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## Terminal Evaluation Report

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### Enhancing Conservation of Globally Significant Biodiversity Through Protected Area System Strengthening in Gansu

#### China Protected Areas System Reform (CPAR) Program - Child Project #2

UNDP PIMS ID: 5689

GEF Project ID: 9465

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<b>Country:</b>	China
<b>Region:</b>	East Asia
<b>GEF Focal Areas:</b>	Biodiversity
<b>Implementing Agency:</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>Executive:</b>	Gansu Forestry & Grassland Bureau
<b>Implementation:</b>	National Implementation Modality
<b>Project Timeframe:</b>	January 2019 – February 2024

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**Exhibits:**

- Exhibit 1: Project Information Table
- Exhibit 2: Ratings Summary Table
- Exhibit 3: Ratings & Achievement Summary Table
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**Disclaimer**

The TE views were discussed with UNDP, the Implementing Partner – Gansu Forestry & Grassland Bureau (FGB), Project Board members, local government partners and other key stakeholders. There was a debriefing held to present views and refine findings. UNDP, the Project Management Office (PMO), and the Gansu FGB provided comment on the draft report before finalization.

The views held within this report are those of the TE team.

**Acknowledgement**

The Terminal Evaluation Team would like to acknowledge all UNDP and project staff and partners who supported this evaluation of the project.

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

BSAP	Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan
CBD	UN Convention on Biological Diversity
CCC	Community Co-management Committee (one of each of the 4 NRs)
DoF	Gansu Department of Finance
EA	Executing Agency (Gansu Department of Finance / Gansu FGB)
ECA	Ecological Corridor Area
FFWMC	Gansu Forest Fire Prevention Warning & Monitoring Information Centre (of Gansu FGB)
FGB	Gansu Province Forest & Grassland Bureau
FYP	Gansu 14 <sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GPNP	Giant Panda National Park (under development)
HWC	Human wildlife conflict
IA	GEF Implementing Agency (UNDP)
IGAs	Income Generating Activities
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
KBA	Key Biodiversity Area (IUCN classification)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
METT	GEF PA Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MEE	Ministry of Ecology & Environment; DEE – Gansu Department of EE
MTR	Mid-term review (of the project)
NIM	National Implementation Modality (which was partly UNDP-supported for this project)
NFPP	Natural Forest Protection Programme
NP	National Park (a PA under varying levels of nature conservation) – under state control
NR	Nature Reserve (a PA under strict nature conservation – IUCN classification) – Provincial control, otherwise referred to as National NR
NTFP	Non-timber forest product
PA	Protected Area (for biodiversity conservation – includes NPs and NRs)
PCO	Project Coordination Office (of DoF)
PIF	GEF Project Identification Form (concept note application / approval)
PIMS	UNDP Project Information Management System
PIR	Project Implementation Report (UNDP reporting method to GEF)
PMO	Project Management Office (Gansu FGB managed)
PPG	GEF Project Preparation Grant to prepare the prodoc
prodoc	Project Document (for this project)
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PWF	Public Welfare Forest
Quantum	UNDP management & tracking system
SFGA	State Forestry & Grassland Administration (under MNR)
SFU	State Forestry Unit (a.k.a Forest Farm, formerly forestry enterprises)
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (for logframe indicators)
Smart	Spatial Monitoring & Reporting Tool (wildlife / crime monitoring method used by the project)
Smart	Internet-connected telemetric data transfer (i.e. any device with a SIM card connected to a cell tower)
TE	Terminal Evaluation (of the project)
TYWPB	Two-year Work Plan & Budget (every two years)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme (GEF Implementing Agency, member of PSC)
VAC	Village Administrative Committee (lowest level of government)
WQMM	West Qinling Mountains - Minshan Mountains landscape
<b>Units</b>	m - million or meters; ha - hectare (100 m x 100 metres); 1 ha = 15 mu; 1 km <sup>2</sup> = 100 ha China currency ~7 CNY / RMB / Yuan = 1US\$

## Executive Summary

The executive summary is a 11-page summary of the Terminal Evaluation (TE) report.

Project Title:	UNDP-GEF Enhancing conservation of globally significant biodiversity through protected area system strengthening in Gansu		
UNDP Project ID:	5689	PIF Approval	October 2016
TF ID:	9465	CEO Endorsement	November 2018
Country	China	Project Document (ProDoc) Signature	January 2019
Region	Gansu	Project manager hired	February 2019
Focal Area	Biodiversity	Inception Workshop	May 2019
Strategic Programs	BD-1. 1 - Financial Sustainability of Ecological Infrastructure; BD-1.2 - Expanding the Global PA Estate	Terminal Evaluation	Sept - Oct 2023
Trust Fund	GEF	Operational Closure	January 2024
Modality	NIM		
Executing Agency / Implementing Partner	Gansu Forest & Grassland Bureau (FGB)		
Other Partners / Responsible Parties	UNDP, Gansu Department of Finance		
Project Financing:	at CEO endorsement (USD)	at Terminal Evaluation (USD)*	
[1] TF financing:	2,652,294	1,959,873	
[2] UNDP contribution:	45,000	36,000	
[3] Government:	18,000,000	24,696,300	
[4] Other partners:	0	0	
[5] Total cofinancing [2 + 3+ 4]:	18,045,000	24,732,300	
PROJECT TOTAL COSTS [1 + 5]	20,697,294	26,692,173	

\*By End-June 2023, government co-financing was US\$24,696,300 (of which US\$24,553,443 was in-kind, and US\$142,857 was in cash; with UNDP co-financing at US\$36,000 (Source PMO Email to UNDP, 18 July 2023). TF spending (Source PMO GEF Expenditure table provided to TE)

### Project Description

#### Project Description

The full-sized UNDP-supported, GEF-financed project was titled 'Enhancing Conservation of Globally Significant Biodiversity Through Protected Area System Strengthening in Gansu' - China Protected Areas System Reform (CPAR) Program Child Project #2 (PIMS#5689).

#### Issues that the project was designed to address

West Qinling - Minshan Mountains (WQMM) landscape lies within one of the world's 25 biodiversity hotspots, with globally significant species now confined to small areas, including the Giant panda, Sichuan (snub-nosed) golden monkey, and alpine musk deer. GEF funding was to strengthen institutional capacity of Gansu and the PA sub-system of WQMM landscape to enforce protection laws, mainstream biodiversity conservation and improve the effectiveness of the PA system with protection and restoration of wildlife habitats. In addition, the project was to create a system for monitoring the status of significant species, and to demonstrate an eco-compensation scheme to mitigate damage by wildlife.

#### Project Location

The project was located in WQMM landscape, within four Protected Areas (PAs). Three of the four project PAs are provincial nature reserves (NRs), namely Axia, Yuhe, Chaganliang, while Duoer NR was upgraded to national NR in 2017. Many of the NR staff in Axia and Chaganliang NRs were former state forest enterprise workers before the change in land use. All four NRs face gaps in capacity and funding. The project was also located within two State Forest Units (SFUs) in Liangdang and Hezheng counties, where key Ecological Corridor Areas (ECAs) for

wildlife exist. These SFUs are managed by county Forest & Grassland Bureaus (FGBs).

The government's Natural Forest Protection Programme (NFPP) has been on-going since 1999 in the WQMM landscape. About 80% of funds are used to pay staff, with funds for the NRs (Axia, Chagangliang and Yuhe) and the SFUs in Liangdang and Hezheng Counties primarily rely on this program. The four PAs are Giant panda areas, with Yuhe NR being the main corridor linking the Minshan and Qinling Mountains. Funds provided by the NFPP is supporting the protection and rehabilitation of habitats in these corridor areas, as well as Liangdang and Hezheng Counties.

### Project Management

The project started in January 2019 and is in its 5<sup>th</sup> year of implementation and is due to close in February 2024. The 5-year UNDP-GEF project was under National Implementation Modality (NIM), with the Gansu Forestry and Grassland Bureau (FGB) as the Executing Entity and designated Implementing Partner (IP). The project was overseen by a Project Steering Committee (PSC), chaired by Gansu FGB (representing ownership of the project), as the Executive. The Project Director was the Deputy Director of the Foreign Affairs Cooperation Division of the FGB. This allowed the project to function within Gansu government, remembering that the PM position is an externally recruited consultant position.

