuity of SECURE Himalaya work.
- Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC) could optimize activities across states and landscapes. Activities of nursery development, trekking trail development and management, waste management in trekking trails, homestay running, biodiversity heritage site development, enhancing livelihoods from local produce and high value products.
- Peoples Biodiversity Registers (PBR) should be further developed and used. Support of State Biodiversity Board to BMC be promoted.
- Capacity Building, Training and Awareness should receive special attention.
- Capture success stories and information for knowledge development products by the project across states and landscape.
- Cross learning between landscapes and states will be useful. Ladakh and Sikkim will be highly benefitted from other two states.
- Documentation of upscaling & outscaling and contributions of departments and partners needs to be improved.

## **State-wise recommendations**

### **1) Uttarakhand:**

- Project governance at the state and landscape level looks very good. However, the fruits from such a situation need to be harnessed. Use these networks to optimize the project activities on the ground including leveraging funds through partnership.
- Wildlife Database Centre and IT interventions in Uttarakhand need to be further consolidated.
- Try to promote SECURE prepared High Altitude Wetlands Guideline for effective implementation by relevant departments resulting into impacts. Document activities and impacts.
- Promote the Geographical Indicator (GI) status of Bhotia Daan to bring benefits to local communities. Also try to get new GI registration for promising products.
- Completion of Snow Leopard Conservation Centre (SLCC) and using it for nature tourism.
- SHGs involved in handloom where sheep wool from snow leopard landscapes is used. Communities of these villages have direct link with the herders. Three activities should be carried out – promote restoration of high altitude rangeland restoration using these people; secondly quality of handloom products is still not yet fine enough to draw premium price – therefore improvement of products; and promote branding and marketing outside. For the last two activities professional persons or organizations should be involved.
- Strengthen BMCs for their livelihood and conservation initiatives including wetland like Sone Tal trekking and
- It is difficult to compete the produce of apple from Uttarakhand compared to Himachal Pradesh. The work on apple branding started by SECURE Himalaya in Uttarakhand should receive more attention. Proposed apple processing unit for juice and other products may be helpful for low-grade apples.
- Continue the good work on Para-Taxonomists, Para-Vets and Vanpanchayats as their services can go beyond life of the SECURE Himalaya.

### **2) Himachal Pradesh:**

- Chandratat wetland (Ramsar) plan follow up for approval, and coordinate the implementation plan using consortium partnerships lead by the state.
- Idea of replicating Wildlife Database Centre and IT interventions in Uttarakhand to Himachal Pradesh should be pursued.<sup>2</sup>
- The landscapes have good potential on livelihoods development. Initiatives like (1) Ecotourism – homestays, souvenir shops,<sup>3</sup> cultural and conservation trekking; (2) Development of NTFPs especially Seabuckthorn (juice, jam, pulp), hazel nuts; local dyes for handloom; (3) Dairy development including processing; and (4) handloom especially local wears. Value addition and marketing to be strengthened.
- Explore and try to get GI registration for Hazel nuts and herbal tea from Karem Kurbi and other potential nature based products
- Expedite the ongoing conservation work done by BMC, and also in identified 'Key Biodiversity Areas' and High Conservation Value (HCV Area). Try to concretize the work on Medicinal Plant Conservation and Development Area (MPCDA), Community Conservation Area, Biodiversity Heritage Sites and Habitat Degradation Assessment for developing working mechanism for the State Departments.
- Many technologies and initiatives started by SECURE Himalaya should be completed such as small area plantations, solar water heaters, improved cook stoves, smart school with solar heating for mid-day meals, improved water mills and community fodder bank.
- Upscaling of Community Fodder Bank to other project areas.

- HWC – Brown bear in high altitude areas, black bear, wild pig and monkeys should be sorted out for actions between Wildlife Division and Communities. SECURE can facilitate the process.
- Role of Mahila Mandals in project activities can be enhanced.
- Predator proof coral building should be accomplished.
- Yak and Sheep wool spinning mill in Pangi could be restarted. Wool quality needs to be improved.

### **3) Ladakh:**

- Capacity development of frontline staff towards conservation should be continued. Local communities should also be trained in conservation for supporting the front staff as number of staff currently very low.
- Tso Kar Wetland now Ramsar Site should be facilitated by project among relevant departments for developing plans for implementation
- Yak and Pashmina gene pool is degrading therefore gene exchange amongst the different regions could be started by the project which then can be continued by Animal Husbandry.
- BMC formed should start consolidating their work including engagement in ecotourism activities.
- Work on six identified potential 'Biodiversity Heritage Sites' needs to be started and State Government may be then able to continue to develop in future.
- Strengthen yak, sheep and pashmina wool value chain; also further develop local dyes. Design improvement machines and tools.
- Nature, cultural, spiritual and leisure tourism in project sites be supported.
- Continue the good work of bio-digester in army areas and tourists camps; Organic waste composting machines in tourists and army areas to be promoted.
- Predator-proof coral – continue the incremental improvement.
- Idea of honorary wildlife wardens and wildlife volunteers should be promoted.
- Use woman alliance for local livelihoods
- Monasteries could be a good source for infusing conservation awareness amongst local communities.

### **4) Sikkim:**

- Zero waste management in Yuksom for the KBR by KCC needs to be supported for developing business model. Great potential for other landscapes to learn and upscale.
- *Himal Rakshaks*, honorary wildlife warden is a good example of community taking conservation role. This needs strengthening and upscaling to North District Project site.
- Value addition to yak products from project landscapes will be useful.
- BMC and Panchayats work on Biodiversity Heritage Site development and community livelihoods is good initiative. However, this site is not connected with snow leopard habitat.
- Yak tourism – promoting tourism for stay in herder's tents and feel the high altitude life, culture and food. Incentives for herders to restore and maintain high altitude pasture lands.
- Promote bio-digesters and organic waste composting machines in army and tourism areas to address the issues of feral dogs.
- Yak herders could be used for pasture restoration by following seed collection and dispersal of valuable high altitude palatable species.
- Emphasize carrying out action on the ground in addition to trainings, which has been the main achievement.
- State Biodiversity Board, Tourism Department, Wildlife Division and Forest Departments contributions in the SECURE project need to be documented more precisely.



## Annex 1: MTR Mission Itinerary

Dates and Timing MTR Field Missions and Interviews							
Day/Date	Time	Location/ Venue	Item/Activity	Stakeholder/ Role	MTR-Team		Remarks (If any)
					Camillo Ponziani (CP)	Dr. E. Sharma Mr. Sudarshan	
April 18 – April 29, 2022							
Monday April 18, 2022	1:00 pm		Bangalore to Delhi Arrival at Delhi/Project office				UNDP to make hotel and travel arrangements for ES. If arrival of ES is on April 17, then the schedule for April 18 may be revised
	2:00 pm-2:30 pm	New Delhi/Bangkok	– Interview with Mr. Tashi Dorji (TD)	UNDP Regional Office/Regional Technical Advisor	CP to join via zoom meeting	In person	TD to join via zoom meeting. CP to arrange zoom meeting invitation, meeting ID & Passcode. Date/time for interview with TD may be decided by MTR team and TD’s availability
	2:45 pm-3:30 pm	New Delhi	– Interview with Dr. Ruchi Pant, UNDP	UNDP Country Office	CP to join via zoom meeting	In person	CP to arrange zoom meeting invitation, meeting ID & Passcode.
	3:45 m – 5:00 pm	New Delhi	– Interview with PMU – Detailed briefing by the PMU on project strategy, approach, major results, key achievements, bottlenecks, and challenges faced during the project	PMU/Overall Project Management	CP to join via zoom meeting	In person	

<b>Dates and Timing MTR Field Missions and Interviews</b>							
<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location/ Venue</b>	<b>Item/Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder/ Role</b>	<b>MTR-Team</b>		<b>Remarks (If any)</b>
					<b>Camillo Ponziani (CP)</b>	<b>Dr. E. Sharma Mr. Sudarshan</b>	
			implementation – Options and alternative approaches for seeking stakeholders’ feedback, including Focus Group Discussion (FGD), covering gender equality & women empowerment.				
Tuesday April 19, 2022	7:00 am – 10:00 am	Travel	– Travel from Delhi to Dehradun	Additional Chief Secretary (Forest)/Principal Secretary, Forest and Environment, Government of Uttarakhand/ Chair SPSC, Uttarakhand	CP to join via zoom meeting	In Person Meeting	UNDP to make hotel and travel arrangements
	12:00 pm- 12:30 pm	Uttarakhand Secretariat, Dehradun	– Meeting with Mr Anand Bardhan – Key achievements, contribution of project to address state priorities, challenges faced and Govt. plan to ensure sustainability of project interventions				SPO Uttarakhand to take appointment from ACS, coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewee.
	12:30 pm -2:00 pm	Local travel	– Local travel from Uttarakhand Secretariat to Forest Department				UNDP to make travel arrangements
	[[ 2:00 pm – 3:45 pm	Office of Forest Department	– Meeting with Mr. Ranjan Kumar Mishra – Overall project implementation, key achievements, contribution of project to address state	RP/State Nodal Officer (SNO), SECURE Himalaya		In Person meeting	SPO Uttarakhand to take appointment from SNO, coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewee.

<b>Dates and Timing MTR Field Missions and Interviews</b>							
<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location/ Venue</b>	<b>Item/Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder/ Role</b>	<b>MTR-Team</b>		<b>Remarks (If any)</b>
					<b>Camillo Ponziani (CP)</b>	<b>Dr. E. Sharma Mr. Sudarshan</b>	
			priority, challenges faced and Govt. plan to ensure sustainability of project interventions – Visit Wildlife Database Center and interaction with Mr. Naresh Kumar				
	5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Dehradun/Toronto	– Meeting with Dr. Dhananjay Mohan, IFS – Contribution of project to address conservation issues of high Himalayan Ecosystem, combating Wildlife Crime and Human Wildlife Conflict, challenges faced and key actions towards exit strategy of the project	Director WII and Former Chief Wildlife Warden, Uttarakhand	CP to join via zoom meeting	In Person/ join via zoom meeting	CP to arrange zoom meeting invitation, meeting ID & Passcode.
Wednesday April 20, 2022	7:00 am – 11:00 am	Travel	– Travel from Dehradun to Uttarkashi	District Magistrate/Chair of Landscape Level Management Committee	CP to join via zoom meeting	In Person meeting	UNDP to make hotel and travel arrangements  SPO Uttarakhand to take appointment from DM, coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewee.
	12:30 pm – 1:15 pm	Office of District Magistrate (DM), Uttarkashi	- Meeting with Mr. Mayur Dixit				
	1:15 – 2:30	Lunch					

<b>Dates and Timing MTR Field Missions and Interviews</b>							
<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location/ Venue</b>	<b>Item/Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder/ Role</b>	<b>MTR-Team</b>		<b>Remarks (If any)</b>
					<b>Camillo Ponziani (CP)</b>	<b>Dr. E. Sharma Mr. Sudarshan</b>	
	3:00 pm – 5:00 pm		- Meeting with Mr. Puneet Tomar, Mr Rangnath Pandey and Mr D.P Balooni,	DFO Uttarkashi, DD Gangotri National Park, DD, Govind Wildlife Sanctuary/National Park /Landscape level RP		E.S and S.R to conduct field mission	Project Associates to coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewees.
Thursday April 21, 2022	10:00 am - 11:00 am	PHC Batwari	- Visit to PHC Bhatwari and interaction with Dr Ved Prakash, BMO Bhatwari on One Health related interventions	Landscape level stakeholders/Department		E.S and S.R to conduct field mission	Project Associates to coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewees.
	11:45 am - 12:30 pm	Sukhi and Jhala village	- Visit to Community Conservation Site (Thuner Forest) and Apple Processing Unit - Interaction with Mr. Kripal Singh (BMC Chairman), Mr. Mohan Singh, Mrs. Prabha (SHG Member) and Mrs Manorma (SHG Member)	Landscape level stakeholders (CBOs)		E.S and S.R to conduct field mission	Project Associates to coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewees.
	3:00 pm – 4:30 pm	Harsil	- Meeting with members of Budhera Cooperative on ongoing livelihood initiatives Visit to Harsil BMC Office	Landscape level stakeholders (CBOs)		E.S and S.R to conduct field mission	Project Associates to coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewees.
Friday April 22, 2022	8:00 am – 7:00 pm	Travel	- Travel from Uttarkashi-Dehradun-Delhi			E.S to conduct field mission	UNDP to make travel arrangements Mr. Sudarshan may return to Delhi considering his prior engagements. Dr. Sharma may visit intervention sites

<b>Dates and Timing MTR Field Missions and Interviews</b>							
<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location/ Venue</b>	<b>Item/Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder/ Role</b>	<b>MTR-Team</b>		<b>Remarks (If any)</b>
					<b>Camillo Ponziani (CP)</b>	<b>Dr. E. Sharma Mr. Sudarshan</b>	
	10:00 am – 4:30 pm	Dharali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visit to Sattal Trek and inspect management interventions with the help of BMC Dharali or</li> <li>- Khankoo Barrier Strengthening /Nelong valley /Gangotri NP to oversee management interventions towards enhancing METT score</li> </ul>			E.S to conduct field mission	UNDP to make travel arrangements
Saturday April 23, 2022	8:00 am – 7:00 pm	Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Travel from Harsil-Uttarkashi-Dehradun-Delhi</li> </ul>				UNDP to make travel arrangements for Dr Sharma
Sunday April 24, 2022			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rest</li> </ul>				UNDP to make arrangement for accommodation for Dr. Sharma at Delhi
Monday April 25, 2022	9.00 am – 1:00 pm	Interaction at the NPMU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meetings with PMU staff</li> </ul>				UNDP to make arrangement for local travel
	1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Lunch at project office					

<b>Dates and Timing MTR Field Missions and Interviews</b>							
<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location/ Venue</b>	<b>Item/Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder/ Role</b>	<b>MTR-Team</b>		<b>Remarks (If any)</b>
					<b>Camillo Ponziani (CP)</b>	<b>Dr. E. Sharma Mr. Sudarshan</b>	
	5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Office of National Project Director, MoEF&CC, New Delhi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting with Mr. Rohit Tiwari</li> <li>- Key achievements, contribution of project to address state priorities, challenges faced and Govt. plan to ensure sustainability of project interventions</li> </ul>	IP/Inspector General of Wildlife, MoEF&CC/National Project Director, SECURE Himalaya	CP to join via zoom meeting	In Person/ join via zoom meeting	
Tuesday April 26, 2022	9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Travel from Delhi to Shimla</li> </ul>				UNDP to make hotel and travel arrangements
Wednesday April 27, 2022	10:30 am – 10:45 am	Forest Headquarters, Talland, Shimla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting with Mr. Rajiv Kumar</li> <li>- Overall project implementation, key achievements, contribution of project to address state priority, challenges faced and Govt. plan to ensure sustainability of project interventions</li> </ul>	RP/PCCF (Wildlife) cum State Project Director, SECURE Himalaya		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO H.P to take appointment, coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewee.
	11:00 am – 11:45 am	Forest Headquarters, Talland, Shimla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting with Mr. Anil Thakur</li> <li>- Overall project implementation, key achievements, contribution of project to address state priority, challenges faced and Govt. plan to ensure sustainability of project interventions</li> </ul>	APCCF (Wildlife) cum State Nodal Officer, SECURE Himalaya		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO H.P to take appointment, coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewee.
	12:30 pm – 1:15 pm	Directorate of Environment, Science and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting with Mr. Sudesh Mokhta, Member Secretary/State Coordinator</li> </ul>	H.P State Biodiversity Board/ Member, State Project Steering Committee		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma	SPO H.P to take appointment, coordinate and

<b>Dates and Timing MTR Field Missions and Interviews</b>							
<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location/ Venue</b>	<b>Item/Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder/ Role</b>	<b>MTR-Team</b>		<b>Remarks (If any)</b>
					<b>Camillo Ponziani (CP)</b>	<b>Dr. E. Sharma Mr. Sudarshan</b>	
		Technology, Shimla	-			and Mr. Sudarshan	arrange meetings with interviewee.
	3:00 pm -3:45 pm		- Meeting with Dr. Savita	Former HoFF cum PCCF Wildlife cum State Project Director		Virtual meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO H.P to take appointment, coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewee.
Thursday April 28, 2022	10:00 am – 11:00 am	Forest Headquarters, Talland, Shimla	- Meeting with Mr. Dinesh Sharma and Mr. Sushil Guleria	RP/DFO Lahual and DFO Pangi/ Overall project management at Landscape level		In person /zoom meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO H.P to coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewee. In case, the DFOs are unable to come to Shimla, virtual meeting will be arranged. Due to limited network connectivity in Pangi, DFO may be connected thru' phone calls
	11:30 am – 2:00 pm	Forest Headquarters, Talland, Shimla	- Meeting with select community stakeholders/project beneficiaries			In person /zoom meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	Project Associates from both the landscapes coordinate with interviewee. Due to remote location and far distance, the beneficiaries might not be able to come to Shimla. Virtual

<b>Dates and Timing MTR Field Missions and Interviews</b>							
<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location/ Venue</b>	<b>Item/Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder/ Role</b>	<b>MTR-Team</b>		<b>Remarks (If any)</b>
					<b>Camillo Ponziani (CP)</b>	<b>Dr. E. Sharma Mr. Sudarshan</b>	
							meeting will be arranged
	3:30 pm – 5:00 pm	Forest Headquarters, Talland, Shimla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting with landscape level implementing partners (Mr. Abhimanyu Sheravat and Akshata Dhamle, Not on Map, Mr. Swapnil and Haresh</li> <li>- CEVA-RES, Dr. Paramita Sarkar</li> <li>- Assistant Professor, NIFT, Kangra)</li> </ul>	Partners implementing interventions on Ecotourism, Homestay and cultural tourism, Handicraft and Handlooms at ground		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO H.P to take appointment, coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewee.
Friday April 29, 2022	8:00 am – 7:00 pm	Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Travel from Shimla-Chandigarh-Delhi</li> </ul>				UNDP to make travel arrangements for ES and SR. Arrangement of accommodation for ES at Delhi
Saturday April 30, 2022	10:00 am – 5:00 pm	Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Travel from Delhi – Siliguri</li> </ul>				UNDP to make travel arrangements for ES
<b>May 2 - 7, 2022</b>							
Monday May 2, 2022	10:00 am – 7:00 pm	Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Travel from Delhi-Bagdogra-Siliguri – Gangtok (SR)</li> <li>- Travel from Siliguri – Bagdogra (ES)</li> </ul>				UNDP to make hotel and travel arrangements
Tuesday May 3, 2022	8:00 am-10:00 am	Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Travel from Gangtok – Mangan-Lingdem village</li> </ul>				UNDP to make travel arrangements



<b>Dates and Timing MTR Field Missions and Interviews</b>							
<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location/ Venue</b>	<b>Item/Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder/ Role</b>	<b>MTR-Team</b>		<b>Remarks (If any)</b>
					<b>Camillo Ponziani (CP)</b>	<b>Dr. E. Sharma Mr. Sudarshan</b>	
	11:00 am – 12:30 pm	Lingdem village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focus Group Discussion with beneficiaries from Lingdem and Laven village (Nettle value chain intervention)</li> <li>- Visit to Nettle Processing Unit</li> </ul>	Nettle value chain beneficiaries and Implementation partner		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	Project Associates to coordinate with interviewees.
	12:30 pm - 2:30 pm	Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lunch and travel (Lingdem to Hee-Gyathang)</li> </ul>				UNDP to make travel arrangements
	3:00 pm – 4:30 pm	Hee-Gyathang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interaction with members of Hee-Gyathang BMC on BHS related interventions and plans</li> </ul>	Members of BMC and Hon'ble Panchayats		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	Project Associates to coordinate with interviewees.
	4:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hee-Gyathang to Gangtok</li> </ul>				UNDP to make hotel and travel arrangements
Wednesday May 4, 2022	10:30 am - 11:15 am	CWLW Office at Gangtok	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting with Mr. D.C. Nepal and Udai Gurung</li> <li>- Overall project implementation, key achievements, contribution of project to address state priority, challenges faced and Govt. plan to ensure sustainability of project interventions</li> </ul>	RP/CWLW/State Project Director cum State Nodal Officer, SECURE Himalaya		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO Sikkim to take appointment, coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewee.
	12:00 pm - 12:45 pm	PCCF Office, Gangtok	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting with Mr. M.L. Srivastava</li> <li>- Key achievements, contribution of project to address state priorities, challenges faced and Govt. plan to ensure</li> </ul>	ACS cum Principal Secretary cum PCCF		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO Sikkim to take appointment, coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewee.

<b>Dates and Timing MTR Field Missions and Interviews</b>							
<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location/ Venue</b>	<b>Item/Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder/ Role</b>	<b>MTR-Team</b>		<b>Remarks (If any)</b>
					<b>Camillo Ponziani (CP)</b>	<b>Dr. E. Sharma Mr. Sudarshan</b>	
			sustainability of project interventions				
	2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Director KNP/KBR Office, Gangtok	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with Ms. Sonam Choden and Ms. Sonam Norden</li> <li>Landscape level implementation, concerns, and sustainability plans</li> </ul>	RP/Director and DFO KNP, Landscape level		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO Sikkim to coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewees.
	4:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Office of AH&Vs department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with Secretary AH&amp;VS/ Dr. Thinley, Joint Director, AH&amp;VS,</li> </ul>	Landscape level Govt. line Department		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO Sikkim to coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewees.
Thursday May 5, 2022	7:00 am-12:00 pm	Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel from Gangtok - Geyzing</li> </ul>				UNDP to make hotel and travel arrangements
	12:30 pm – 1:15 pm	DM office, Geyzing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with Mr. Karma Bonpo, IAS</li> </ul>	DM Geyzing /Chair, Landscape Management Committee, oversee overall implementation and convergences		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO Sikkim to coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewees.
	2:30 pm – 3:15 pm	Office of AH&VS, Geyzing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with Dr. N.M. Cintury, Additional Director, AH &amp;VS and AD AH&amp;VS</li> </ul>			In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO Sikkim to coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewees.
	3:30 pm -5:30 pm	Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel from Geyzing - Yuksom</li> </ul>				UNDP to make hotel and travel arrangements

<b>Dates and Timing MTR Field Missions and Interviews</b>							
<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location/ Venue</b>	<b>Item/Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder/ Role</b>	<b>MTR-Team</b>		<b>Remarks (If any)</b>
					<b>Camillo Ponziani (CP)</b>	<b>Dr. E. Sharma Mr. Sudarshan</b>	
Friday May 6, 2022	9:00 am – 10:00 am	KCC Office	– Meeting with KCC team	Landscape level implementation partner			SPO Sikkim to coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewees.
	10:30am – 11:30 am	Yuksam KNP Office	– Interaction with the Range Officer (KNP-Yuksom) and Himal Rakshak (Community Wildlife Wardens) regarding project intervention on improving KNP management	Landscape level Responsible Parties/ community volunteers		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO/CV Sikkim to coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewees.
	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	GPU Office- Yuksom	– Interaction with Hon'ble Panchayats and visit to Handmade paper unit supported under project	PRI institution at Yuksam		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO/CV Sikkim to coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewees.
	2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	PHC Yuksom	– Visit to solarized Primary Health Centre, Yuksom supported through convergence with Green Recovery Programme and meeting with Dr. Raman Pokhrel on future planning to combat spread of zoonotic diseases	Landscape level Govt. Line departments		In person meeting with Dr. Sharma and Mr. Sudarshan	SPO/CV Sikkim to coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewees.
	3:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Travel	– Travel from Yuksom - Siliguri				UNDP to make travel arrangements for ES and SR. Accommodation arrangements for SR at Siliguri

<b>Dates and Timing MTR Field Missions and Interviews</b>							
<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location/ Venue</b>	<b>Item/Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder/ Role</b>	<b>MTR-Team</b>		<b>Remarks (If any)</b>
					<b>Camillo Ponziani (CP)</b>	<b>Dr. E. Sharma Mr. Sudarshan</b>	
Friday May 7, 2022	10:00 am – 5:00 pm	Travel	– Travel of Mr. Sudarshan from Siliguri-Bagdogra- Delhi				UNDP to make travel arrangements

<b>Virtual meetings with Stakeholders in UT of Ladakh May 9 - 13, 2022</b>						
Monday, 9 May 2022	3:00 pm to 4:00 pm	Zoom meeting	– Meeting with SECURE Himalaya Team	Landscape Project Management Unit (LPMU)		
Wednesday, 11 May 2022	10.30 am to 10:50 am		– Agenda for the day	Landscape Project Management Unit (LPMU)		
	11.00 am to 11:30 pm	Zoom Meeting / SECURE Himalaya Office	– Meeting with Mr Thinle Nurboo, SAVE Changthang. They are a grassroots collective/organisation that has worked with the project on implementation of Biological Diversity Act.	Landscape level implementing partners	LPO to take appointment, coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewees.	
	11:40 am to 12:20 pm		– Meeting with Mr Jigmet Wangchuk and Mr. Siddharth Pradan, Mantra Himalaya. They are working with the Project for training and capacity building of beneficiaries in the Rong Valley area for strengthening of ecotourism in the region.	Landscape level implementing partners		

	12:30 pm to 1:00 pm		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting with Mr Rohit Joshi, Ecosage. They worked with the project to develop a biodigester that was later implemented in an Army camp in Chushul.</li> </ul>	Landscape level implementing partners	
	2:00 pm to 4:00 pm		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting with select beneficiaries of various interventions of the Project (promotion of ecotourism in Rong Valley, Nature Guide Training programme, Bird Monitoring, BMC members), and with frontline staff involved in various training and capacity building programmes.</li> </ul>	Beneficiaries of various interventions	
Friday, 13 May 2022 (tentative)	11:00 am- 11:45 am	Zoom meeting / Dr Pawan Kotwal's chamber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting with Dr. Pawan Kotwal and</li> <li>- Key achievements, contribution of project to address state priorities, challenges faced and Govt. plan to ensure sustainability of project interventions</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	Principal Secretary (Forest, Ecology & Environment)/Chair UT PSC, SECURE Himalaya.	LPO to take appointment, coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewee.
	12:00 pm– 12:45 pm	Zoom meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting with Mr. Sajjad Hussain Mufti on Overall project implementation, key achievements, contribution of project to address state priority, challenges faced and Govt. plan to ensure sustainability of project interventions.</li> </ul>	CWLW, CCF, State Nodal Officer and State Project Director, SECURE Himalaya	LPO to take appointment, coordinate and arrange meetings with interviewee.

## Annex 2: List of People Interviewed

No.	Name	F	M	Date Interviewed	Email
	GEF Project Focal Point and Team				
1	Mr. Tashi Dorji, Regional Technical Advisor, UNDP		1	1, 18 April 2022	<a href="mailto:tashi.dorji@undp.org">tashi.dorji@undp.org</a>
2	Dr Ruchi Pant, Chief, Climate Change, Resilience, Biodiversity and Chemicals Management, UNDP India	1		18 April 2022	<a href="mailto:ruche.pant@undp.org">ruche.pant@undp.org</a>
3	Mr. Khanduri, Advisor to Project, (retired former IGF- Wildlife) (not mentioned in the excel sheet)		1	18 April 2022	skhanduri57@gmail.com
4	National Project Director, SECURE Himalaya Mr. Rohit Tiwari, Inspector General of Forest (WL), MoEF&CC, Member Secretary		1	25 April 2022	igfwl-mef@nic.in
5	Mr. Krishna Kumar, National Project Officer, MoEF&CC, New Delhi		1	25 April, 23 May 2022	krishna.kumar@undp.org
6	Ms. Gayatri Mahar, State Coordination Officer	1		18 April 2022	gayatri.mahar@undp.org
7	Mr. Parth Joshi, Communication Officer		1	18 April 2022	parth.joshi@undp.org
8	Mr. Jishu Chakraborty, National Livelihood Officer		1	18 April 2022	jishu.chakraborty@undp.org
9	Mr. Siddharth Nair, Project Associate		1	18 April 2022	siddharth.nair@undp.org
10	Mr. Vedant Rastogi Strategic Design and Innovation Officer		1	18 April 2022	<a href="mailto:vedant.rastogi@undp.org">vedant.rastogi@undp.org</a>
11	Ms. Anusha Sharma (partly charged), Project Officer (M&E)	1		18 April 2022	<a href="mailto:anusha.sharma@undp.org">anusha.sharma@undp.org</a>
12	Ms. Simran Bawa (partly charged) Admin and Finance Associate	1		18 April 2022	<a href="mailto:simran.bawa@undp.org">simran.bawa@undp.org</a>
<b>Uttarakhand</b>					
13	Mr. Aanand Bardhan, Additional Chief Secretary (Forest)/Principal Secretary, Forest and Environment, Government of Uttarakhand, Chairman		1	19 April 2022	<a href="mailto:acs-uk-ab@uk.gov.in">acs-uk-ab@uk.gov.in</a>
14	Mr. Dhananjay Mohan		1	19 April 2022	dhananjaim@gmail.com
15	Mr. SS Rasaily		1	19 April 2022	rasaily.ifs@gmail.com
16	Mr. Ranganath Pandey, Deputy Director, Gangotri National Park		1	20 April 2022	ddgnpuki@gmail.com