The project implementation team was formed according to UNDP procedure, to include a Project Manager (PM), a Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and two coordinators. The Project Management Office (PMO) was based at the FGB in Lanzhou. Coordination amongst provincial government agencies was facilitated by the International Division of Gansu Department of finance (DoF), who were also responsible for fund disbursement. PA Coordination Teams were located at the project demonstration sites within the WQMM landscape.

### **Purpose and Methodology**

The objective of the Terminal Evaluation (TE) was to gain an independent analysis of the achievement of the project at completion, as well as to assess its sustainability and impact. The report focuses on assessing outcomes and project management. The TE additionally considered accountability and transparency, and provided lessons-learned for future projects, in terms of selection, design and implementation. The report is in six sections - introduction, description, findings, sustainability, impact and conclusions / recommendations. The findings (Section 3) are additionally divided into strategy and design, implementation and management, and results.

The overall approach and methodology of the evaluation followed the guidelines outlined in UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects (2020). The TE was an evidence-based assessment and relied on feedback from persons who were involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project. The TE interacted with the PMO project staff, the UNDP Country Office as well as with the project executive (FGB) and other stakeholders such as PA staff, SFUs, local government, community leaders and farmers. The TE visited the project area to interact with local administrators, technical staff and beneficiaries. Gaining a representative view from local stakeholders was not limited, although gaining access to the PAs and natural resource use areas was limited due to the short period in the field and the long travel distances between sites and meetings.

### **Evaluation Ratings Summary**

GEF UNDP projects of this type require the TE to evaluate the implementation according to set parameters and ratings. The summary ratings of this evaluation are presented:<sup>1</sup>

**Exhibit 2: TE Ratings Summary Table**

<b>1. Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E)</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>2. Implementing Agency (UNDP) &amp; Executing Entity (Gansu FGB / PMO) Execution</b>	<b>Rating</b>
<b>Overall quality of M&amp;E</b>	<b>MS</b>	<b>Overall quality of Implementation / Execution</b>	<b>S</b>
M&E Design at entry	MS	Quality of UNDP Implementation	S
M&E Implementation	MS	Quality of Execution – FGB / PMO	S
<b>3. Assessment of Outcomes</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>4. Sustainability</b>	<b>Rating</b>
<b>Overall Project Outcome (Objective)</b>	<b>MS</b>	<b>Overall Likelihood of Sustainability</b>	<b>MU</b>
Effectiveness of Outcome 1	MS	Financial resources	MU

<sup>1</sup> The GEF methodology for the ratings is presented in **Annex 9**

**Terminal Evaluation Report** - UNDP GEF Enhancing Conservation of Globally Significant Biodiversity Through Protected Area System Strengthening in Gansu - CPAR Program Child Project #2

Effectiveness of Outcome 2	S	Socio-economic	MU
Effectiveness of Outcome 3	S	Institutional framework & governance	MU
		Environmental	MU
Efficiency	MS		
Relevance	S		

Ratings Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU); For Sustainability: Likely (L); Moderately Likely (ML); Moderately Unlikely (MU); Unlikely (U)

A detailed summary of the project is presented below.

**Exhibit 3: TE Ratings and Achievement Summary Table**

Project: <b>UNDP GEF</b> Enhancing Conservation of Globally Significant Biodiversity Through Protected Area System Strengthening in Gansu - CPAR Program Child Project #2 (GEF ID: 9465; PIMS ID: 5689)			
<b>Achievement Description &amp; TE Rating</b>			
<b>Outcomes/ Results</b>			
Overall Project Objective Achievement - The overall grading is <b>Moderately Satisfactory</b>			
<b>Objective: Conservation of significant biodiversity through improved legal &amp; institutional framework, reform and mainstreaming the PA system, enhancing habitat connectivity and reducing key threats</b> (3 indicators)			
The overall grading is Moderately Satisfactory. There were three indicators attached to the objective level which rated as: satisfactory; moderately satisfactory (1); and moderately unsatisfactory (1). The Satisfactory indicator concerned the numbers of PA staff and community members trained, which including for women was good and exceeded targets; the MS rating was for expansion of the PA network which included the project-outlined ECAs being encompassed within national park (NP) or public welfare forest (PWF) areas. The MU rating concerned the status of threatened species which for snow leopard the data was insufficient and for Giant panda, their numbers fell.			
<u>Number of direct project beneficiaries</u> (Indicator 1)			
There were 4,015 (49% women) community persons trained in Axia, Chagangliang, Duoer and Yuhe NRs from a target of 3,800 (60% women)			
There were 1,770 (26% women) PAs staff trained from Gansu FGB, Bailongjiang FA, EAPC, PAs and ECAs from a target of 750 (40% women). This indicated 460 women were trained, which as a percentage of the target of 750 persons trained, is 61%			
<u>Ecological Corridor Areas (ECAs) and PA System expanded by &gt;25,000 ha, with increased coverage of KBAs</u> (Indicator 2)			
The were four ECAs established:			
	<b>Proposed ECA</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>Legal Status of ECA</b>
<b>Yuhe ECA (C1)</b>	ECA between Baishuijiang NNR and Yuhe NR which was community forest land	7,426 ha	ECA integrated in to Panda NP
<b>Chagangliang ECA (C2)</b>	ECA between two parts of Chagangliang NR and belongs to a SFU	6,920 ha	ECA integrated in to Public Welfare Forest (PWF)
<b>Hezheng Forest ECA (C3)</b>	Adjacent to Taizishan NNR and belongs to a SFU	13,767 ha	ECA integrated into Public Welfare Forest
<b>Liangdang County ECA (C4)</b>	ECA between Lingguanxia NR and belongs to Xiaolongshan SFU	8,384 ha	ECA (1,419 ha) included in Lingguanxia NR; ECA (4,064 ha) included in PWF
The view of the project is that these proposed ECAs have now gained a form of conservation status. Before the project, these areas were located outside PAs and were not included in the scope of PWF. Now the proposed areas are either included in PA or in PWF, which means that there should be specific funds for conservation and restoration, monitoring and patrolling and wildlife conservation regulations.			
It should be remembered that the ECAs are a conservation tool and in this case a project-construct. There were no actual ECAs designated, just areas that were identified as important to be protected as wildlife corridor area. Thereafter, the project-proposed ECAs were redefined as standard conservation or natural resource protection areas in terms of NP or PWF.			
<u>Threatened Species</u> (Indicator 3)			
The result that stood out was the wide confidence level in the estimated number of snow leopard. This was most worrying in terms of management effectiveness (for seasonal habitat and prey species maintenance). The other concerning result was the apparent loss of Giant panda and its habitat at present.			
Effectiveness – Outcome 1 Achievement - <b>Moderately Satisfactory</b>			
<b>Outcome 1 - Legal framework for PAs, Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and Threatened Species</b> (5 indicators)			
There were five indicators attached to the Outcome 1 level which were rated as: satisfactory (1), moderately satisfactory (3), and moderately unsatisfactory (1). The expected results from Outcome 1 included: Five biodiversity-related laws revised			

with the provision for KBAs and threatened species, , with biodiversity also mainstreamed into the 14<sup>th</sup> Gansu Five Year Plan (FYP); and financial sustainability for an expanded PA system.

The actual results from Outcome 1 were: One policy was updated – 14<sup>th</sup> FYP. There were four pieces of legislation updated to various degrees: Forest law (2021) revised; Wetland law and NP Administrative Measures were revised but on an interim or trial basis; and updates for the Environment Law were approved, but not enacted.

Laws and / or plans reflecting KBAs and ECAs, such as FGB’s draft plan for habitat connectivity and the Gansu BSAP were not approved, but rather pushed along to 2025 and required national level approval. Unfortunately, the approach taken was to wait for top-down future national plans first, when it would have been more appropriate for the project / FGB to engage in producing both these key project outputs as bottom-up plans to inform government. A Gansu PA financing plan was not prepared although financing plans for the four project NRs were produced. At the local level community co-management agreements were created with the communities adjacent or inside the four NRs

The most notable omission was the lack of presentation of the BSAP or any update of it. This was one of the key design features of the project, but it was not undertaken. It also was not under the direct remit of the project partner – FGB, but rather under the Department of Ecology & Environment (DEE).

Legal, policy & institutional frameworks reflect national policy for biodiversity conservation (Indicator 4)

Four pieces of legislation were updated: National Park Interim Administrative Measures (2022); Forest Law Implementation Measures (2021); Wetlands Management - Trial Implementation (2020); and Environmental Protection Regulations (2019).

The project started preparation of a new BSAP. It included a stronger focus on the recognition and designation of KBAs, however the BSAP was not promulgated as a legal document for implementation.

Laws for conservation and NR management with KBAs, reflecting responsible agency for monitoring & reporting (Indicator 5)

The legal framework to include KBAs and a ECA network in the PA system was not achieved. FGB drafted a plan for optimisation of PAs, however it will not be submitted to national government until 2025

Biodiversity conservation mainstreamed into the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP with protection of KBAs and threatened species (Indicator 6)

The BSAP was mainstreamed into the Gansu 14<sup>th</sup> FYP. The expectation of the indicator was that KBAs would be legally recognised or at least their areas included as conservation areas in planning, however the impact of inclusion of biodiversity protection in the higher-level FYP was difficult to determine. There was little evidence of KBAs being recognised.

To note, Indicators 4, 5 and 6 were very similar.

Administration of the PA System and threatened species conservation (Indicator 7)

Institutional capacity was improved through the development of professional competence standards, and training. Modules included: Implementation & management of ECAs; Smart patrol & law enforcement; Biodiversity monitoring; Information management; and Community-based natural resource management.

PA system financing gap (Indicator 8)

The reported annual PA System funding gap was US\$44.3 m. The project produced four NR financing plans, however, the plans were not government endorsed, with financing only agreed annually after FGB application to the Department of Finance (DoF).

**Effectiveness - Outcome 2 Achievement - Satisfactory**

**Outcome 2 - Strengthened WQMM PA and ECA network and reduction of threats**

The expected results of Outcome 2 were: An added 25,000 ha of PAs, including ECAs; and increased management effectiveness of four PAs with threats to biodiversity reduced. There were two indicators attached to the Outcome 2 level concerning management effectiveness and threat reduction, which were both rated as satisfactory. The management effectiveness results were good. Concerning the threat reduction in the four NRs, there were only minor shortcomings in attaining the project’s global objectives here. These were that there was little indication that a standardised monitoring system had been established for the four NRs. Also the target and result for the removal of cattle from Duo’er NR was too low. The expected result to expand PA estate by 25,000 ha was moved to Indicator 2.

Increased management effectiveness of the four NRs (Indicator 9)

According to the GEF METT self-assessment, the management effectiveness of the four NRs improved and surpassed the target. (Baseline 49%; Target 73%; and Result 78%).

Threats to biodiversity reduced at Nature Reserves (Indicator 10)

The statistic that stood out is the removal of only 1,064 (7%) grazing cattle from Duo’er NR, from a herd of 15,200 cattle. Furthermore the target was very low to begin - to remove 6% of the 15,200 head of cattle grazing in the NR (i.e. remove 912 head over period of five years). If the figures were accurate, then the reduction in cattle grazing from Axia NR also stood out with the removal of 10,991 (22%) grazing cattle. The reduction in fuelwood collection from Axia, Changangliang and Duo’er NRs was also impressive, if again monitoring indicates that these figures are sustainable post-project.

The project had not established an on-going standardised threat monitoring survey which was needed annually. Thus cattle numbers could easily return to previous or higher numbers. The four NRs signed co-management agreements with



communities in 2021.
<p>Effectiveness - Outcome 3 Achievement - <b>Satisfactory</b></p> <p><b>Outcome 3 - Knowledge Management, M&amp;E and Gender Mainstreaming</b> (2 indicators)</p> <p>There were two indicators attached to the Outcome 3 level which were both rated as satisfactory. The expected results for Outcome 3 were: 20 lessons learned disseminated on a CPAR project website; and Awareness of biodiversity conservation by government agencies and communities.</p> <p><u>Lessons learned</u> (Indicator 11)</p> <p>Three lessons from a target of 20 had been produced. The project is in process to create and post the remaining 13 lessons, and disseminate them.</p> <p><u>Awareness of biodiversity conservation by government and communities</u> (Indicator 12)</p> <p>The project undertook Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) surveys in 2020 and 2023, with an improvement reported over the period.</p>
<b>Efficiency</b>
<p><b>Efficiency Rating – Moderately Satisfactory</b></p> <p>Implementation proceeded as planned, albeit with delays due to covid. Cumulative financial delivery was on target. The timing of key implementation milestones and risk management measures were on track. The project was managed efficiently and effectively. However, there were moderate short-comings in the achievement of expected Outcomes. In particular the expectation for updating legislation was not fully achieved against the prodoc design. Whilst the training results were excellent, there was too much emphasis on the higher-level 14th FYP, and not on tangible actions such as wildlife monitoring data management and decision-making. Thus, the efficiency was rated as moderately satisfactory.</p>
<b>Relevance</b>
<p><b>Relevance Rating – Satisfactory</b></p> <p>The overall objective of the CPAR Program was to ‘transform China’s national PA system through systematic legal and institutional reform and innovation for conservation of globally significant biodiversity’. The components of CPAR included: Improved legal and institutional framework at national and provincial level; Systematic PAs planning; and Site level management and supervision standards raised for different PA types. The 2<sup>nd</sup> child project (CPAR2 – Gansu) included: Formulation of species conservation and recovery plans for key endangered species and their habitats; and Expansion and consolidation of the PA system by 25,000 ha in the WQMM landscape to increase connectivity and coverage of KBAs and habitats of threatened species in the PAs.</p> <p>The intervention was designed under international agreements (CBD, and Aichi targets 11 and 12). The expected outcomes were linked to GEF-6 focal areas: Biodiversity 1.1 - Financial sustainability &amp; effective management of national ecological infrastructure; and Biodiversity 1.2 - Expanding the global PA estate. The project was in-line with national biodiversity conservation planning and UNDP country programming. The project design remained highly relevant.</p>
<b>Ownership</b>
<p>Government ownership was high, especially in terms of the development of livelihood alternatives, but government behavioural change in terms of on-the-ground expansion and management of PA estate was mainly limited to pre-project decisions. Formal recognition of ECAs and KBAs was expected by the prodoc design, but were considered outside the state biodiversity legal planning system. A work-around solution was found for this issue, in designating the proposed ECAs as other types of PA zone in the form of national park or PWF. Moreover the scale of expansion of these ‘ECAs’ for wildlife, was very limited. The ownership of the SMART patrol system in terms of data management, analysis and decision-making was an area that needed ownership.</p>
<b>Implementation - Execution</b>
<p>Implementation – The overall rating is <b>Satisfactory</b>.</p> <p><b>Project Implementation:</b> According to the given five categories - coordination &amp; operational matters, partnership arrangements &amp; stakeholder engagement, finance &amp; co-finance, M&amp;E systems (see next), and adaptive management (work planning, reporting &amp; communications). The overall quality of implementation / execution was rated as Satisfactory, with both the quality of UNDP Implementation and PMO Execution rated as Satisfactory.</p> <p><b>Coordination &amp; Operational Management</b></p> <p><u>By the Implementing Agency (UNDP) and the Executing Agency / Implementing Partner (Gansu FGB / PMO)</u></p> <p>A Project Preparation Grant (PPG) Initiation plan was developed from February 2017 – March 2018. A project appraisal committee meeting was held in December 2018. The meeting approved in principle the prodoc and SESP.</p> <p>UNDP were the GEF Implementing Agency (IA). The 5-year UNDP-GEF project was under National Implementation Modality (NIM), with Gansu FGB as the Executing Entity and designated Implementing Partner (IP). The project was implemented by a PMO, led by a Project Manager (PM), appointed by the UNDP / IP and under the management of Gansu FGB. UNDP and the PMO were supported by a Project Steering Committee (PSC). The project was jointly managed by UNDP / Gansu FGB via</p>

a PMO, with fund disbursement based on quarterly plans and invoicing.