17	Mr Punit Tomar, DFO, Uttarkashi Forest Division + Vice Chair of Landscape Management Committee),		1	20 April 2022	ddgnpuki@gmail.com
18	Mr Mayur Dixit, District Magistrate Uttarkashi + Chair of Landscape Management Committee		1	20 April 2022	<a href="mailto:dmrudraprayag@gmail.com">dmrudraprayag@gmail.com</a> mayurdixit@gmail.com
19	BMC committee		7	21 April 2022	
	<b>Himachal Pradesh</b>				
20	Mr. Rajiv Kumar Chief Wildlife Warden cum PCCF (WL) H.P. Member Secretary		1	27 April 2022	<a href="mailto:pccfwl-hp@nic.in">pccfwl-hp@nic.in</a>
21	Mr. Anil Thakur, APCCF (Wildlife) cum State Nodal Officer, SECURE Himalaya		1	27 April 2022	<a href="mailto:anil.thakur.ifs@gmail.com">anil.thakur.ifs@gmail.com</a>
22	Dr. Lal Singh, Himalayan Research Group, Chotta Shimla/ Member, State Level Technical Committee		1	27 April 2022	<a href="mailto:lahrg@gmail.com">lahrg@gmail.com</a>
23	Mr. Balwan Chand Former Resident Commissioner, Pangti/ Chairman, Landscape Level Project Monitoring and Coordination Committee		1	27 April 2022	registrar@hpuniv.ac.in
24	Mr. Satpal Dhiman, Special Secretary Environment Science and Technology and Joint Member Secretary, HPSCST&E, HP State Biodiversity Board H.P State Biodiversity Board/ Member, State Project Steering Committee		1	27 April 2022	satpaldhiman1@gmail.com
25	Ms. Hriti Sharma, Not on Map	1		28 April 2022	hriti.s@notonmap.com
26	Mr. Abhimanyu Sheravat, Not on Map		1	28 April 2022	abhimanyu.s@notonmap.com
27	Ms. Akshata Dhamle, Not on Map	1		28 April 2022	akshata.d@notonmap.com
28	Mr. Rajiv Kumar DFO WL Chamba		1	28 April 2022	dfowlchamba@gmail.com
29	Mr. Dinesh Sharma, DFO Lahaul,		1	28 April 2022	dfolahaul35@gmail.com
30	Mr. Sushil Guleria DFO Pangti,		1	28 April 2022	dfokillar@gmail.com
31	Ms. Paramita Sarkar, Assistant Professor, NIFT, Kangra	1		28 April 2022	<a href="mailto:paramita.sarkar@nift.ac.in">paramita.sarkar@nift.ac.in</a>
32	Mr. Swapnil, CEVA-RES,		1	28 April 2022	swapsslan@gmail.com
33	Mr. Hareesh, CEVA-RES,		1	28 April 2022	cevahimalayan@gmail.com
34	Dr Savita Sharma	1		27 April 2022	savvysavita@hotmail.com
35	Meeting with select community stakeholders/project beneficiaries and Project Associates (UNVs)	6	6	28 April 2022	
	<b>Ladakh</b>				

36	Dr. Pawan Kotwal, IAS, Principal Secretary Forest, Ecology & Environment, Chaiperson		1	13 May 2022	comsecyutladakh@gmail.com
37	Mr Sajjad Hussain Mufti, IFS Chief Wildlife Warden Member Secretary Wildlife Department, State Project Director and State Nodal Officer, SECURE Himalaya		1	13 May 2022	ccfladakh@gmail.com cwlwladakh@gmail.com
38	Mr Thinle Nurboo, SAVE Changthang.		1	12 May 2022	<a href="mailto:info.save08@gmail.com">info.save08@gmail.com</a> , thinleynorboo@gmail.com
39	Mr. Siddharth Pradan Mantra Himalaya		1	12 May 2022	himalayanfriend9@gmail.com
40	Mr Rohit Joshi, Ecosage		1	12 May 2022	info@ecosage.in
41	Mr. Lobzang tsultim , Wildlife Conservation Birds Club Of Ladakh		1	12 May 2022	info@wcbci.org
42	Mr Jigmet Wangchuk, Mantra Himalaya		1	12 May 2022	jigmet@mantrahimalaya.com
43	Gyatso and Kasmanla, Wildlife Guards		2	12 May 2022	
44	Ms. Angmo, Neder Nyoma Block	1		12 May 2022	
45	Ache Thinley, Kadpu village , Home stay owner	1		12 May 2022	
46	Ms. Kunzes -Sister of one if the beneficiary (Corral)	1		12 May 2022	
47	Ladakh Basket. NGO		1	12 May 2022	
48	Mr. Kunga, Designer of Visual Material		1	12 May 2022	
	<b>Sikkim</b>				
49	Mr.D.C Nepal, IFS Chief Wildlife warden, Forest & Environment Department, Govt of Sikkim Member- Secretary		1	4 May 2022	<a href="mailto:dcnepal1962@gmail.com">dcnepal1962@gmail.com</a>
50	Mr.Udai Gurung Conservator of Forests (Wildlife)		1	4 May 2022	<a href="mailto:udaigurung@yahoo.com">udaigurung@yahoo.com</a>
51	Ms. Sonam Choden Director KNP -	1		4 May 2022	sonam.coden1947@gmail.com
52	Ms. Sonam Norden DFO KNP	1		4 May 2022	snphempu@gmail.com
53	Shri P. Senthil Kumar, Secretary AH&VS		1	4 May 2022	<a href="mailto:senthilkumarifs@gmail.com">senthilkumarifs@gmail.com</a>
54	Dr. Thinley Bhutia, Joint Director, AH&VS			4 May 2022	<a href="mailto:thinlay@vetsbeyondborders.org">thinlay@vetsbeyondborders.org</a>
55	Ms. Bhumika Rai DFO-SBB	1		4 May 2022	dfosbb@gmail.com
56	Mr.Karma Bonpo, DC Geysing		1	5 May 2022	<a href="mailto:Karma.banpo@gmail.com">Karma.banpo@gmail.com</a>



57	Group discussion with nettle value chain beneficiaries and MLAS team	20	3	3 May 2022	
58	Mr. Ugen P Lepcha Hee Gyathang BMC Chairman,	3	1	3 May 2022	mlasngo@gmail.com
59	Mr. Pema Bbhuita KCC-NGO Team		1	6 May 2022	pg_yuksam@yahoo.com
60	Mr. Kinsong KCC-NGO Team		1	6 May 2022	kinzong@gmail.com
61	Ms.Tshering Uden Bhutia President KCC-NGO Team	1		6 May 2022	uden.sikkim07@gmail.com
62	Panchayat Representative		1	7 may 2022	
63	FD check post RFO		1	7 may 2022	
	<b>Uttarakhand</b>				
64	Ms. Aparna Pandey, State Project Officer (Dehradun)	1		19 April 2022	aparna.pandey@undp.org
65	Mr. Bhaskar Joshi, Project Associate Conservation (Uttarkashi)		1	21 April 2022	<a href="mailto:bhaskar.joshi@undp.org">bhaskar.joshi@undp.org</a>
66	Mr. Ummed Dhakad, Project Associate Livelihood (Uttarkashi)		1	21 April 2022	ummed.dhakad@undp.org
67	Ms. Ambika Rawat, Community Mobiliser(Uttarkashi)	1		21 April 2022	<a href="mailto:ambika.rawat@undp.org">ambika.rawat@undp.org</a>
68	Ms. Tanshu Gairola IT Assistant	1		19 April 2022	tanshu.gairola@undp.org
69	Ms.Shinkita Negi IT (Software Development) Assistant	1		19 April 2022	shinkita.negi@undp.org
	<b>Himachal</b>				
70	Mr. Manoj Thakur, State Project Officer (Shimla)		1	28 April 2022	<a href="mailto:manoj.thakur@undp.org">manoj.thakur@undp.org</a>
71	Mr. Abhishek Kumar, Project Associate Conservation (Keylong)		1	28 April 2022	<a href="mailto:abhishek.kumar@undp.org">abhishek.kumar@undp.org</a> <a href="mailto:abhiin001@gmail.com">abhiin001@gmail.com</a>
72	Mr. Amit Mehta, Project Associate Livelihood (Pangi)		1	28 April 2022	<a href="mailto:amit.mehta@undp.org">amit.mehta@undp.org</a> <a href="mailto:mfhamit@gmail.com">mfhamit@gmail.com</a>
	<b>Ladakh</b>				
73	Mr. Tanuj Nagpal, Project Officer (Leh)		1	11 May 2022	tanuj.nagpal@undp.org anub.paljor@undp.org

74	Mr. Stanzin Namdol, Project Associate, Community Mobilisation(Leh)		1	11 May 2022	stanzin.namdol@undp.org
75	Ms. Nansel Stobdan      Nansel Stobdan, Project Associate, Livelihood (Leh)	1		11 May 2022	nansel.stobdan@undp.org
76	Ms.Anub Paljor, Project Associate, conservation(Leh)	1		11 May 2022	anub.paljor@undp.org
	<b>Sikkim</b>				
77	Mr. Rajarshi Chakraborty, State Project Officer (Gangtok)		1	2 May 2022	rajarshi.chakraborty@undp.org
78	Mr. Jaya Sharma Project Associate Livelihood (Mangan)		1	2 May 2022	jaya.sharma@undp.org
79	Ms. Tashi Choden Shengna, Community Volunteer (Geyzing)	1		5 May 2022	tashi.shengna@undp.org

### Annex 3 Photographs from MTR field mission

	
<p>27 April, 2022 Wildlife Database Centre, Dehradun, Uttarakhand</p>	<p>29 April, 2022 Uttarkashi -Livelihood Bhutia Dhan beneficiary meeting, Uttarakhand</p>
	
<p>29 April 2022 Uttarkashi -Processing Centre, Uttarakhand</p>	<p>29 April 2022 Uttarkashi -Processing Centre, Uttarakhand</p>





29 April 2022 Uttarkashi Books of Account maintained by Project Beneficiary Group, Uttarakhand



29 April 2022 Uttarkashi Sales Centre – Govt Co financing to be used by Project Beneficiary Group, Uttarakhand



21 April Meeting with BMC Sukhi and Jhala village, Uttarakhand

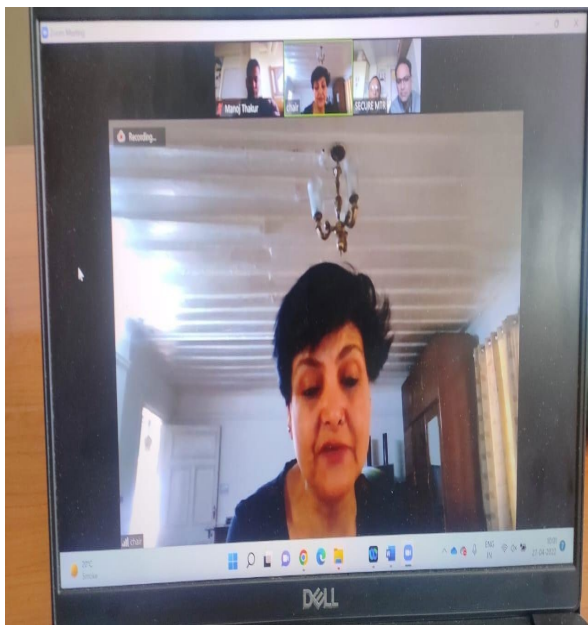


22 April 2022 Nursery at Harsil Village, Uttarakhand





22 April 2022 Proposed Site for Craft sales centre at Harsil Village, Uttarakhand ( govt co-financing )



27 April 2022 Interaction viz Video conference with former state project director Himachal Pradesh, PCCF, Dr. Savita Sharma



27 April 2022. Shimla, meeting with Mr. Rajiv Kumar PCCF (Wildlife) cum State Project Director, SECURE Himalaya, Himachal Pradesh





28 April , 2022 Shimla Interaction with Project Beneficiaries community stakeholders/project beneficiaries and Project Associates (UNVs)



28 April , 2022, Shimla, Interaction with Project Beneficiaries community stakeholders/project beneficiaries and Project Associates (UNVs)



27 April 2022, Shimla Meeting with Dr. Lal Singh, Director Himalayan Research Group and Member, State Level technical Committee, SECURE Himalaya Project



28 April , 2022 Shimla Interaction viz Video conference with Meeting with landscape level implementing partners



3 May 2022, Lingdem Village, Sikkim -Interaction with nettle value chain beneficiaries and MLAS team



3 May 2022, Hee Gyathang Village, Sikkim -Meeting with Hee Gyathang BMC members and local Panchayat on project activities at local BHS site





7 May 2022, Yuksom, Sikkim, Interaction with Panchayats and visit to Handmade paper unit supported under project



7 May 2022 , Yuksom, Sikkim Project intervention with KCC on zero waste management in & around Khangchendzonga National Park



3 May 2022, Hee Gyathang, Sikkim Village seed bank maintained by BMC members



3 May 2022, Hee Gyathang, Sikkim Village Biodiversity Heritage Site

## Annex 4: List of Documents Reviewed

### Project documentation

1. Project Identification Form (PIF)
2. Project Document
3. GEF CEO Endorsement Request
4. GEF Review Sheet
5. STAP Review Sheet
6. UNDP Environmental and Social Screening results
7. Gender Analysis and Action Plan
8. Project inception report
9. Annual work plans for each year of implementation
10. Annual financial project reports (combined delivery reports - CDR), broken down by components and project management (2019, 2020 and 2021)
11. Financial audit reports and spot checks
12. Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports (2018, 2019, 2020,2021,2022)
13. Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools at CEO endorsement and midterm
14. Self-assessment towards project results
15. Terms of reference for technical assistance consultancies
16. Consultancy products such as study reports
17. Project Steering Committee meeting minutes both national and state levels
18. Cofinancing information: Co-Finance mobilized by the project states, MoEF&CC and UNDP
19. Quarterly Progress Report cum PO's Report Q3 2018- till Quarter: 1 Q (Jan-March 2022)
20. GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet by NMPU
21. Tracking Tool for GEF-7 Protected Area Projects in the Biodiversity Focal Area by NMPU
22. Tracking Tool for GEF-6 Global Wildlife Program (GWP) by NMPU
23. Analysis of Community training & skill dev. Report Uttarakhand SMPU
24. Coffee Table Book-Trek Leader/Guide Course Under Adventure Tourism
25. Forest officialcapacity building-assessment Uttarakhand SMPU
26. Indicator wise progress for 5th State Project Steering Committee Meeting, 13-April-2022 Uttarakhand SMPU
27. Livelihood Strategy and Implementation Plan, Sikkim SMPU
28. Project Progress Report, Year 2019 – 2022, Darma-Byans Landscape Pithoragarh, SMPU Uttarakhand
29. Project Progress Report, Year 2019 – 2022, Gangotri-Govind Landscape . Uttarkashi, SMPU Uttarakhand
30. Report Sankri Interpretation Centre Govind Wildlife Sanctuary and National Park Uttarkashi, SMPU Uttarakhand
31. Training, capacity building and support provided on SPAI protocol, SMPU Uttarakhand
32. Village Profile Bagori, SMPU Uttarakhand
33. Village Profile Dharalim SMPU Uttarakhand
34. Village Profile Hashil, SMPU Uttarakhand
35. Village Profile Jhala, SMPU Uttarakhand
36. Village Profile Sukki , SMPU Uttarakhand\
37. Indicator wise progress report April 2022, SMPU Uttarakhand
38. Solid waste video, SMPU Uttarakhand
39. Forest-official-capacity building-assessment, SMPU Uttarakhand
40. Emerging IT Technologies in Forest Department, SMPU Uttarakhand
41. Secure Himalaya project support in IT interventions in Wildlife Database Centre, SMPU



#### Uttarakhand

42. UNDP Environmental And Social Screening: Changthang landscape, Ladakh, NMPU
43. UNDP Environmental And Social Screening: Darma Byans Landscape, Uttarakhand, NMPU
44. UNDP Environmental And Social Screening: Govind Landscape, Uttarakhand, NMPU
45. UNDP Environmental And Social Screening: KNP Sikkim, NMPU
46. UNDP Environmental And Social Screening: – Lahual, Himachal Pradesh NMPU
47. UNDP Environmental And Social Screening: –Pangi Landscape, NMPU
48. Presentation-Development of Homestay and Cultural Tourism in Lahaul-Pangi landscapes under UNDP SECURE Himalayas CEVA and RES
49. Presentation-Promotion & Implementation of conservation-oriented ecotourism model in Lahaul-Pangi landscapes of Himachal, Not on the MAP
50. Presentation- “Development of conservation-based handicraft and handloom initiatives in the Lahaul-Pangi landscape, NIFT, Kangra

#### **51. UNDP documents**

52. UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) 2018-2022
53. UNDP Strategic Plan, 2014-2017
54. UNDP guidance for conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed projects. 2014
55. Social and Environmental Safeguard Standards, 2014
56. UNDP Evaluation Guidelines Revised Edition: June 2021
57. UNDP EVALUATION GUIDELINES The Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES): A Methodology Guidance Note

#### **GEF documents**

58. GEF focal area strategic Programme Objectives, GEF-6
59. GEF Co-financing Guidelines, 2018
60. GEF Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples. 2012
61. Guidance To Advance Gender Equality In Gef Projects And Programs. 2018
62. Guidelines On Gef's Policy On Environmental And Social Safeguards. 2019

## Annex 5: Evaluation Matrix

The following evaluative matrix provides a clear and logical guide of the core MTR line of questioning. Some of the questions identified herein may change as more information and documentation is digested during the fact-finding stage and may even be formed into questionnaire questions.

<b>Evaluation Matrix</b>			
<b>Evaluative Questions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
<b>Questions Related to the Review of Project Indicators Across Objective and Outcome</b>			
<b>Project Objective:</b> <i>To promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secures conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats, ensure sustainable livelihoods and community socio-economic benefits.</i>			
What monitoring data has been / is being collected to support the project's results indicators at the objective level?	Evidence of active and ongoing collection of monitoring data and not post-facto.  Evidence of strong, clearly thought out baselines.	Document review, stakeholder	Desk review and interviews
To what extent are plans and strategies being operationalized as opposed to being static documents	Evidence of approval of plans and strategies and that they are being used and have been afforded a budget.	Document review, budget, stakeholder	Desk review and interviews
From an indicator perspective, what remaining barriers exist, to achieving the project objective, within the time remaining until project completion?	Identification of barriers and strategies to address the barriers	Progress reports, meeting minutes, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews
<b>Outcome 1:</b> <i>Improved management of high Himalayan landscapes for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services.</i>			
When were previous METT & capacity development scorecards developed? Could you please indicate all dates?  Were METT and capacity development scorecards results developed consultatively? Could you please indicate the dates and the progress/status?	Evidence of update on METT and capacity development scorecards and scorecards result	Draft scorecard, capacity scorecards development documentation and reports, stakeholder	Desk review and interviews

<b>Evaluation Matrix</b>			
<b>Evaluative Questions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
<p>Has there been a consistent improvement in management effectiveness and capacity scorecard results from inception of the project through the midterm?</p> <p>When and what are the processes in updating the scorecard?</p> <p>Are the management tools and scorecards being applied in a standardized way and is guidance provided?</p>			
<b>Outcome 2: Improved and diversified sustainable livelihood strategies and enhanced capacities of community and government for sustainable natural resources management and conservation to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems.</b>			
How were sustainable natural resource practices defined by the project during inception and how has this informed its monitoring?	Technical discussions on definitions and planning undertaken.	Inception report, M&E plans, meeting minutes	Desk review, questionnaire and Interviews and field visits
Has the project been able to provide / quantify the total cumulative area brought under sustainable management due to these practices. What have been the bottlenecks and can this indicator be achieved?	Increase in ha under sustainable management	Assessments, maps and technical reports and M&E plan	Desk review, questionnaire and Interviews and field verification assessment
How is the project measuring community incomes and what has been the benchmark of progress?	Baseline established, evidence of increased incomes through environmentally friendly practices	Socio-economic surveys, training conducted	Desk review, questionnaire and Interviews and field visit
How has the end of project targets already been achieved?	Coherence of calculation.	Document review, stakeholder	Desk review and interviews
<b>Outcome 3: Enhanced enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and human-wildlife conflict.</b>			
What has been the level of commitment among community members regarding surveillance	Number of agreements, evidence of patrol logs and training delivered	Review of agreements, assessment of patrol logs and review of material used for	Desk review, questionnaire and Interviews, field visit and focus group discussions

<b>Evaluation Matrix</b>			
<b>Evaluative Questions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
activities?		training	
To what extent have transboundary agreements been nurtured and forged with range states. What are the bottlenecks?	Evidence of transboundary agreements with China, Nepal, Bhutan and India	Minutes, stakeholder interviews and agreements approved by competent authorities	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews
How is HWC progress being assessed in the absence of a defined baseline?	Planning documents / mapping of hotspots, evidence of baseline being discussed	Minutes, stakeholder interviews, AWP, mapping and due diligence conducted	Desk review, questionnaire and Interviews and field visits
<b>Outcome 4: Improved knowledge and information systems for promotion of landscape conservation approaches.</b>			
What is the number of and availability of policy and regulatory mechanisms developed at MTR?	Clear definition of what constitutes "improved management of high Himalayan areas provisioned"  No. Policy and regulatory instruments	Documentation	Desk review
How has the project contextualized and internalized best practices?	Availability of activity planning and M&E strategy for indicator	AWPs, minutes and reports	Desk review and interviews and field visit
How is the project measuring household awareness of conservation, natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention	Availability of baseline with clear metrics to be gauged at MTR and TE	Microplans, KAP surveys and measuring pre- and post-capacity	Desk review, interviews, field visits and beneficiary discussions
<b>Project Strategy: To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best route towards expected results?</b>			
Do you believe the project is still relevant to the Indian context and what has been the impact realizing thus far, if any?	Consistency with national strategies and policies. Participation of national/state agencies in proposal development	Project document, meeting minutes, national policy documents	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews
Were lessons from other projects incorporated into the project strategy?	Reference of lessons learned from other project captured	Project document and stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews

<b>Evaluation Matrix</b>			
<b>Evaluative Questions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
How was the project goals and objectives used to update the CPD (2018-2022)?	Consistency with updated CPD	Comparison between CPDs	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews
Is the project aligned to the GWP (i.e.: programme elements and theory of change)?	Consistency with GWP	GWP TOC and best practice documents	Desk review and interview with UNDP-CO and RTA
Was the project strategy developed cognizant of national/state sector development priorities?	Consistency with national strategies and policies. Participation of national/state agencies in proposal development	Project document, meeting minutes, national policy documents	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews
How is the Project prioritizing impact pathways?  To what extent has the TOC and underlying assumptions integrated gender equality and other cross-cutting issues?  To what extent are these still valid?	Evidence of strategic thinking and prioritizing of activities via impact pathways.	TOC and best practices documents  Conceptual model	Desk review and interview with UNDP-CO and RTA
Did persons who would potentially be affected by the project have an opportunity to provide input to its design and strategy?	Level of participation of persons potentially affected by the project	Project document, inception report, stakeholder interviews SESP	Desk review and interviews
Were gender and social inclusiveness considered in developing the project strategy?	Active stakeholder involvement from both men and women	Project document, inception report, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and Interviews, field visits and focus group assessment
If you had the opportunity to redesign the project, what changes would you make?	Documentation of any lessons learned to date	PIR, stakeholder interviews	Questionnaire and interviews
<b>Progress Towards Results: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved thus far?</b>			
What remaining barriers exist, to achieving the project objective, within the time remaining until project completion?	Identification of barriers and strategies to address the barriers	Progress reports, meeting minutes, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews

<b>Evaluation Matrix</b>			
<b>Evaluative Questions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
How is the workload divided among the Project Offices (national and state level)?	Equal division of labour relative to project components.	Org chart, meeting minutes and stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews
What are the success and challenges of the capacity building interventions related to high conservation value ecosystems in high-altitude mountain areas?	Evidence of a systematic capacity building programme	Documentation of capacity building programme related to monitoring of biodiversity.	Desk review and interviews
Have the tracking tools and GEF6 scorecards shown improvements from inception of the project through the midterm?	Improved scoring from respective tracking tools	Tracking tools, stakeholder interviews	Desk review and interviews
How have the scorecards been managed (via expert consultant or by the PCU)?	Evidence of who is overseeing the scorecard and data collection	Tracking tools, stakeholder interviews	Desk review and interviews
Based on identified successes, how can the project further expand these benefits?	Replication of successful outputs and evidence of enhanced PA management	Progress reports, meeting minutes, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews
Has the socio-economic study been initiated? Does it include a gender lens? What have been some challenges?	Socio-economic studies result	Socio-economic studies result, stakeholder	Desk review and interviews
How has COVID-19 impacted the project's outcome and objectives?	Identification of obstacles to meeting objectives and outcomes as a result of COVID-19	Project Implementation Review (PIR), Project Steering Committee and PMU minutes, progress reports, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews
<b>Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? To what extent are project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting, and project communications supporting the project's implementation?</b>			
Have changes in management arrangements been needed, due to changing conditions?	Results from M&E are used to adjust and improve management decisions	Project Implementation Review (PIR), Project Board and PCU minutes, progress reports, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews with project staff
How has the project adapted to / dealt with the seasonality of activities in high-altitude mountain ecosystems?	Results from M&E are used to adjust and improve management decisions and implementation of activities.	Project Implementation Review (PIR), Project Board and PCU minutes, progress reports,	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews with project staff and field visits

<b>Evaluation Matrix</b>			
<b>Evaluative Questions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
		stakeholder interviews	
Have changes been made in management arrangements, and were they effective?	Adaptation and reflection characterize the project's management	Project Implementation Review (PIR), progress reports, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews with project staff and other stakeholders
Has the IP been effective in guiding the implementation of the project?	Leadership of the National Project Director and ownership of other Directorate officials	Project Implementation Review (PIR), progress reports, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews with project staff and other stakeholders
What support has been required by the UNDP-CO over and above its mandate in a NIM implementation?	Leadership of the UNDP-CO and RTA and active role of UNDP in project activities and to the project implementation	Project Board and PCU minutes, progress reports, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews with project staff and other stakeholders
Has UNDP been effective in providing support for the project?	Quality and timeliness of support	Stakeholder interviews, project procurement, disbursement and METT	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews with project staff and other stakeholders
Have executing partners fulfilled their obligations and been effective in the implementation of the project?	Active role in project activities with catalytic support to the project implementation	Stakeholder interviews, project procurement, METT and reporting	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews with project staff and other stakeholders
Were delays encountered in project start-up/implementation, disbursement of funds, or procurement?	Compliance with schedule as planned and deviation from it is duly addressed	Annual workplan, project audits, project outputs, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews with project staff and other stakeholders
Is work planning for the project (i.e., funds disbursement, scheduling, etc.) effective and efficient?	Responsiveness to significant implementation problems	Annual workplan, project audits, project outputs, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews with project staff and other stakeholders
Have changes been made to the project results framework?	Variances between initial and existing project results framework	Project Implementation Review, progress reports, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, field visits and interviews
Have changes been made to the TOC?	Variances between initial TOC and any updated version	TOC	Desk review and interviews
Have co-financing partners been meeting their commitments to the project?	Mobilization of resources by partners beyond project funding	Co-financing reports, CDR reports, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews with project staff and other stakeholders
Are the project M&E tools adequate to guide ongoing project management and adaptive processes?	Sufficient budget and fund allocated to M&E and tools aid in its actual undertaking	Tracking tools, stakeholder interviews	Desk review and interviews
How is risk managed in the project?	Regular updates made to risk register	Risk log	Desk review and interviews

<b>Evaluation Matrix</b>			
<b>Evaluative Questions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
What has been the most challenging and rewarding aspects of the project that you have encountered thus far?	Enthusiasm of project results linked to the project objective and constructive criticism	Stakeholder interviews and questionnaire results	Questionnaire and interviews
How has the project responded to COVID-19 challenges?	Change in project scope and/or delivery channels and special planning	Project Board and PCU minutes, progress reports, stakeholder interviews	Desk review and interviews
<b><i>Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?</i></b>			
Following conclusion of the project, what is the likelihood that adequate financial resources will be in place to sustain the project's outcomes?	Opportunities for financial sustainability from multiple sources exist	Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIR	Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIR
Is it expected that, upon conclusion of the project, stakeholder ownership will be sufficient to sustain the project's outcomes?	Identification and involvement of champions at different levels of the project	Progress reports, meeting minutes, stakeholder interviews and questionnaire results	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews
Are legal frameworks, policies, and institutional arrangements favourable for sustaining the project's outcomes following conclusion of the project?	Exit strategies available with policies, legal frameworks, and institutional capacity put in place	Progress reports, meeting minutes, stakeholder interviews, review of legislative framework and questionnaire data	Desk review, questionnaire and interviews
Are there any environmental risks that could jeopardize the sustainability of the project's outcomes?	Environmental factors or negative impacts are foreseen and mitigation measures are planned	Progress reports, meeting minutes, stakeholder interviews	Desk review, field visits and interviews