The project document (prodoc) was signed in January 2019 by the International Finance Cooperation Department, Ministry of Finance; the Gansu FGB, and UNDP. The first PSC meeting held in May 2019. Further meetings were held in November 2020, March 2022, and March 2023. The PSC meetings were well attended with county representation (County Natural Resource Bureaus (FG Stations), project NRs).

The leadership at NPD level changed five times, which was not ideal, but appeared to have limited impact. A Project Coordination Office (PCO) was established within the International Division of the Gansu Department of Finance (DoF), with the division chief as director. The PCO designated an official for supervising the project and coordinating fund disbursement.

The PMO was set up within the Gansu Forest Fire Warning & Monitoring Centre (FFWMC, as part of / within the Gansu Foreign-funded FGB PMO). The director of the centre served as the PMO director, with the ability to execute project requests / decisions on behalf of government, thus making a workable arrangement (together with the PCO), as the PMO PM was a project-hired position.

The PMO comprised of a PM, CTA, Landscape coordinator and project assistant, of which the CTA was a part time position. FGB deployed one staff member to provide technical support for PMO, which helped support the project from a government perspective. Local coordination was established through eight local PMO offices, each with a coordinator. The PMO was also supported through the hire of national consultants and consultant firms / NGOs (~30 sub-contracts in total).

#### **Partnership Arrangements & Stakeholder Engagement**

Community co-management committees (CCCs) were established for the four NRs and signed between the NRs and the Village Administrative Committees to manage natural resource use and protect forest and wildlife, in return for project participation and benefit from project activities and financial inputs towards socio-economic development in these communities. These CCCs were a key part of the functioning and future sustainability of the project.

#### **Women's Empowerment**

During design, the project was UNDP-classified as having 'gender equality as a significant objective' (UN Gender Marker – GEN-2). A Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan (2018) was prepared and reported on. The overall numbers for direct beneficiaries and those trained, including women exceeded targets.

#### **Financial management & finance**

The project formulated a Financial Management System which included approval procedures, accounting, internal control, asset and file management. The project funds were under the supervision of UNDP, PCO and PMO. The PMO prepared quarterly workplans and budgets, which were signed by the PMO and PCO and submitted to UNDP for approval, after which the grant funds were transferred to the Gansu DoF. Expenditure vouchers were reviewed by the PCO and the UNDP FACE table was signed by both the PMO and PCO, before submission to UNDP. After approval, the PMO then submitted a request to PCO to fund release, in a re-imbusement method.

#### Project spend by year against the prodoc plan

US\$ / Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total USD
Prodoc	547,930	713,865	664,815	459,927	265,757	2,652,294
Total Disbursed	132,538	599,113	825,544	341,067	61,611	1,959,873
Balance	415,392	114,752	-160,729	118,860	204,146	692,421
% remaining	75.8	16.1	-24.2	25.8	76.8	26.1

#### Co-financing

Apart from for UNDP, co-financing contributions, either as direct support funds or as complementary funds are not formally accounted for under GEF methods. Thus, the extent of co-financing is based on government / project figures. The government - Gansu Department of Finance (DoF) - in-kind / cash was reported at (all recurrent):

Co-financing - Government only (\$)	Endorsement	18th July 2023
In kind	18,000,000	24,553,443
Cash	0	142,857
<b>Total</b>		24,696,300

The provincial co-financing funds were managed from the basic account of the FGB FFWMC and accounted for under provincial requirements. The proportion of cash co-financing was exceptionally small (0.25% only), with more discussion needed at PPG stage to increase this. UNDP co-financing - as of end June 2023, UNDP spend was \$36,000 from a planned \$45,000.

#### **Adaptive management** (Work planning, Reporting, and Communications)

##### Work planning

The project started in January 2019 and will end in January 2024. The Inception Workshop report was dated May 2019, and included minutes of the PSC meeting from May 2019. The workshop included 38 participants

There were five two year workplans and budgets (TYWPB) produced , which were signed by UNDP and endorsed by the PMO Director. The TYWPBs were presented by Output (with Activities described) against the standard UNDP accounting codes (with division by Description, and amount / percentage). They were also divided financially by eight quarters. The responsible party tended to be either Gansu FGB PMO or the PAs. The TYWPB (2023-24) was signed by UNDP at the end of April 2023, almost four months after the beginning of the plan timetable. The TYWPB (2022-23) was signed early March 2022, which was better. The preceding TYWPB plan 2021-22 was signed without date of signature.

Four Project Implementation Reviews (UNDP GEF PIRs) were produced - To end-June 2020, end-June 2021, end-June 2022, end-June 2023.

Communications & Visibility - The GEF and UNDP logos were present on project outputs such as the tea machines. The project was visible on social media.

### Monitoring & Evaluation

**M&E Systems** – The M&E system design and the implementation of the M&E system was rated as **Moderately Satisfactory**.

#### M&E at Design

UNDP GEF projects have a particular M&E system that is report-based, centred around an annual PIR that runs mid to mid-year. The M&E system is based on a mixture UNDP’s contractual compliance with GEF and its own systems, and checking the IP in terms of its contractual compliance of deliverables. These include annual workplans with budgets, PIRs, and audits, with an MTR and Terminal Evaluation (this report).

#### M&E Implementation

Apart from the main M&E design requirements, the project’s primary method of M&E was ad hoc PMO, UNDP staff and consultants ‘back to office’ mission / deliverable reports. There was no M&E specialist employed for this project.

It would have been useful for UNDP to have encouraged a spreadsheet tracking system, that ran annually and cumulatively with all the project numbers - inputs and outputs. For example, indicators (and their baselines and targets) are often number-based, whereas reporting is primarily text-based, with a few numbers ‘put-in’, but often not dated.

An MTR was prepared in 2021 with one of its recommendations being: ECAs – Clarify how the establishment of the four ECAs will be measured; develop an ecological objective for each, with a map showing the ECA in the landscape and the key wildlife populations being protected.

### Sustainability

Sustainability: According to the four GEF risk categories (financial, socio-economic, institutional & governance and environmental), present status, and towards the future is assessed.

**Overall Rating: Moderately Unlikely**

#### **Financial Risks to Sustainability**

The rating is ‘Financial Sustainability is **Moderately Unlikely**’

Financial sustainability was one of the central tenets of the project design, with Indicator 8 - PA system financing gap reduced to US\$57.2 million for basic management costs (30% reduction). The reported annual PA System funding gap was US\$44.3 m. However, the figure presented in the GEF METT table for the financing gap in basic management operational costs was US\$10.2 m (CNY 71,155,037). The fact that since 2017, an consolidated operating unit or over-arching management authority for the GPNP has not been created or funded also suggests a more significant gap. However, to note, in 2017, before the establishment of GPNP Pilot, the two PAs, Yuhe and Baishuijiang NRs existed. On creation of GPNP through institutional reform, these two NRs were merged. At this point funding for the GPNP increased. Duo'er, A'xia, and Chagangliang PAs also received a significant increase in financial investment in 2022 compared to 2017.

#### **Socio-Economic Risks to Sustainability**

The rating is ‘Socio-economic Sustainability is **Moderately Unlikely**’

The collection of socio-economic data provided a snapshot of villagers’ increases in income from IGAs. A number of income generating activities (IGAs) were successful, especially for the leading protagonists. Successful IGAs included: prickly ash (Hua Jiao) plantation; ecotourism development families, especially in Dayi Village; income from tea production and internet-based marketing of sales for Golden Monkey Tea.

#### **Institutional Framework & Governance Risks to Sustainability**

The rating is ‘Institutional & Governance Sustainability is **Moderately Unlikely**’

The Master Plan for establishing the National Park System was launched in September 2017, constituting the most important milestone on PA reform to date. The construction of the Giant Panda National Park (GPNP) in Gansu involves two nature reserves (Baishuijiang National NNR and the Yuhe NR) and two SFUs. The Pilot Implementation Plan of GPNP (2017-20) has been adopted. According to this Plan, the three provinces of Sichuan, Shaanxi and Gansu will establish a unified management system and draft legal regulations.

By 2023, the GPNP had yet to establish a fully operating management authority, however, in 2020 FGB was re-organised to improve its management capacity. These changes included:

- The management of GPNP was based on specialised management institutions, with sufficient personnel from the FGB to Longnan City. Before the creation of GPNP and project design in 2017, Yuhe NR and Baishuijiang NR existed, but were then merged to become the Yuhe and Baishuijiang branches of GPNP. In 2020, the government approved the establishment of these management institutions, with personnel numbers increased. This development included Yuhe Bureau with 98 staff, three monitoring centres, 77 staff at Luotang Protection Station, and 16 staff at Minbaogou Protection Station. (Yuhe Branch Organization Document No. 11, 2020).

- Before institutional reform, the vast majority of PAs in Gansu were subordinate to the FGB, and mainly managed by the Animal & Plant Management Section. After reform, this section was renamed the Wildlife Conservation Station. Other sections created were: National Parks Office, NRs Office, Wildlife & Wetland Office. All these offices included staff re-assignment and an increase in staff numbers in order to allow the FGB to manage effectively.

Gansu FGB is a fairly new government administrative office, with staff (~100) having transferred from the Agriculture & Grassland Bureau, and other offices, but the skills and mandate for conservation are different and need to be developed.

The FGB's Forestry Ecological Resources Monitoring Centre has a technical team responsible for regular monitoring, collection, and organization of data from the PAs and forestry units. It organizes and analyze the data in accordance with SFGA requirements. The results of the analysis are regularly reported back to the line offices, with key results passed up the hierarchy of FGB to its leaders. The data is collected and reported quarterly, usually in the form of documents, spreadsheets and analysis / work reports from the newly reformed offices.

However, the collection, collation and analysis of SMART data is new. SMART data is expected to be presented to county FGBs, who in turn are expected to report to the Gansu FGB, however it is not clear on how and who is undertaking this analysis of SMART data, and at what level. Also importantly is the question of data storage, management, access, and trend analysis. The software needed for this certainly needs development, otherwise the quality of information reaching the FGB is likely to be degraded (by reporting), and / or being in an unmanageable format. There is also the issue of the institutional division between NPs / National NRs under central state control, and the Gansu managed NRs / SFUs. It was indicated that the FGB have a NP management division, but again information may become siloed. Added to this is the fact that the GPNP is expected to cross provincial boundaries, thus a protocol on information housing and sharing etc would be needed.

#### **Environmental Risks to Sustainability**

The rating is 'Environmental Sustainability is **Moderately Unlikely**'

The GEF STAP screening response of the PIF indicated that the 'project focuses mainly on connectivity of ecosystems within and between NRs, including the development of ECAs to connect key forest habitat. There are no precedents for the development of ECAs in China, but approaches can be adapted according to specific ECAs. E.g. ECAs intended for use by Giant panda would benefit from bamboo species enrichment planting. The planning and governance arrangements developed by the project (e.g. community forestry) would provide for the legal and institutional sustainability of such ECAs'.

The report of the 19<sup>th</sup> CPC Congress (2017) mentioned – 'developing ecological corridors and biodiversity protection networks so as to strengthen the quality and stability of our ecosystems'. The goal of the Gansu 13<sup>th</sup> FYP was to improve the ecological environment and complete the building of the ecological security barrier. By 2020, the main objectives concerned a 'stable land ecological security barrier' and 'full implementation of forestry ecological protection red line'.

Thus these statements together would suggest that ECAs could have been established as demonstration areas without new top-down legislation, and that conservation-enhanced ECAs could have been developed on the ground. The approach taken by the project was slightly different.

#### **Impact**

##### Impact:

The impact of the project was not considered significant from the wider viewpoint.

Reduction in stress on ecological systems - The reduction in cattle numbers and NTFP collection was recorded, but the validity of the statistics was not available for review, and the process to repeat to ascertain trends was undetermined.

Regulatory & policy change - This was limited in terms of impact. The key local level community co-management agreements didn't define livestock grazing numbers nor did the county government regulations.

##### **Catalytic Effect**

The TE prepared a Theory of Change chart – see text of full report.

##### Scaling-up & Replication

- There were no examples of scaling-up and replication

##### Demonstration

- Tea cooperative established with a web-based platform to market tea sales
- The Dayi village ecotourism development project
- A HWC compensation scheme was put into operation and demonstrated

##### New techniques / approaches

- ECAs were not accepted *per se* as policy, but these project-designated areas were put under stronger conservation management within existing management systems
- The SMART patrol system was introduced but was left to its own devices, and the Biodiversity Conservation Information System was left unfinished

## Analysis & Conclusions

### Project design and approach

The project design was top-heavy on legislative change, somewhat light on tangible conservation actions and was compensated by an extensive training program with added IGAs for livelihood improvement.

For example, there were nine laws or plans that were expected to be revised or written (excluding the creation of township co-management agreements or mainstreaming biodiversity into the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP), which over the 5-year project duration should have been possible, as many of these only required update. The project's legal consultant provided recommendations, which were adopted by the Gansu legislative affairs committee, however key plans such as the BSAP were not updated, and the expectation to include KBAs and ECAs in legislation was pushed back to 2025. In both of these cases, the responsible party was the DEE / MEE respectively. However, as national level policy change was required first, this was in effect a 'killer assumption' or fault in the project's design.

The project design target area for new ECAs was unusually very small (25,000 ha which is only 25 x 10 km), possibly because it was expected to be a demonstration, or because it was not within the PA legal system and needed to 'go under the radar', or it was kept small simply because of land jurisdiction issues. The project identified 36,497 ha for ECA coverage, which were all re-assigned to accepted conservation designations as either NP or PWF. There was also a lack of tangible added change in conservation actions in these areas, which under reassignment meant existing regulation – as core, buffer, experimental zone rules for these areas with the GPNP, or no forest harvesting and no 'official' grazing within PWF.

Thus finally, the fall-back position of the project was in the provision of an extensive training program with added livelihood activities.

The GPNP Pilot Plan (2017-20) was adopted, however the GPNP has yet to be put into full operational status, so it has been a state NP for six years without an overall designated management authority in place. CPAR1 was the national level part of the CPAR program, which was expected to improve the institutional framework at national level and support PAs planning at national level. The same situation existed under CPAR3 with the Qilian Mountains National Park Pilot being 'under development without full operation for ~5 years'. The result was a project working in a NP without it having a separate operating unit to talk to. This also resulted in less tangible conservation actions within the proposed ECAs and a greater focus on training again.

The project had an excessive emphasis on the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP which was a higher-level policy document, when legislative change and adoption of plans were more important to the project design. The project design was limited and didn't fully incorporate GEF expectation for its biodiversity focal area. The PA estate was only directly expanded by the project to cover an added 36,497 ha, however these areas mostly were already delineated as within NP boundary or within PWF. The fact that throughout the project duration, the GPNP was not operating also indicated that the financial sustainability for this ecological infrastructure was not in place. The lack of a GPNP management authority created a somewhat of a vacuum for the project to work in. It meant that for the ECAs in this area, the project needed to coordinate between Yuhe NR, Wudu District FGB, Fengxiang Township, and Baishuijiang National NR, and the FGB's National Parks Office.

### Project design and policy

The inclusion of KBAs and ECAs were not formally included in policy documents as to become PA estate, but rather an example conservation tools. Neither KBAs nor ECAs are legally recognised in China. Thus the heavy focus within the prodoc, on bringing these into policy was over-embellished and partly a distraction through implementation, in comparison to the physical tangible actions needed within these key conservation areas.

For example, under Outcome 1, Indicators 4, 5 and 6 were all very similar in mainstreaming conservation in to the legal framework, provincial laws, and 14<sup>th</sup> FYP. With such an emphasis, they skewed the project somewhat towards this aspect, as per most of the project objective, but not necessarily the aspect concerning field implementation of enhanced habitat connectivity. Plans for an ECA network were not definitive, but rather the project selected four ECAs as demonstrations, which was fine, but these areas were just subsequently redefined,

thus avoiding any actual ECA delineation or communicate on habitat enhancement, or permitted conservation-friendly actions within.