## Annex 6: Progress towards Results

Assessment Key:	Achievement Rating Scale:
Achieved	Ratings assigned using the following 6-point scale: highly satisfactory, satisfactory, moderately satisfactory, unsatisfactory, highly unsatisfactory
Target partially achieved or on track to be achieved by the end of the project	
Not on target to be achieved	
Unable to assess	

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	Status (as reported in PIR in July 2022)	Midterm review time status	MTR assessment
<b>Objective:</b> To promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secures conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats, ensure sustainable livelihoods and community socio-economic benefits					
A. Mandatory Indicator 1.3.1 Area of sustainable management solutions at sub-national for conservation of snow leopard, wild prey and associated species and habitats, sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem services	Approximately 30,000-40,000 hectares (parts of Kanchenjunga National Park and Gangotri National Park) managed effectively	At least 1,600,000 hectares effectively managed through participatory approaches	A total of 3,424,500 hectare area is being managed through participatory approaches. Out of this, 964,787 hectare area is covered under six Protected Areas (PAs) (The variation in total area reported previous years is due to error in the area coverage of Changthang and Seichu Tuan WLS). Improved management of all the PAs has been undertaken by addressing gaps in parameters listed in METT. The key focus of interventions around were capacity building of park management on law enforcement, establishing baseline, resource inventory, equipment support, providing sustainable livelihood opportunities to the communities residing adjacent to the PAs	This indicator appears to be on track <b>Target Achieved</b> to meeting the end-of-project target of at least 1,600,000 hectares effectively managed through participatory approaches based on progress articulated in 2021 PIR and most recent Q1 2022 progress report.	<b>Achieved</b>
B. Mandatory Indicator 1.3.2 Number of additional people benefiting from strengthened livelihoods through solutions for management of natural resources and ecosystem services	0 (Baseline of households participating in alternative livelihoods and sustainable resource management will be established through the village micro-planning process)	At least 2,500 households directly benefit through improved livelihood and incomes (50% of the 12,500 beneficiaries would be women)	Overall, 1,219 households including 692 women directly benefiting from improved / additional livelihood options supported under the project (Note: The project has focused one individual in one household for improved livelihoods and the benefit infiltrated into entire household).	Midterm target level has been exceeded therefore midterm <b>Target is Achieved</b> . However, there are risks to meeting the ambitious end-of-project target of 2,500 households [12,500 beneficiaries – 50% women]. Strategy should be developed to	<b>Achieved</b>

				have clear plans for each of the landscapes and states.	
C. Mandatory indicator 2.5.1 Extent to which Institutional frameworks are in place for conservation, sustainable use, access and benefit sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems and improved livelihoods	0 (Current institutional arrangements do not facilitate significant coordination across multi-sectors and multiple actors)	All four multiple use landscapes have official multi-stakeholder, multi-sector coordination and governance mechanisms that facilitate convergence of planning, manpower and financial resources for conservation, sustainable use and improved livelihood benefits	Institutional frameworks at national, state and landscape level with representation of multi-sector/multi-stakeholders constituted	Significant investment has been made in management planning and enabling governance structures at state and local level. The midterm <b>Target Achieved</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
D. Biological Indicator. Status of snow leopard populations in four project states	Estimated at 474 individuals. There is no formal baseline.	Stable or increase snow leopard populations in the four project states	State-level snow leopard and prey population estimation completed in Himachal Pradesh	Snow leopard baselines validated. There is no formal baseline established, therefore, this indicator is at <b>risk of not being achieved</b> . Remedial action required and target can be achieved.	<b>On track</b>
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>End of Project target</b>	<b>Status (as reported in PIR in July 2022)</b>	<b>Midterm review time status</b>	<b>MTR assessment</b>
<b>Outcome 1:</b> Improved management of high Himalayan landscapes for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services					
<b>1.1</b> Improved management effectiveness of protected areas and biological rich areas in alpine and sub-alpine landscape	Changtang WLS (22) Govind Pasu WLS (25) Gangotri NP (35) Khangchenjunga NP (29) Seichi Tuan WLS (13) Shingba Rhododendron WLS (16)	Average increase by at least 30 points in METT from current PA baselines	Improvement in METT scores of all the PAs reported	Changtang WLS (22 => 61 = 177%) Govind Pasu WLS (25 => 55 = 120%) Gangotri NP (35 => 64 = 82.75%) Khangchenjunga NP (29 => 69 = 138%) Seichi Tuan WLS (13 => 60 = 361%) Shingba Rhododendron WLS (16 => 60 = 275%) = AVERAGE INCREASE OF 146%. <u>End of Project Target</u> is already achieved.	<b>Achieved</b>

1.2 Improved institutional capacities for planning implementation and monitoring of multiuse landscape level plans as measured by UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard	Limited institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring of multiple use landscapes. UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline score of 18	Increase of institutional capacity as measured by a 50% increase in UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline value	So far 1166 Government staff including middle and frontline staff including 146 women, trained thru' various trainings and exposure visits of management of PAs, law enforcement and other aspects of conservation  Score card to be updated	Observed significant investments in capacity across all landscapes and can infer achievement of target but Capacity Development Scorecard should be provided. <u>Target Achieved pending GEF CD Scorecard results.</u> Otherwise this indicator will be noted as only <u>Partially Achieved</u> at MTR	On track
1.3 Reduced pressure and prevented degradation of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forests	Approximately 700,000 ha of alpine meadows under unsustainable grazing with average 75 livestock units/km2 and forests around villages lack sustainable management arrangements	Reduced grazing pressure on 700,000 ha of alpine meadows by at least 20% (from 75 to 60 livestock units/km2) and prevented degradation in around 10,000 ha of subalpine forest under community-based management resulting in projected 0.46-0.50 and 0.31-0.36 m tCO2 /30 year period sequestered and avoided respectively.	Approximately 4,190 ha of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forests brought under community management aiming to promote sustainable grazing practices and resource use. (1) There is a naturally decreasing trend of livestock population in all states.  (2) Reducing grazing pressure/livestock numbers is very challenging and poses significant social risks as agro-pastoralism is the primary income source and forms the identity of communities across the project landscapes	Notwithstanding distribution of cooking stoves and restoration plans, grazing pressure still appears to be a problem in some of the landscapes based on consultations in the field. Indicator <u>Partially Achieved</u> at MTR - unclear whether or not there is a consistent and harmonized strategy to measure progress based on narratives within progress report. This needs to be addressed to achieve the end target.	On track
1.4 Extent of degraded alpine pastures/rangelands and sub-alpine forests under sustainable management regimes	Approximately 40,000 ha of alpine pastures and 2,000 ha of subalpine forests under continued degradation through overuse	40,000 hectares alpine pastures and 2,000 hectares sub-alpine forests under sustainable regeneration regimes resulting in projected 0.16 - 0.18 and 0.42 - 0.05 m tCO2 /30 year period sequestered and avoided respectively.	Approximately 1484 hectare of alpine pastures and 2208 hectare of subalpine has been covered under sustainable regeneration regime.  The mid term target for the indicator was at least 5,000 hectares alpine pastures and 500 hectares sub-alpine forests under sustainable regeneration regimes. As per the data compiled below from different intervention of all project landscapes/states/UT through SECURE Himalaya as well as Co-finance by Forest Department under various schemes, so far 14,331 Ha of Alpine area and 2,175 Ha of Subalpine area have been covered which is well above the mid term targets. The different activities carried out covers	Restoration strategies developed but actual restoration activities must be accelerated to achieve ambitious target of 40,000 hectares alpine pastures and 2,000 hectares sub-alpine forests under sustainable regeneration regimes. Project also not calculating tCO2 /30 year period sequestered and avoided. <u>At high risk of not being achieved.</u> Remedial action(s) required but can be achieved with partnerships with other programmes.  End term target of the indicator seems ambitious for the Alpine ecosystems	On track

			<p>assisted natural regeneration, removal of invasive weeds, soil and water conservation works, plantations, Fodder banks, bringing areas under improved management through declaring them as HCV/BHS/Ramsar sites, nurseries and providing alternate energy solutions to reduce fuelwood dependency from forests.</p> <p>Different states have piloted some energy solutions in their landscapes, which has not been reported neither in terms of the area they will be impacting, nor the amount of CO2 emissions avoided due to these interventions. So, an effort was done to calculate the avoided carbon emissions due to these energy solutions and carbon sequestration due to other eco-restoration activities mentioned above. Different interventions done so far would result in sequestration of 9.9 m tCO2 and will avoid 0.005 m tCO2 respectively in next 30 years period  <i>(Note: the calculation have been done using secondary data published for similar species/forest types assuming 30% mortality rate in general and are approximate estimates only, The exact carbon calculation needs to be done by taking actual field data on species DBH, Height, Age, Form Factors etc to come at more accurate carbon figures).</i></p>		
1.5 Area of High Conservation Value Forests under improved management	High Conservation Value Forests (dispersal corridors, biodiversity rich areas and buffer areas) lack appropriate management regimes	(a) Reduced direct pressure on at least 60,000 ha covering at least 18 newly designated and managed key biodiversity areas, including 30,000 ha of HCVFs to ensure connectivity and species conservation resulting in projected avoided 1.38-1.47 m tCO2 over 30 year period	High conservation value areas identified has been reported	HCVAs identification progress and area targets well underway, exceeding Midterm and even End of project targets.	<b>Achieved</b>

		(b) Reduced direct pressure on at least 20,000 ha of moist and dry alpine areas and sub alpine forests managed as Biodiversity Heritage Sites <sup>43</sup> resulting in projected avoided 0.46 – 0.49 m tCO <sub>2</sub> over 30-year period			
Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	Status (as reported in PIR in July 2022)	Midterm review time status	MTR assessment
<b>Outcome 2</b> Improved and diversified sustainable livelihood strategies and enhanced capacities of community and government for sustainable natural resources management and conservation to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems					
<b>2.1</b> Extent under sustainable natural resources management practices	0 (Currently sustainable land management natural resources practices at the village level are absent or limited)	At least 10,000 ha under sustainable natural resources management practices	<p>Total 1000 ha brought under sustainable natural resources management practices through multiple activities/actions taken. (Actual coverage 2712 ha)</p> <p>Grazing has completely stopped in nearby area of Dayara restoration site covering 290 hectare with by the community Approx. 400 hectare area covered thru' promoting sustainable agricultural practices in the Gangotri-Govind landscape thru' co-finance and convergence with Forest Department</p> <p>Sustainable harvesting of sea-buckthorn by women SHG from 03 hectare area. The SHG members also supported for value chain of sea-buckthorn</p> <p>Setting up of community fodder bank in 08-hectare areas engaging 29 families to reduce extraction of fodder from subalpine forest The species of Robinia and Willow has been planted along with grass species</p> <p>400 ha area covered community management i.e. management of</p>	Indicator <u>Partially Achieved</u> at MTR. Narrative in PIRs does describe progress however clarity and consistency should be maintained. Focus has been brought recently on actions taken and more attention should be given on what actions will incrementally deliver 10,000 ha under sustainable natural resources management practices by the project's operational closure.	<b>On track</b>

			<p>irrigation channel originated from Sattal wetland complex by one BMC in Gangotri landscape</p> <p>07 community-based nurseries (each in Gangotri, Darma-Byans and Lahaul Pangi landscape) of NTFPs including sea-buckthorn, MAPs covering 08 hectare land.</p> <p>06 new trails covering 03 hectare identified and developed for eco-tourism and reduce pressure on key destinations which leads to destruction of habitats</p>		
<p><b>2.2</b> Average percentage increase in community incomes from sustainable livelihood, natural resource management and business activities (calculated for each community)</p>	<p><i>Baseline to be established in YR1 during village micro-planning</i></p>	<p>30% increase in average incomes from sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management and business activities (At least 40% of beneficiaries are women)</p>	<p>The baseline income of beneficiaries supported under various value chain has been established and reported in PIR 2022.</p> <p><i>10% increase in average incomes from sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management and business activities (At least 40% of beneficiaries are women).</i></p> <p>The household level baseline data has been established in all the states/UT under various livelihood sectors (more than 40% are women beneficiaries). Income baseline and income enhanced.</p>	<p>Baseline not formally established at inception and therefore, difficult to gauge progress at this juncture. Notwithstanding, the project has invested in a range of interventions and pilots with select beneficiaries towards enhancing incomes through diversified livelihood options (eco-tourism, natural fibre based handloom and handicraft development, skilling) value addition and market chain development. Household level socioeconomic surveys were conducted in a number of landscapes and should be used to extrapolate a baseline before the TE.</p> <p>Looking at the PIR 2022 July 2022 this indicator can be assessed as on target.</p>	<p><b>On track</b></p>
<p><b>2.3</b> Number of community members trained, adopting community-based agricultural, agro-pastoral, natural resource management and livelihood activities.</p>	<p>0 (currently training at the community level is limited and sector specific.) and limited effort at comprehensive training that integrates the multiple dimensions of managing</p>	<p>At least 2,500 community members trained and adopting community-based sustainable resource use, agro-pastoral, agricultural and other sustainable livelihood activities and receiving detectable</p>	<p>So far, total 2076 community members trained on various aspects of community based sustainable resource use, agricultural practices and sustainable livelihood practices. Out of which 971 are women.</p>	<p><b>Target Achieved</b> and exceeded at MTR. Training observed as one of the project's core strengths.</p>	<p><b>Achieved</b></p>

	resources across the different sectors and for multiple use.	conservation and livelihood benefits			
Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	Status (as reported in PIR in July 2022)	Midterm review time status	MTR assessment
<b>Outcome 3</b> Enhanced enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and human-wildlife conflict					
<b>3.1</b> Number of community members actively volunteering in security monitoring and surveillance	0 (There is no coordinated program for community participation in surveillance and monitoring of wildlife crime)	200 community members actively engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions (At least 20% women) to serve as deterrent to wildlife crime	59 community members engaged in surveillance and monitoring of wildlife/crime and conservation issues	Midterm Target Achieved. In the 2021 PIR, the project reported 42 community members (all males) engaged in surveillance and monitoring of wildlife/crime and conservation issues. In the Q1 2022 progress report it was noted 45 officers from different enforcement agencies participated in an interagency coordination meeting, with high demand for training on core issues. End of project target of 200 community members engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions realistic, although gender dimension of 20% women is likely not.	<b>Achieved</b>
<b>3.2</b> Number of international agreements for enhancing trans-boundary cooperation between China, Nepal, Bhutan and India	0 (a number of transboundary plans exists, but coordination is limited)	At least 3 trans-boundary agreements effective and collaborative implementation		At high risk of not being achieved. Remedial action(s) and acceleration required achieving at least 3 trans-boundary agreements effective and collaborative implementation.	<b>Not on Target</b>
<b>3.3</b> Annual number of human wildlife conflicts leading to livestock and crop losses and retaliatory killings of wildlife	Baseline will be developed in Year 1	At least 50% decrease in HWCs	Technological interventions piloted in the conflict prone villages and location for mitigation of HWC. Subsequently, reduction in HWC cases mapped periodically and found more than 25% reduction in HWC. However, the impact varies from intervention to interventions. For example, a predator-proof corral pen	Indicator Partially Achieved at MTR. Context has changed since the project's original design	<b>On track</b>