#### Government Financing agreement

The UNDP Management Response also indicated that the management and financing plans for the NRs had been approved. However, there was a major difference in meaning between the project's PSC / FGB agreeing that the quality of a report was acceptable for approval (e.g. payment of the consultant), and the prodoc design meaning that a key plan or piece of legislation should be approved i.e. promulgated.

#### Giant Panda National Park (GPNP)

The designation of the GPNP had limited material difference on the conservation of Giant panda during the project. In 2017, in Axia NR / Wangzang SFU, there was a survey of bamboo dieback after flowering (which is a natural, but uncommon event) and a pilot to restore eight hectares of bamboo. The results of this and how it could have been applied to the project for panda, would have been useful<sup>2</sup>.

#### Cattle Grazing and farming

The reduction in the number of cattle grazing in Axia was good, but conversely poor in Duoer NR. The systems to maintain or continue to improve ecosystem health with reduced cattle numbers in conservation areas were not put in place. The co-management agreement didn't stipulate cattle numbers and the monitoring survey was a one-time consultant contract. Tea plantation expansion and hill farming on new land may also have had a negative impact

#### GEF / China targets on red-lines

Was 25,000 ha of new ECA a sufficient target, bearing in-mind the already planned GPNP? Once biodiversity area is lost, recovery is near impossible, thus the phrase 'too little too late' would seem appropriate. This is only an area of 250 km<sup>2</sup>, which is ~ 25 x 10 km<sup>2</sup>. It is so small, especially when divided by four ECAs.

#### SFU Capacity and Mandate

The SFUs are still working on a passive policy to look after areas with forest, without any clear monitoring guidelines on pasture control or heath. The SFUs lag behind for protection controls and enforcement, especially for concerning pasture health. This is due to the lack of a government / FGB mandate, and a traditional focus on forested areas, and other land under SFU jurisdiction which can be converted to forest land to receive NFPP payments for staff and tree planting.

## **Lessons Learned**

#### Prodoc and Policy direction

The expectation that FGB would be able to update so much legislation (five laws), when this was also partly dependent on the national level, was unrealistic. The prodoc was front-loaded with five out of nine indicators (56%) for Outcome 1, most of which concerned legislation. This was excessive and unnecessary, and detracted from time needed for tangible conservation returns. The returns to add conservation to policy, when it should already be there, was marginal. The over emphasis on the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP over-shadowed much more immediate actions. Update of the key BSAP was not even started, when it should have been the first plan to be considered.

#### ECAs

The project circumnavigated the issue of ECAs having no legal status, but then didn't follow-up effectively in local conservation management rules for these areas. The existing legislation for the PWF only focused on forest plantation areas, which was old standard SFA directives, and not based on their new mandate to conserve both forest and grassland areas.

#### Training with competency standards

This was a clear success, with project first developing the standards and then putting conservation staff and practitioners through the training modules. This was a major gap in management that PA financing was missing, and this was covered by the project as per its design.

#### NFPP Payments

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<sup>2</sup> Bamboo species differ by altitude, which is key to understanding panda population habitat and nutritional needs.

NFPP payments remain focused on tree plantation payments, and the covering of SFU staff salaries. They have yet to evolve towards the present ecological requirements or the government's new institutional structure of 'forest and grassland' administration or bureaus. This needs major reform and understanding of where grasslands under SFUs stand. These are ecological red-line areas, but have not undergone any ecological conservation improvement change.

## Recommendations

### Exhibit 4: Key Recommendations Table [with responsible entity]

1. Concerning threat monitoring in the four NRs and the ECAs, an agreement between FGB and the four NRs and / or with a survey consultant is needed for five years to conduct the same survey annually, focusing on cattle numbers and fuelwood removal. There is a need for a responsible agency (FGB) to be given the mandate and funding to conduct this together with habitat (forest and grassland) health, according to set criteria [SFGA / FGB]
2. The SMART patrol monitoring system needs development including a protocol concerning data storage, access, collation, analysis, and reporting with a responsible party. The protocol will need to encompass institutional differences between state and provincial mandates for protection of differing types of PA [FGB, with outline drafting by FGB]
3. The BSAP update contract needs to be put in place [MEE / SFGA with preparation by FGB]
4. The SMART patrol app and its functions needs update to include monitoring of cattle numbers, timing of seasonal movement into SFU PWF areas and grassland health. [PMO to revised contract with the service provider to add functions, and handover to FGB to manage and fund it]
5. The SFUs responsible for two of the ECAs now designated as PWF need to utilise the SMART patrol app and report directly to FGB wildlife division [SFUs / FGB]
6. Axia and Duoer NRs to monitor cattle numbers inside PAs / ECAs with township government / community ranger support [Axia and Duoer NRs with FGB support]
7. Report on options for restoration of bamboo flowering / dieback in panda areas [FGB to put action in financial planning to DoF for 2024-25]
8. SFUs to create alpine meadow land experimental research areas, which would require cattle grazing prohibition. This would be to avoid conversion of meadow land to forest land, just because NFPP payments are available for forest plantation. [SFUs with FGB mandate provided for them, by putting in financial plan for DoF]

[Full report](#)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. The project

The full-sized UNDP-supported, GEF-financed project is titled 'Enhancing Conservation of Globally Significant Biodiversity Through Protected Area System Strengthening in Gansu' - China Protected Areas System Reform (CPAR) Program Child Project #2 (PIMS#5689).

GEF funding was to secure populations of globally significant species by strengthening systemic and institutional capacity of Gansu Province and the PA sub-system of West Qinling Minshan Mountains (WQMM) landscape to enforce protection laws, mainstream biodiversity conservation and improve the effectiveness of the PA sub-system for protection and restoration of their habitats and to reduce threats. In addition, the project was to create a landscape-scale biodiversity monitoring system to monitor the status of key species to inform decision-making, and to demonstrate an eco-compensation scheme to reduce threats to wildlife from herders and farmers.

The project started in January 2019 and is in its 5<sup>th</sup> year of implementation and is due to close in February 2024. The 5-year UNDP-GEF project was under National Implementation Modality (NIM), with the Gansu Province Forestry and Grassland Bureau (FGB) as the Executing Entity and designated Implementing Partner (IP). The



project was implemented by a Project Management Office (PMO), led by a Project Manager (PM), appointed by the UNDP / IP. UNDP and the PMO were supported by a Project Steering Committee (PSC).

## 1.2. Purpose of the evaluation and report structure

### Purpose & Structure

The objective of the Terminal Evaluation (TE) was to gain an independent analysis of the achievement of the project at completion, as well as to assess its sustainability and impact. The report focuses on assessing outcomes and project management. The TE additionally considered accountability and transparency, and provided lessons-learned for future projects, in terms of selection, design and implementation. The report is in six sections - introduction, description, findings, sustainability, impact and conclusions / recommendations. The findings (Section 3) are additionally divided into strategy and design, implementation and management, and results.

## 1.3. Scope and Methodology

### Approach

The overall approach and methodology of the evaluation followed the guidelines outlined in UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects (2020). The TE was an evidence-based assessment and relied on feedback from persons who were involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project. The TE team reviewed available documents (**Annex 7**), conducted field visits and held interviews. The international TE consultant was the evaluation team leader and responsible for quality assurance and consolidation of the findings, and provided the TE report.

The TE was conducted over the period of July – December 2023, including preparatory activities, inception report, document provision, desk review, field mission with stakeholder consultation (August – September 2023), and completion of the TE report.

### Methods

The TE determined if the project's building blocks (technical, financial, management, legal) were put in place and then, if together these were catalysed sufficiently to make the project successful. The TE method was to utilise a 'multi-level mixed evaluation', which is useful when evaluating delivery of a new service or approach, being piloted through state institutions. The method allows for cross-referencing and is suitable for finding insights which are sensitive and informative. The rating scales are provided in **Annex 9**. Pro-forma questions on key themes such as those provided by the UNDP GEF guideline were updated by the TE (**Annex 12**).

### Main partners and Stakeholder feedback

The TE interacted with the PMO project staff, the UNDP Country Office as well as with the project executive (Gansu FGB) and other stakeholders such as PA staff, State Forestry Administrations and their State Forestry Units (SFUs), provincial and local government and community leaders and farmers. The TE visited the project area to interact with local administrators, technical staff and beneficiaries. Gaining a representative view from local stakeholders was not limited, although gaining access to the PAs and high altitude pastures was not really possible for such a short mission. **Annex 6** provides a list of persons met and **Annex 10** is the mission schedule.

### Ethics

The review was conducted in accordance with the UN Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators, and the reviewer signed the Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct Agreement (**Annex 13**). In particular, the TE team ensured the anonymity and confidentiality of 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.

### Limitations

There were a number of limitations. The field review was undertaken in one week only, with a significant time also taken up in travelling long distances. This was despite the TE request for a longer field mission. The field agenda was only provided a few days before the mission with no time for acceptance of previous TE requests for access to wildlife habitat areas to view habitat degradation. The documentation was only provided a few days before the mission, and thus missing items could only be collected and collated after the mission which made understanding and reporting more difficult.

## 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 2.1. Development Context

[GEF-6 Focal Area linkage](#)



- Biodiversity Objective - BD-1. 1 - Financial Sustainability & Effective Management of National Ecological Infrastructure; and BD-1.2 - Expanding the Reach of the Global PA Estate

#### Sector-wide linkage with the International Community

- UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD, 1992) – China became a party in 1993, which in Article 8, obliges member states to: Establish a system of PAs; Develop guidelines for the creation and management of PAs; Promote the protection of ecosystems, natural habitats and viable species populations in natural habitats. FECCO is affiliated to the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP), which is the lead ministry for CBD in China. The Environmental Protection Bureau (EPB) have the mandate for implementation. UN CBD COP-15 was held in Kunming (2021)
- CBD Aichi Targets: Target 11 - significantly increase the area & connectivity of PAs with high biodiversity and ecosystem services, and increase management effectiveness of PAs through integration into the wider landscape; Target 12 - to prevent the extinction of threatened species
- CITES convention – China became a party to CITES in 1981, with snow leopard listed as Vulnerable (2017), and included in Appendix 1 in 1975. Snow leopard habitat in China accounts for ~60% of the global habitat, which is mainly distributed in Qinghai, Tibet, and Xinjiang, and also in Gansu, Sichuan, Yunnan and Inner Mongolia.
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Goal 15 - Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss; Goal 1 (End poverty); Goal 5 (Gender equality and empowerment of women); and Goal 13 (Combat climate change and its impacts)
- UNDAF 2016-20 Outcome 2 - More people enjoy a cleaner, healthier and safer environment as a result of improved environmental protection and sustainable green growth

#### Project linkage to National / Provincial Planning (Policy & Regulatory)

- National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (NBSAP, 2011-30) - identifies 35 biodiversity priority protection regions, which include regions of upper Yangtze River including the Minshan Mountains and Eastern Tibetan Plateau, with specific reference to endangered species such as giant panda and musk deer. The project supports key priorities of the plan: biodiversity conservation policy, regulation and systems; mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation into planning; capacity; and *in-situ* conservation
- The PRC 13<sup>th</sup> FYP (2016-20) on ecosystems and the environment: development of functional zones; ecological conservation, restoration and security. Includes the integrated reform plan for promoting ecological progress in 2015 – to establish a national park system by consolidating suitable PAs into a batch of national parks
- Gansu Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (BSAP) 2011 - management of the PA system and protection of key species such as giant panda, golden snub-nosed monkey, snow leopard
- Gansu Government Master Plan for upgrading the National Park system (2017)
- There are two transboundary national park (NP) pilots in Gansu - the Giant Panda NP pilot and the Qilian Mountains NP pilot. With these two pilot NPs both partially within Gansu, a NP Administration Office has been set-up. The construction of the Giant Panda NP in Gansu involves two NRs (Baishuijiang National NR and the Yuhe NR) and two SFUs. The pilot Implementation Plan of Giant Panda NP (2017-20) has been adopted. According to this plan, the provinces of Sichuan, Shaanxi and Gansu will establish a unified management system, legal regulations, and build the Giant Panda National Park (GPNP) into a conservation paradigm for global biodiversity hotspots

#### Linkage to donor-projects

- UNDP GEF Strengthening the PA system in the Qilian Mountains-Qinghai Lake landscape - CPAR Program Child Project #3
- Previously – UNDP GEF Strengthening Globally Important Biodiversity Conservation through Protected Area Strengthening in Gansu

## 2.2. Problems that the Project Sought to Address

#### Threats, Root causes, & Impacts (prodoc)

- Unsustainable land use - The Bailongjiang Basin is an important as forest and watershed. From the 1950s - 1990s, it was logged by the state forestry enterprise, especially besides the river. In 1998, the government issued a logging ban (NFPF) and an added policy to set aside sloping land for forest and grassland ('grain to green'). The NRs are mostly located in mountainous areas with nearby farmers depending on livestock. Cattle grazing, fuelwood collection, land conversion to farming, NTFP collection (bamboo, medicinal herbs, mushrooms) continues to cause incremental habitat degradation and fragmentation and disturbance to wildlife. E.g. illegal logging and removal of fruit has degraded habitats formerly suitable for golden snub-nosed monkey.
- Habitat fragmentation due to infrastructure development - The project demonstration area in the Bailongjiang Basin is a key residence and passageway for animals such as the giant panda, golden snub-nosed monkey, takin and forest musk

deer. Habitat fragmentation has become a serious problem for wildlife movement and genetic exchange. For example, Yuhe PA has 13 musk deer populations, of which four are isolated from the others due to habitat fragmentation. Increasing habitat fragmentation indicates that isolation of giant panda populations may increase the extinction probability to 41% among populations with 10 or fewer individuals

- Human wildlife conflict - The reduction of wildlife habitat has resulted in increased damage to farmers' crops from wild boar and of black bear, including bear attacks on livestock
- Illegal hunting - such as bears and serow (for gall bladder), snow leopard (skins, bones, claw), pheasants (live trade), musk deer (musk gland), Chinese giant salamander (for traditional Chinese medicine), and Saiga antelope (horn).
- Climate change in Gansu - increasing temperature, decreasing rain, warmer winters and drier summers. The temperature has increased from 1951 - 2010 at a rate of 0.18°C per ten years. The winter temperature increase is more pronounced at 0.37°C per ten years. After 1986, the mean temperature in Gansu increased by 1.1°C (comparing the periods 1987-2010 and 1960-86). The ecological impacts of this man-made climate change include evidence of giant panda on the northern side of the Bailongjiang river, which implies that the panda population is extending northwards, and its activities reach higher altitudes. These trends exacerbate the impact of existing human pressure and imply that PA and species conservation planning need to include climate resilience through habitat connectivity.

## 2.3. Description and Strategy

### Background

In terms of global environmental benefits, the West Qinling - Minshan Mountains (WQMM) landscape lies within one of the world's 25 biodiversity hotspots, and harbours globally significant biodiversity including species that were once widespread and are now confined to small areas, including the giant panda, Sichuan (snub-nosed) golden monkey, forest and alpine musk deer species.

#### PA's in the WQMM landscape

	Area (ha)	Key Habitat / Species Protected	Year	Supervision Agency	Operating budget*	PA Staff	Resident Population
Duoer NR - Diebu County	54,575	Old conifer / broad-leaf forest. 12 species under 1 <sup>st</sup> class protection inc. panda; 34 species under 2 <sup>nd</sup> class inc. red panda	2005	Diebu county government	426	32	5,100
Axia NR - Diebu County	135,536	Conifer / Panda	2004	Bailongjiang Forestry Management Bureau	160	30	17,602
Chagang-liang NR - Zhouqu County	114,361	Conifer & broad-leaf mixed forest. Panda, takin, gold-haired monkey, and pheasant	2006	Plant & Animal Protection Bureau	246	23	70,431
Yuhe NR - Wudu District	51,058	Mixed conifer / broad-leaf and broad-leaf forest. Golden snub-nosed monkey, panda, musk deer, takin, serow	2002	Wudu District FGB	920	113	5,374
	<b>355,530</b>						

\*US\$ 1,000 per annum

### Project Location

The project was located in WQMM landscape, within four targeted PAs. In the area, national, provincial and local government units have invested in biodiversity conservation. The Baishuijiang National NR has central government budget for its staff and operating costs.