			constructed in Changthang landscape in participation with community has reported zero (0) cases of HWC.		
Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	Status (as reported in PIR in July 2022)	Midterm review time status	MTR assessment
<b>Outcome 4</b> Improved knowledge and information systems for promotion of landscape conservation approaches					
<b>4.1</b> Number of policy and regulatory mechanisms for improved management of high Himalayan areas provisioned	0 (A number of areas where policy reform is required exists)	3 policy recommendations officially approved and implemented	A total of 03 policy recommendations discussed and agreed with the key stakeholders. The project has significantly contributed to the preparation of management framework, guidelines and SoPs for overarching objective of conservation and sustainable management of high Himalayan areas.	Target Achieved in spite of poor and vaguely worded midterm target. 4 policy mechanisms being targeted towards the achievement of the End of project target are: (i) snow leopard enumeration protocol; (ii) high altitude wetland management handbook for managers; (iii) wildlife crime scene investigation manuals; and (iv) state biodiversity strategies and action plans.	<b>Achieved</b>
<b>4.2</b> Number of project best practices used in development and implementation of other conservation initiatives	0 (A few best practice publications etc., but the project will make efforts for additional project specific lessons to be documented)	10 best practices documented, disseminated and up-scaled in non-project areas	Good Practices are emerging t: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Wildlife Database Centre and Management Information System established in Uttarakhand collects temporal data of Illegal Trade in Wildlife and Human Wildlife Conflict for analysis and further interventions to reduce the same.</li> <li>– Participatory snow leopard monitoring being conducted in project landscapes. This has been achieved by training local youth in citizen science and taxonomy under the project.</li> <li>– Off-Farm Farmer Producer Organizations (OFPO) established in Uttarakhand and Sikkim towards</li> </ul>	Solid and exemplary demonstration and piloting of new practices in high-altitude ecosystems, originating from needs assessments, and disseminated using a variety of mediums. MTR Target Achieved.	<b>Achieved</b>



			<p>income enhancement of local communities, with a focus on women empowerment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greening practices of key contributors to habitat degradation by installing new and innovative high-altitude biogas Digesters in Ladakh</li> <li>- Video documentation of 10 existing best practices conducted in project landscapes and 20 practices documented in print on wildlife conservation in India</li> <li>- Fellowship provided to over 40 youth from the local community for community radio and video documentation and dissemination to document issues of biodiversity conservation and spread awareness</li> </ul>		
4.3 Percentage of participating households aware of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits	Baseline to be established in Year 1 through micro-planning process	50% of participating households have good awareness of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits	<p>Local communities in the project landscapes have been engaged from data collection to implementation of interventions for sustainable natural resource management. Cumulatively the following activities address awareness generation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training and Capacity Building of local community through community radio and participatory film making workshops on key issues in the landscape; ecotourism, celebration of key biodiversity and environment days, art and writing competitions; promotion of citizen science, taxonomy, snow leopard monitoring, development of predator proof corals, deployment of IT equipment to prevent human-wildlife conflict, afforestation,</li> </ul>	There is no question that the project has engaged in significant awareness raising, advocacy and targeted behaviour change leading to an internalization of key concepts. However, without an established baseline and uniform measurement of awareness, this indicator is at high risk of not being achieved. MTR team revisited to see the attempts to tackle this, therefore the target is taken as achieved.	<b>Achieved</b>

			<p>emerging sustainable livelihood opportunities,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness Campaigns: More than fifteen awareness campaigns launched on social media to target audiences at the national level including celebration of key environment and biodiversity days through blogs, photo stories and social media campaigns.</li> <li>- National Level Competitions: Three national level competitions held, viz. SECURE Himalaya hackathon for awareness generation on illegal trade in wildlife; illustration, logo and tagline competition; best practices from project landscapes</li> <li>- Participatory decision-making processes including consultations on the future of livelihoods and tourism in the project landscapes, community led discussions on prevention of human-wildlife conflict, methods to sustainably extract medicinal plants, women's empowerment and economic self-sufficiency.</li> <li>- Development of knowledge products to nudge local communities and key stakeholders for action towards conservation at the landscape level. These products range from manuals to raise legal literacy, films to educate stakeholders responsible for habitat degradation, signboards and posters on important wildlife species and how to save them, making scientific more accessible and easily understood by local communities.</li> </ul>		
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Involvement of school children and youth to spread awareness by conducting street plays, flash mobs, extra-curricular activities to connect with traditional ecological knowledge.</li> </ul>		
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## Annex 7: Cofinancing table

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Cofinancing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (\$)
Recipient Country Government	Government of Sikkim	In-kind	Recurring Expenditure	0.57
Recipient Country Government	Government of Uttarakhand	In-kind	Recurring Expenditure	7.43
Recipient Country Government	Government of Himachal Pradesh	In-kind	Recurring Expenditure	9.43
Recipient Country Government	Administration of UT of Ladakh	In-kind	Recurring Expenditure	1.30
Recipient Country Government	MoEF&CC	Grant	Projects & Recurring Expenditure	7.43
GEF Agency	UNDP	Grant	Recurring Expenditure	0.54
GEF Agency	UNDP	In-kind	Recurring Expenditure	TBA
<b>Total Co-financing</b>				<b>22.70</b>

Name of Co-financing Agency	Type of Co-financing	Co-financing amount committed (US\$ in million)	Actual Amount Contributed at stage of Midterm Review (US\$ in million)	Actual of Expected Amount (%)
Government of Sikkim	In kind	9.00	0.57	6
Government of Uttarakhand	In kind	12.00	7.43	62
Government of Himachal Pradesh	In kind	12.00	9.43	79
Administration of UT of Ladakh	In kind	6.00	1.30	22
MoEF&CC	Cash	21.82	7.43	34
UNDP	In kind + Cash	1.00	0.54	54
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>60.82</b>	<b>22.70</b>	<b>37</b>

## Annex 8: Rating Scales

Ratings for progress towards results:	
<b>Highly Satisfactory (HS)</b>	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve or exceed all its end-of-project targets, without major shortcomings. The progress towards the objective/outcome can be presented as “good practice”.
<b>Satisfactory (S)</b>	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings.
<b>Moderately Satisfactory (MS)</b>	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, but with either significant shortcoming.
<b>Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)</b>	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its end-of-project targets, with major shortcoming.
<b>Unsatisfactory (U)</b>	The objective/outcome is expected not to achieve most of its end-of-project targets.
<b>Highly Unsatisfactory (U)</b>	The objective/outcome has failed to achieve its midterm targets, and is not expected to achieve any of its end-of-project targets.

Ratings for project implementation and adaptive management:	
<b>Highly Satisfactory (HS)</b>	Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as “good practice”.
<b>Satisfactory (S)</b>	Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action.

<b>Moderately Satisfactory (MS)</b>	Implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial action.
<b>Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)</b>	Implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action.
<b>Unsatisfactory (U)</b>	Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.
<b>Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)</b>	Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

<b>Ratings for sustainability (one overall rating):</b>	
<b>Likely (L)</b>	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key Outcomes on track to be achieved by the project's closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future
<b>Moderately Likely (ML)</b>	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some Outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on Outcomes at the Midterm Review
<b>Moderately Unlikely (MU)</b>	Significant risk that key Outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
<b>Unlikely (U)</b>	Severe risks that project Outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained

## Annex 9: Signed UNGE Code of Conduct Forms

### Evaluators/Consultants:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing or advising on the project being evaluated.

### MTR Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:

Name of Consultant: Camillo Ponziani

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): Interamna Group Inc.

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at Toronto, Canada (Place) on 6 April 2022 (Date)

Signature: 

### Evaluators/Consultants:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing or advising on the project being evaluated.

### MTR Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:

Name of Consultant: Eklabya Sharma

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): NA

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at Siliguri, WB, India (Place) on 21 March 2022 (Date)

Signature: 

**Evaluators/Consultants:**

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing or advising on the project being evaluated.

**MTR Consultant Agreement Form**

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:

Name of Consultant: SUDARSHAN RODRIGUEZ

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): RTLWORKS

**I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.**

Signed at Guwahati (Place) on 7 April 2022 (Date)

Signature:





## Annex 10: Terms of Reference

### BASIC CONTRACT INFORMATION

<b>Location :</b>	Home based with travel to project landscape if required, INDIA
<b>Application Deadline :</b>	26-Nov-21 <b>(Midnight New York, USA)</b>
<b>Type of Contract :</b>	Individual Contract
<b>Post Level :</b>	National Consultant
<b>Languages Required :</b>	English
<b>Duration of Initial Contract :</b>	December 2021-April 2022

**UNDP is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.**

**UNDP does not tolerate sexual exploitation and abuse, any kind of harassment, including sexual harassment, and discrimination. All selected candidates will, therefore, undergo rigorous reference and background checks.**

### Background

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for - the Midterm Review (MTR) of the full-sized UNDP-supported GEF-financed project titled Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan Ecosystems (PIMS 3298) implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, with support of UNDP which is to be undertaken in 2021. The project started on the 1 April 2017 and is in its fourth year of implementation. This ToR sets out the expectations for the MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document [Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects](#)

#### 2. PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

##### [Project Background](#)

#### 3. MTR PURPOSE

The MTR will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document, and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project's strategy and its risks to sustainability.

MTR will identify challenges and outline corrective actions to ensure that the project is on track to achieve maximum results by its completion. The results and recommendations from the MTR will be used by UNDP and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, to design and implement strategy and action plan for achieving desired outcomes under the project. The process will also help identify potential challenges and risks that will affect the project delivery. The MTR will also lay the foundation for a strong Terminal Evaluation (TE). Likewise, the other parts of the country the project landscapes have been affected from the on-going pandemic and hence the several measures have been undertaken by the project to support the stakeholders especially w.r.t sustainable livelihoods. MTR will also assess the viability of the interventions *vis-à-vis* the project outcomes and expected results, identify the challenges related to the same and suggest appropriate measures.

#### 4. MTR APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The MTR report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The MTR shall be conducted by one International Consultant supported by two National Consultants (one is responsible to look at conservation and IWT related aspects and one for livelihoods related component).

The National Consultant - Livelihoods will support the Lead (International Consultant) in reviewing all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP), the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project budget revisions, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review. The National Consultant will review the baseline GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools that must be completed before the MTR mission begins.

The National Consultant is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office(s), Regional Technical Advisor, direct beneficiaries, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR. Stakeholder involvement should include interviews (virtual if required) with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State/UT Forest and Wildlife Departments, executing agencies, senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Considering the recent outbreak of COVID-19 led restrictions, virtual tools may be used for stakeholder consultations and evidence-based reporting of results. However, the National Consultant- Livelihood is expected to conduct field missions to the UT of Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim (India) following the COVID 19 guidelines issued by Central and State Governments.

The specific design and methodology for the MTR should emerge from consultations between the MTR team and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the MTR purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions. However, gender-responsive methodologies and tools should be used to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the MTR report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the MTR must be clearly outlined in the Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders and the MTR team.

The final MTR report must describe the full MTR approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

Considering the pandemic situation the MTR Lead (International Consultant) may not be able travel to or within the country for the MTR mission. The National Consultant- Livelihood should travel to the project states and landscapes. However, in case of travel restrictions (if any), the National Consultant in consultation with the team lead will develop a methodology that takes this into account the conduct of the MTR virtually and remotely, including the use of remote interview methods and extended desk reviews, data analysis, surveys and evaluation questionnaires. This should be detailed in the MTR Inception Report and agreed with the Commissioning Unit. If a data collection/field mission is not possible then remote interviews may be undertaken through telephone or online (skype, zoom etc.). If all or part of the MTR is to be carried out virtually then consideration should be taken for stakeholder availability, ability or willingness to be interviewed remotely. In addition, their accessibility to the internet/computer may be an issue as many government and national counterparts may be working from home. These limitations must be reflected in the final MTR report.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

### **DETAILED SCOPE OF THE MTR**

The National Consultant- Livelihood will assess the following four categories of project progress against Component II (Improved and diversified sustainable livelihoods for communities to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems) and Component IV (Improved knowledge and information systems for promotion of landscape conservation approaches).

See the *Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for extended descriptions.

#### **i. Project Strategy**

Project design:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)?
- Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design. See Annex 9 of *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for further guidelines.
  - Were relevant gender issues (e.g. the impact of the project on gender equality in the programme country, involvement of women's groups, engaging women in project activities) raised in the Project Document?
- Review the impact of COVID in the landscape and on the project implementation

- If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement.

#### Results Framework/Logframe:

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project's logframe indicators and targets, assess how "SMART" the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.
- Are the project's objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
- Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women's empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
- Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART 'development' indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits, also considering the impact of COVID.

#### ii. Progress Towards Results

##### Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix and following the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; colour code progress in a "traffic light system" based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as "Not on target to be achieved" (red).

Table. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of outcomes against End-of-project Targets)

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1st PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
<b>Objective:</b>	Indicator (if applicable):							
<b>Outcome 2:</b>	Indicator 1:							
	Indicator 2:							
<b>Outcome 4:</b>	Indicator 3:							
	Indicator 4:							
	Etc.							
<b>Etc.</b>								

##### Indicator Assessment Key

Green= Achieved	Yellow= On target to be achieved	Red= Not on target to be achieved
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In addition to the progress towards outcomes analysis:

- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project.
- By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

#### iii. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

##### Management Arrangements:

- Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Do the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner and/or UNDP and other partners have the capacity to deliver benefits to or involve women? If yes, how?
- What is the gender balance of project staff? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in project staff?

- What is the gender balance of the Project Board? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in the Project Board?

#### Work Planning

- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.
- Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
- Examine the use of the project's results framework/ logframe as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start.

#### Finance and co-finance:

- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
- Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
- Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?
- Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out by the Commissioning Unit and project team, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financer	Type of Co-financing	Co-financing amount confirmed at CEO Endorsement (US\$)	Actual Amount Contributed at stage of Midterm Review (US\$)	Actual % of Expected Amount
		<b>TOTAL</b>			

- Include the separate GEF Co-Financing template (filled out by the Commissioning Unit and project team) which categorizes each co-financing amount as 'investment mobilized' or 'recurrent expenditures'. (This template will be annexed as a separate file.)

#### Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:

- Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
- Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were incorporated in monitoring systems. See Annex 9 of *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for further guidelines.

#### Stakeholder Engagement

- Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
- Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?
- Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?

- How does the project engage women and girls? Is the project likely to have the same positive and/or negative effects on women and men, girls and boys? Identify, if possible, legal, cultural, or religious constraints on women's participation in the project. What can the project do to enhance its gender benefits?

#### **Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)**

- Validate the risks identified in the project's most current SESP, and those risks' ratings; are any revisions needed?
- Summarize and assess the revisions made since CEO Endorsement/Approval (if any) to:
  - The project's overall safeguards risk categorization.
  - The identified types of risks<sup>[1]</sup> (in the SESP).
  - The individual risk ratings (in the SESP) .
- Describe and assess progress made in the implementation of the project's social and environmental management measures as outlined in the SESP submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval (and prepared during implementation, if any), including any revisions to those measures. Such management measures might include Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) or other management plans, though can also include aspects of a project's design; refer to Question 6 in the SESP template for a summary of the identified management measures.
- A given project should be assessed against the version of UNDP's safeguards policy that was in effect at the time of the project's approval.

#### **Reporting:**

- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.
- Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PIRs, if applicable?)
- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.
- Communications & Knowledge Management:
- Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?
- Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)
- For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project's progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.
- List knowledge activities/products developed (based on knowledge management approach approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval).

#### **iv. Sustainability**

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Register are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why.
- In addition, assess the following risks to sustainability:

##### **Financial risks to sustainability:**

- What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)?

##### **Socio-economic risks to sustainability**

- Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

#### Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability

- Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.

#### Environmental risks to sustainability

- Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?

### Conclusions & Recommendations (including recommendations for exit strategy)

Evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings, should be a part of the MTR report.

Additionally, the National Consultant (as a part of the MTR team) is expected to make recommendations to the Project Team. Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. Recommendations should also be proposed for exit strategy for the project. A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for guidance on a recommendation table.

There should be no more than 15 recommendations in total.

#### Ratings

The ratings of the project's results and brief descriptions of the associated achievements will be recorded in a *MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table* in the Executive Summary of the MTR report. [Annex E](#) for ratings scales. No rating on Project Strategy and no overall project rating is required.

Table. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for SECURE Himalaya Project

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A	
Progress Towards Results	Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 2 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 3 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 4 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Etc.	
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
Sustainability	(rate 4 pt. scale)	

### Competencies

#### 1. TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the assignment would be 36 working days over a time period of 04 months and shall not exceed three months from when the consultant(s) are hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF WORKING DAYS	COMPLETION DATE
Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report (MTR Inception Report due no later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission)	5 days	20 December 2021
Review and finalization of Inception Report based on the comments received from the Commissioning Unit	1 day	10 January 2022
MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, virtual missions	15 days	28 February 2022
Presentation of initial findings- last day of the MTR mission	1 day	10 March 2022
Preparing draft report (due within 2 weeks of the MTR mission)	10 days	5 April 2022
Finalization of MTR report/ Incorporating audit trail from feedback on draft report (due within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on the draft)	4 days	30 April 2022

Options for site visits should be provided in the Inception Report.

#### Required Skills and Experience

##### 1. MIDTERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES

•	•	•	•	•
1.	MTR Inception Report	MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review	No later than two weeks days before the MTR virtual mission	MTR team submits to the Commissioning Unit and project management
1.	Presentation of initial findings	Initial Findings	End of MTR mission	MTR Team presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit
1.	Draft MTR	Full draft report (using guideline	Within two weeks	Sent to the Commissioning

	<b>Report</b>	son content outlined in <a href="#">Annex B))</a> with annexes	ks of the MTR mission	Unit, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFF
1.	<b>Final Report*</b>	Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report	With in 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft	Sent to the Commissioning Unit

\*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

## 1. MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is UNDP India Country Office.

The Commissioning Unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and all necessary arrangements for the MTR team and will provide an updated stakeholder list with contact details (phone and email). The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

The MTR lead (International Consultant) will be responsible to conduct the MTR with the support of two national consultants. This will include designing appropriate methodology and strategy for carrying out this MTR. The National Consultant – Conservation will design the questionnaires related to Outcome 1 and Outcome 3 of the project for the interviews with the stakeholders and submit to the MTR lead. Considering the current COVID 19 situations in the country the Lead will undertake all the meetings and consultations virtually and shall not travel. The national consultant – Conservation shall travel in the select location in the project landscape and conduct field visits and support the Lead. The locations for field visits shall be finalized by the MTR team in consultation with the commissioning unit. The project teams shall facilitate the visit missions of national consultants.

### ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

The MTR team will be composed of three consultants including 01 team leader (International Consultant) and 02 national consultants (one for conservation and one for livelihoods) who shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. The National Consultants will be expected to conduct field missions in the select locations of UT of Ladakh (Changthang landscape), Himachal Pradesh (Lahual and Pangi), Uttarakhand (Gangotri-Govind and Darma Byans) and Sikkim (Khangchendzonga – Upper Teesta Landscape). The MTR team leader (International Consultant) will be designated team leader and shall be responsible for the overall design and writing of the MTR report and as well as the overall quality of the final report submitted to UNDP. However, the National Consultants shall support the Lead in drafting the report including all the data gathered from the field mission and interviews. The two national evaluators and a lead MTR consultant will be recruited separately; however, all three consultants shall form a team carrying out this MTR, under the overall guidance of the team leader and overall management of the Commissioning Unit.

The consultants cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

The selection of the National Consultant - Livelihoods will be aimed at maximizing the overall "team" qualities in the following areas:

Education (20% weightage)



- A Master's or Higher degree in Environment Sciences/Environment Policy/Biodiversity Conservation/Natural Resource Management/Social Sciences or any other related field

Experience (50% weightage)

- Minimum 10 years of relevant experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies
- Minimum 10 years of experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios
- Competence in adaptive management, as applied to Biodiversity focal area, Natural Resource Based Livelihoods and strengthening of community institutions
- Minimum 07 years of experience in evaluating GEF projects in India;
- Understanding of UNDP social and environmental standards and framework for application to project development and implementation
- At least 10 years of experience of working on sustainable natural resource management, biodiversity conservation, and strengthening of community institutions. Understanding/experience of linking livelihoods with renewable energy solutions will be desirable
- Understanding of issues related to gender biodiversity, sustainable livelihoods, land degradation and sustainable forest management, experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
- Excellent communication skills
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset
- Experience with implementing evaluations remotely will be considered an asset
- Good understanding of different geographies, socio-economy, environment and conservation issues in India and particularly in High Himalayas
- Fluency in written and spoken English.

#### 1. ETHICS

The National Consultant will be held to the highest ethical standards and is required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment ([ANNEX D](#)). This MTR will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The National Consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The National Consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the MTR and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information, knowledge and data gathered in the MTR process must also be solely used for the MTR and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

#### 1. PAYMENT SCHEDULE

- 20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final MTR Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit
- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the draft MTR report to the Commissioning Unit
- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final MTR report and approval by the Commissioning Unit and RTA (via signatures on the Clearance Form) and delivery of completed Audit Trail

Criteria for issuing the final payment of 40%:

- The final MTR report includes all requirements outlined in the MTR TOR and is in accordance with the MTR guidance.
- The final MTR report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other MTR reports).
- The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

The Commissioning Unit is obligated to issue payments to the MTR team as soon as the terms under the ToR are fulfilled. If there is an ongoing discussion regarding the quality and completeness of the final deliverables that cannot be resolved between the Commissioning Unit and the MTR team, the Regional M&E Advisor and Vertical Fund Directorate will be consulted. If needed, the Commissioning Unit's senior management, Procurement Services Unit and Legal Support Office will be notified as well so that a decision can be made about whether or

not to withhold payment of any amounts that may be due to the evaluator(s), suspend or terminate the contract and/or remove the individual contractor from any applicable rosters.

1. *Suggested additional text*

*In line with the UNDP's financial regulations, when determined by the Commissioning Unit and/or the consultant that a deliverable or service cannot be satisfactorily completed due to the impact of COVID-19 and limitations to the MTR, that deliverable or service will not be paid.*

*Due to the current COVID-19 situation and its implications, a partial payment may be considered if the consultant invested time towards the deliverable but was unable to complete to circumstances beyond his/her control.*

1. APPLICATION PROCESS

**Recommended Presentation of Proposal:**

**CV and a Personal History Form ([P11 form](#));**

**Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)

Technically qualified consultants will be requested to submit their Lumpsum rate i.e. consultants who score more than 70% i.e. 49 marks with respect to the above-mentioned evaluation criteria. **Consultant should not specify their consultancy fee on their CV or with the submission. The CV will not be evaluated further in case the consultant submits the same..**

All application materials should be submitted to the address (fill address) in a sealed envelope indicating the following reference "Consultant for (*project title*) Midterm Review" or by email at the

Engagement of the consultants should be done in line with guidelines for hiring consultants in the

POPP: <https://info.undp.org/global/popp/Pages/default.aspx>

[http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11\\_Personal\\_history\\_form.doc](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc)

following address ONLY: (fill email) This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it by (**time and date**). Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

**Criteria for Evaluation of Proposal:** Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted at 70% and the price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP's General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

**[ToR ANNEX A: List of Documents to be reviewed by the MTR Team](#)**

**[ToR ANNEX D: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants](#)**

**[ToR ANNEX E: MTR Ratings](#)**

**[ToR ANNEX F: MTR Report Clearance Form](#)**

**[ToR ANNEX G: Audit Trail Template](#)**

INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT - CONSERVATION

<b>Location :</b>	Home based with travel to project landscape if required, INDIA
<b>Application Deadline :</b>	26-Nov-21 ( <b>Midnight New York, USA</b> )
<b>Additional Category :</b>	Management
<b>Type of Contract :</b>	Individual Contract
<b>Post Level :</b>	National Consultant
<b>Languages Required :</b>	English
<b>Duration of Initial Contract :</b>	December 2021-April 2022

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UNDP does not tolerate sexual exploitation and abuse, any kind of harassment, including sexual harassment, and discrimination. All selected candidates will, therefore, undergo rigorous reference and background checks.

## **Background**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for - the Midterm Review (MTR) of the full-sized UNDP-supported GEF-financed project titled Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan Ecosystems (PIMS 3298) implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, with support of UNDP which is to be undertaken in 2021. The project started on the 1 April 2017 and is in its fourth year of implementation. This ToR sets out the expectations for the MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document [Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects](#)

### **2. PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

#### **[Project Background](#)**

### **3. MTR PURPOSE**

The MTR will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document, and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project's strategy and its risks to sustainability.

MTR will identify challenges and outline corrective actions to ensure that the project is on track to achieve maximum results by its completion. The results and recommendations from the MTR will be used by UNDP and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, to design and implement strategy and action plan for achieving desired outcomes under the project. The process will also help identify potential challenges and risks that will affect the project delivery. The MTR will also lay the foundation for a strong Terminal Evaluation (TE).

Likewise, the other parts of the country the project landscapes have been affected from the on-going pandemic and hence the several measures have been undertaken by the project to support the stakeholders especially w.r.t sustainable livelihoods. MTR will also assess the viability of the interventions *vis-à-vis* the project outcomes and expected results, identify the challenges related to the same and suggest appropriate measures.

### **4. MTR APPROACH & METHODOLOGY**

The MTR report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The MTR shall be conducted by one International Consultant supported by two National Consultants (one is responsible to look at conservation and IWT related aspects and one for livelihoods related component).

The National Consultant - Conservation will support the Lead (International Consultant) in reviewing all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP), the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project budget revisions, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review. The National Consultant will review the baseline GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools that must be completed before the MTR mission begins.

The National Consultant is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office(s), Regional Technical Advisor, direct beneficiaries, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR. Stakeholder involvement should include interviews (virtual if required) with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State/UT Forest and Wildlife Departments, executing agencies, senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Considering the recent outbreak of COVID-19 led restrictions, virtual tools may be used for stakeholder consultations and evidence-based reporting of results. However, the National Consultant- Conservation is expected to conduct field missions to the UT of Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim (India) following the COVID 19 guidelines issued

by Central and State Governments.

The specific design and methodology for the MTR should emerge from consultations between the MTR team and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the MTR purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions. However, gender-responsive methodologies and tools should be used to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the MTR report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the MTR must be clearly outlined in the Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders and the MTR team.

The final MTR report must describe the full MTR approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Evaluation strategies and techniques, see [UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results](#), 05 Nov 2013.

For more stakeholder engagement in the M&E process, see the [UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 3, pg. 93.

Considering the pandemic situation the MTR Lead (International Consultant) may not be able to travel to or within the country for the MTR mission. The National Consultant- Conservation should travel to the project states and landscapes. However, in case of travel restrictions (if any), the National Consultant in consultation with the team lead will develop a methodology that takes this into account the conduct of the MTR virtually and remotely, including the use of remote interview methods and extended desk reviews, data analysis, surveys and evaluation questionnaires. This should be detailed in the MTR Inception Report and agreed with the Commissioning Unit.

If a data collection/field mission is not possible then remote interviews may be undertaken through telephone or online (skype, zoom etc.). If all or part of the MTR is to be carried out virtually then consideration should be taken for stakeholder availability, ability or willingness to be interviewed remotely. In addition, their accessibility to the internet/computer may be an issue as many government and national counterparts may be working from home. These limitations must be reflected in the final MTR report.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

### **DETAILED SCOPE OF THE MTR**

The National Consultant - Conservation will assess the following four categories of project progress against Component I (Improved management of high Himalayan landscapes for conservation of Snow Leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services) and Component III (Enhanced enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife related threats).

See the *Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for extended descriptions.

#### **i. Project Strategy**

Project design:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)?

- Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design. See Annex 9 of *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for further guidelines.
  - Were relevant gender issues (e.g. the impact of the project on gender equality in the programme country, involvement of women's groups, engaging women in project activities) raised in the Project Document?
- Review the impact of COVID in the landscape and on the project implementation
- If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement.

#### Results Framework/Logframe:

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project's logframe indicators and targets, assess how "SMART" the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.
- Are the project's objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
- Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women's empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
- Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART 'development' indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits, also considering the impact of COVID.

## ii. Progress Towards Results

#### Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

- Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix and following the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; colour code progress in a "traffic light system" based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as "Not on target to be achieved" (red).

Table. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of outcomes against End-of-project Targets)

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1st PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment	Achievement Rating
Objective:	Indicator (if applicable):						
Outcome 1:	Indicator 1:						
	Indicator 2:						
Outcome 3:	Indicator 3:						
	Indicator 4:						
	Etc.						
Etc.							