Three of the four PAs targeted by this project (Axia, Chagangliang, and Yuhe) are provincial NRs – while Duoer NR was upgraded to national NR in 2017, and all face critical gaps in capacities and funding. Outside the reserves, forests in Liangdang and Hezheng counties represent key wildlife corridors of the WQMM landscape, and these are managed by the State Forest Units (SFUs) of the two respective counties. Axia and Chagangliang NRs were converted from state forest enterprises more than 10 years ago, and the same staff that managed the former enterprises now serve as PA management staff for these NRs.

The government's Natural Forest Protection Programme (NFPP) has been on-going since 1999 in the WQMM landscape. About 80% of funds are used to pay staff, with funds for the NRs (Axia, Chagangliang and Yuhe) and the SFUs in Liangdang and Hezheng Counties primarily relying on this program.

The four PAs are giant panda areas, with Yuhe NR being the main corridor linking the Minshan and Qinling Mountains. Funds provided by NFPP, support the protection and rehabilitation of habitats in these corridor areas, as well as in Liangdang and Hezheng Counties<sup>3</sup>. For maps – see **Annex 11**.

### Project Timing & Milestones

The UNDP project assurance and oversight role was to ensure that project milestones were attained. Although such milestones were not explicitly listed, they would include: supporting the PPG/ PIF and prodoc submissions, with updates; annual workplan (two-year plans in this case) signature; GEF fund disbursement scheduling; MTR / TE reviews with Management Responses; and project closure – operational and financial. The PMO provided a milestone chart of achievement:

- January 2019 - Project document signed
- March 2019 - PMO established
- April 2019 – Eight local project offices / units established
- April 2019 - PSC and PCO established
- May 2019 - Inception workshop & the first PSC meeting
- July 2019 – Eight national consultants recruited
- October 2020 – Four task forces at provincial & PA level established
- November 2020 – 2<sup>nd</sup> PSC meeting; 1<sup>st</sup> batch of project results passed panel review; UNDP spotcheck
- December 2020 - Monitoring and patrolling equipment purchased for local units
- March 2021 – 2<sup>nd</sup> batch of project results passed panel review
- July 2021 – 1<sup>st</sup> joint action of CPAR program
- September 2021 - MTR
- December 2021 - WQMM Landscape Corridor Network Implementation Plan was issued and implemented
- March 2023: Diebu County HWC Insurance Pilot Officially Launched
- September 2023 – Terminal Evaluation

### Comparative Advantage

UNDP had a comparative advantage of capacity building, provision of technical support in the design and implementation of the project. UNDP also had an advantage working with government especially in strengthening institutional, policy and legislative mechanisms, in undertaking risk assessments, in mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into development planning and harnessing best practices across the thematic area.

## 2.4. Implementation Arrangements

### Project Management Structure

The project was overseen by a Project Steering Committee (PSC), chaired by Gansu FGB (representing ownership of the project), as the Executive. The Project Director was the Deputy Director of the Foreign Affairs Cooperation Division of the Gansu FGB. This allowed the project to function within Gansu government, remembering that the PM position is an externally recruited consultant position.

The project implementation team was formed according to the UNDP procedure, to include a Project Manager (PM), a Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and two coordinators. The Project Management Office (PMO) was based at the Gansu FGB in Lanzhou. Coordination amongst provincial government agencies was facilitated by the International Division of Gansu Department of Finance (DoF), who were also responsible for fund disbursement. The PM was also responsible for coordination with other CPAR projects, including with the CPAR Program Officer working under the CPAR1 National Project. PA Coordination Teams were located at the project demonstration sites within the WQMM landscape. The project organisation structure (prodoc) is in **Annex 5**.

<sup>3</sup> Hezheng County received support from the IFAD GEF project Conservation of Biodiversity in Dryland Ecosystems from 2011-16, which strengthened community-based ecological planning and restoration

## 2.5 Key Partners & Stakeholders

The prodoc outlined its stakeholder analysis, and its stakeholder engagement plan, which is presented here for government and international partners:

- Ministry of Finance (MoF) - MoF is the GEF Operational Focal Point. Recipient of GEF grant
- Ministry of Ecology & Environment (MEE) - The ministry was created at the end of the PPG phase. Key partner of the overall CPAR Program, of which the project is demonstrating the planned national reforms
- Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) – Created in 2018. The ministry is mandated with responsibility over the national PA system, through the subordinate SFGA / State National Park Authority. This ministry was created at the end of the PPG phase and is a key stakeholder during implementation of all outputs.
- State Forestry & Grassland Administration (SFGA) – Created 2018 - A key stakeholder in the project at the national level, overseeing the provincial forestry and grassland system, as well as the Gansu Endangered Animals Protection Centre. Following national institutional reform, the SFGA is responsible for the management of forest, grassland, wetland and desert; wildlife protection; ecological protection, restoration, reforestation, and National Park management.
- UNDP - GEF Agency for the project
- Gansu Forestry & Grassland Bureau (FGB) - The executing agency for the project
- Gansu Department of Finance (DoF) - A key partner in reviewing and approving project budgets and ensuring project finance management to be in line with requirements of the government of China and UNDP; in increasing financial resources for PAs, and to coordinate with other departments to take action to support the project implementation
- Gansu Development & Reform Commission (DRC) - Support implementation of recommendations and strategies proposed by this project and partner in drafting and promoting legislative and regulatory changes that may be necessary
- Axia NR (2004) - lies between the northern part of the Minshan range and the southern margin of the Dieshan Mountains in the Bailongjiang river basin. It is built on Diebu Forestry Bureau under the Bailongjiang Forestry Administration, a state enterprise / unit. Its funds come from the provincial government with no other revenue. It has a staff of 30 and is based in Diebu County.
- Chagangliang NR (2005) - located in the transitional zone between the western wing of the Qinling Mountains and Minshan Mountains in the Bailongjiang river basin. It is supported by Zhouqu Forestry Bureau under the Bailongjiang Forestry Administration. Its finance comes from the provincial government budget. It has a shared staff with Zhouqu Forestry Bureau and is based in Zhouqu County.
- Yuhe NR (2002) - is in the convergence zone between the Qinling mountains and the Minshan mountains. It has 15 staff, of which 10 are in place and is based in Luotang town. Its financing comes from the Wudu District government budget. It will become part of the Giant Panda National Park.
- Duoer National NR (2004, NRR in 2017) - located on the eastern margin of the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau and in the Northern Minshan mountains. It belongs to the Duoer water system, a tributary of the Bailongjiang River. It has a staff of 33 and the NR office is based in Diebu County. Its financing mainly comes from Diebu County government budget.
- Local government - Wudu District, Counties of Zhouqu, Diebu, Liangdang, Hezheng and Wuwei City - Participate in the implementation of NR plans, sustainable livelihoods, and spatial planning for ecological corridor areas (ECAs)
- There are 7 NRs in the Gansu part of the landscape, of which Yuhe NR is under Wudu District Forestry Bureau, Duoer is managed by Diebu County Government, while Axia and Chagangliang are both under the administration of Bailongjiang Forestry Administration.
- Pilot ECAs in Liangdang County and Hezheng County and will be led by their respective State Forest Units (SFUs)
- Gansu Endangered Animals Protection Center (EAPC) - the EAPC is located in Wuwei City, including two NRs for endangered species under its management. Key participant for threatened species action planning, capacity development for species recovery and reintroduction, and conservation for threatened species at sites.

A description of the set of Terminal Evaluation stakeholders – those who were responsible for implementation of the project and those associated with the project – is provided as **Annex 8**.

## 3. FINDINGS

### 3.1. Project Strategy

#### 3.1.1 