#### Indicator Assessment Key

Green= Achieved	Yellow= On target to be achieved	Red= Not on target to be achieved
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In addition to the progress towards outcomes analysis:

- Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool/Core Indicators at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review.
- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project.
- By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

### iii. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Management Arrangements:

- Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Do the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner and/or UNDP and other partners have the capacity to deliver benefits to or involve women? If yes, how?
- What is the gender balance of project staff? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in project staff?
- What is the gender balance of the Project Board? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in the Project Board?

Work Planning

- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.
- Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
- Examine the use of the project's results framework/ logframe as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start.

Finance and co-finance:

- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
- Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
- Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?
- Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out by the Commissioning Unit and project team, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?
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Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financer	Type of Co-financing	Co-financing amount confirmed at CEO Endorsement (US\$)	Actual Amount Contributed at stage of Midterm Review (US\$)	Actual % of Expected Amount

		<b>TOTAL</b>			

- Include the separate GEF Co-Financing template (filled out by the Commissioning Unit and project team) which categorizes each co-financing amount as 'investment mobilized' or 'recurrent expenditures'. (This template will be annexed as a separate file.)

#### Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:

- Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
- Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were incorporated in monitoring systems. See Annex 9 of *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for further guidelines.

#### Stakeholder Engagement

- Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
- Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?
- Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?
- How does the project engage women and girls? Is the project likely to have the same positive and/or negative effects on women and men, girls and boys? Identify, if possible, legal, cultural, or religious constraints on women's participation in the project. What can the project do to enhance its gender benefits?

#### Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

- Validate the risks identified in the project's most current SESP, and those risks' ratings; are any revisions needed?
- Summarize and assess the revisions made since CEO Endorsement/Approval (if any) to:
  - The project's overall safeguards risk categorization.
  - The identified types of risks (in the SESP).
  - The individual risk ratings (in the SESP).
- Describe and assess progress made in the implementation of the project's social and environmental management measures as outlined in the SESP submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval (and prepared during implementation, if any), including any revisions to those measures. Such management measures might include Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) or other management plans, though can also include aspects of a project's design; refer to Question 6 in the SESP template for a summary of the identified management measures.

A given project should be assessed against the version of UNDP's safeguards policy that was in effect at the time of the project's approval.

#### Reporting:

- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.
- Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PIRs, if applicable?)

- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

#### Communications & Knowledge Management:

Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when

Risks are to be labeled with both the UNDP SES Principles and Standards, and the GEF's "types of risks and potential impacts": Climate Change and Disaster; Disadvantaged or Vulnerable Individuals or Groups; Disability Inclusion; Adverse Gender-Related impact, including Gender-based Violence and Sexual Exploitation; Biodiversity Conservation and the Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources; Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement; Indigenous Peoples; Cultural Heritage; Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention; Labor and Working Conditions; Community Health, Safety and Security.

- communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?
- Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)
- For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project's progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.
- List knowledge activities/products developed (based on knowledge management approach approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval).

#### iv. Sustainability

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Register are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why.
- In addition, assess the following risks to sustainability:

##### Financial risks to sustainability:

- What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)?

##### Socio-economic risks to sustainability

- Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

##### Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability

- Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.



## Environmental risks to sustainability

- Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?

## Conclusions & Recommendations (including recommendations for exit strategy)

Evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings, should be a part of the MTR report.

Additionally, the National Consultant (as a part of the MTR team) is expected to make recommendations to the Project Team. Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. Recommendations should also be proposed for exit strategy for the project. A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for guidance on a recommendation table.

There should be no more than 15 recommendations in total.

## Ratings

The ratings of the project's results and brief descriptions of the associated achievements will be recorded in a *MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table* in the Executive Summary of the MTR report. See [Annex E](#) for ratings scales. No rating on Project Strategy and no overall project rating is required.

Table. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for SECURE Himalaya Project

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A	
Progress Towards Results	Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 3 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Etc.	
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
Sustainability	(rate 4 pt. scale)	

## Competencies

### 1. TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the assignment would be 36 working days over a time period of 04 months and shall not exceed three months from when the consultant(s) are hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF WORKING DAYS	COMPLETION DAT
Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report (MTR Inception Report due no later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission)	5 days	20 December 2021
Review and finalization of Inception Report based on the comments received from the Commissioning Unit	1 day	10 January 2022
MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, virtual missions	15 days	28 February 2022
Presentation of initial findings- last day of the MTR mission	1 day	10 March 2022
Preparing draft report (due within 2 weeks of the MTR mission)	10 days	5 April 2022
Finalization of MTR report/ Incorporating audit trail from feedback	4 days	30 April 2022

on draft report (due within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on the draft)		
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Options for site visits should be provided in the Inception Report.

## Required Skills and Experience

### 1. MIDTERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES

Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
<b>MTR Inception Report</b>	MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review	No later than two weeks days before the MTR virtual mission	MTR team submits to the Commissioning Unit and project management
<b>Presentation</b>	Initial Findings	End of MTR mission	MTR Team presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit
<b>Draft MTR Report</b>	Full draft report (using guidelines on content outlined in <a href="#">Annex B</a> ) with annexes	Within two weeks of the MTR mission	Sent to the Commissioning Unit, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFF
<b>Final Report*</b>	Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft	Sent to the Commissioning Unit

The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

### 1. MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is UNDP India Country Office.

The Commissioning Unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and all necessary arrangements for the MTR team and will provide an updated stakeholder list with contact details (phone and email). The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

The MTR lead (International Consultant) will be responsible to conduct the MTR with the support of two national consultants. This will include designing appropriate methodology and strategy for carrying out this MTR. The National Consultant – Conservation will design the questionnaires related to Outcome 1 and Outcome 3 of the project for the interviews with the stakeholders and submit to the MTR lead. Considering the current COVID 19 situations in the country the Lead will undertake all the meetings and consultations virtually and shall not travel. The national consultant – Conservation shall travel in the select location in the project landscape and conduct field visits and support the Lead. The locations for field visits shall be finalized by the MTR team in consultation with the commissioning unit. The project teams shall facilitate the visit missions of national consultants.

### 1. ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

The MTR team will be composed of three consultants including 01 team leader (International Consultant ) and 02 national consultants (one for conservation and one for livelihoods ) who shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. The National Consultants will be expected to conduct field missions in the select locations of UT of Ladakh (Changthang landscape )Himachal Pradesh (Lahual and Pangi), Uttarakhand (Gangotri-Govind and Darma Byans) and Sikkim (Khangchendzonga – Upper Teesta Landscape). The MTR team leader (International Consultant) will be designated team leader and shall be responsible for the overall design

and writing of the TE report and as well as the overall quality of the final report submitted to UNDP. However, the National Consultants shall support the Lead in drafting the report including all the data gathered from the field mission and interviews. The two national evaluators and a lead MTR consultant will be recruited separately; however, all three consultants shall form a team carrying out this MTR, under the overall guidance of the team leader and overall management of the Commissioning Unit.

The consultants cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document ) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

The selection of the National Consultant will be aimed at maximizing the overall "team" qualities in the following areas:

#### Education (20% weightage)

- A Master's degree or higher in Environment Sciences, Biodiversity conservation, Wildlife Conservation, Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Land and Forest Management or any other related field

#### Experience (50% weightage)

- Minimum 10 years of relevant experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies;
- Minimum 10 years of experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
- Competence in adaptive management, as applied to Biodiversity focal area, Wildlife Conservation, Land Degradation and Sustainable Forest Management
- Minimum 07 years of experience in evaluating GEF projects in India
- Demonstrated understanding of UNDP social and environmental standards and framework for application to project development and implementation.
- Atleast 15 years of experience of working on biodiversity conservation, wildlife crime and related issues of Indian Himalayan Region.
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender biodiversity, wildlife conservation, land degradation and sustainable forest management experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
- Excellent communication skills;
- Demonstrable analytical skills;
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset;
- Experience with implementing evaluations remotely will be considered an asset;
- Good understanding of different geographies, environment and conservation issues in India and particularly in the high-altitude Himalayan landscapes.
- Fluency in written and spoken English.

#### 1. ETHICS

The National Consultant will be held to the highest ethical standards and is required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment ([ANNEX D](#)). This MTR will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The National Consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The National Consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the MTR and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information, knowledge and data gathered in the MTR process must also be solely used for the MTR and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

#### 1. PAYMENT SCHEDULE

- 20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final MTR Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit
- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the draft MTR report to the Commissioning Unit

- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final MTR report and approval by the Commissioning Unit and RTA (via signatures on the Clearance Form) and delivery of completed Audit Trail

Criteria for issuing the final payment of 40%:

- The final MTR report includes all requirements outlined in the MTR TOR and is in accordance with the MTR guidance.
- The final MTR report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other MTR reports).
- The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

1. *Suggested additional text*

*In line with the UNDP's financial regulations, when determined by the Commissioning Unit and/or the consultant that a deliverable or service cannot be satisfactorily completed due to the impact of COVID-19 and limitations to the MTR, that deliverable or service will not be paid.*

*Due to the current COVID-19 situation and its implications, a partial payment may be considered if the consultant invested time towards the deliverable but was unable to complete to circumstances beyond his/her control.*

## APPLICATION PROCESS

### Recommended Presentation of Proposal:

1. CV and a **Personal History Form** ([P11 form](#));
2. **Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)
3. Technically qualified consultants will be requested to submit their Lumpsum rate i.e. consultants who score more than 70% i.e. 49 marks with respect to the above-mentioned evaluation criteria. **Consultant should not specify their consultancy fee on their CV or with the submission. The CV will not be evaluated further in case the consultant submits the same.**

All application materials should be submitted to the address (fill address) in a sealed envelope indicating the following reference "Consultant for (*project title*) Midterm Review" or by email at the following address ONLY: (fill email) This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it by (**time and date**). Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

**Criteria for Evaluation of Proposal:** Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted at 70% and the price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP's General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

[ToR ANNEX A: List of Documents to be reviewed by the MTR Team](#)

[ToR ANNEX D: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants](#)

[ToR ANNEX E: MTR Ratings](#)

[ToR ANNEX F: MTR Report Clearance Form](#)

[ToR ANNEX G: Audit Trail Template](#)

### Annex 11: Signed MTR final report clearance form

<b>Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:</b>	
<b>Commissioning Unit</b>	
Name:	
Signature:	Date:
<b>UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor</b>	
Name:	
Signature:	Date:

# SECURING LIVELIHOODS, CONSERVATION, SUSTAINABLE USE, AND RESTORATION OF HIGH RANGE HIMALAYAN ECOSYSTEMS (SECURE HIMALAYA), UNDP India

**Response to comments on draft MTR report  
Prepared by Dr Eklabya Sharma, December 2022**

Author	Location	Comment received	MTR team response
Amees Misra (AM)	Overall Comments from CO	It is important that a rationale be provided for selecting the areas for the implementation of the project. The current draft does not include one. The rationale could include the area's demographics, percentage of total high-altitude landscape covered to evaluate the impact of project. (UNEG 4.3)	Rationale has been now added in "Project Description" section. Actual area of high-altitude landscape conservation impacted is provided. However, demographic figures are difficult to calculate in terms of beneficiaries as these benefit a large population both in mountains and downstream. A sentence on how much people is benefited is mentioned.
AM	Overall Comments from CO	The summary of conclusion section is poorly structured (UNEG 1.0). Specifically, a) The timelines have not been mentioned clearly and b) the overall message remains weak.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Timelines were clearly mentioned in the Project Progress Summary. However now a brief mention on timeline is made.</li> <li>b) Improved by adding some specific points on gender and social inclusion, MTR approach and process followed, and broad areas for focusing on improvement of indicators and institutionalization and sustainability. Many things given in sub-sections of Executive Summary like project summary, ratings, recommendations are avoided to be added in Summary of Conclusion for not repeating.</li> </ul>
AM	Overall Comments from CO	In the report, the scope and methodology section does not focus on gender and human rights. (UNEG 3.4)	Added a sub-section (1.4) on Gender and Social Inclusion under "Scope and Methodology".
AM	Overall Comments from CO	The report fails to cover the political, socio-economic, institutional, and regulatory context of India. It only covers the country and environmental context. (UNEG 2.2)	Now, 1.1 title has been modified as Country, Environment and Social-Political Context; hence a sub-title on "Social-Political Context" added especially for the Indian Himalayan region. Some relevant policies related to project are also included in this section

Author	Location	Comment received	MTR team response
AM	Overall Comments from CO	The report's result table can incorporate gender and other marginalized areas mainstreaming in the gender. (e.g., gender disaggregated data) (UNEG 3.4)	In a number of places gender dimensions are now added under the head "Midterm status". Unfortunately, not much gender disaggregated information exists.
AM	Overall Comments from CO	The 'supporting evidence' sub-section under the 'sustainability' section needs to be better structured as the overall stance is unclear. Actions on improving sustainability to be added (UNEG 1.0)	Now included on what need to be focused in the remaining period of the project and areas to improve for sustainability under the sub-section 'supporting evidence'
AM	Overall Comments from CO	The annex provides the list of interviews held but the report does not provide a complete description of stakeholder's consultation process in the evaluation, including the rationale for selecting the level and activities for consultation (UNEG 4.4). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The results which were assessed against the SMART criteria, have been systematically presented. However, the section doesn't identify the reasons for accomplishments and failures. (UNEG 5.5)</li> </ul>	Now this is added in 'Scope and methodology' 1.2. Described stakeholder consultation processes, levels and purposes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Now added for all the four outcomes after the results table in the description part.</li> </ul>
Nittaya Saengow (NS)	Track Change Inputs in MTR Report	Detailed comments and formatting changes in track change mode were made in the MTR Report.	<b>All the suggestions and remarks given in the track changes of the draft MTR report by UNDP have been incorporated in the final report. There were 3 suggestions where the reasons are provided below why they have been left out.</b>
NS	Track Change Inputs in MTR Report	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Minor suggestion to move "Abbreviations and Acronyms" after the ToC, for easy reference.</li> <li>2) Table 10 – Midterm assessment progress towards global environmental benefits – suggestion was made to add a third column on 'midterm target'</li> <li>3) In the context of Annex 5 "Evaluation Matrix" a suggestion was made to add questionnaire.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) I attempted but it doesn't make sense to move this section in the middle of the report. Therefore, retained it in its original place.</li> <li>2) The midterm target is not given for this part anywhere, hence left out. However, for objective and four outcomes third column on midterm target has added now for comparison of midterm status.</li> <li>3) This matrix in the first column has all the questions broken down by objectives, outcome, project strategy, project implementation, adaptive management and sustainability. Since all questions are clearly mentioned in the matrix the additional questionnaire may not be necessary.</li> </ol>

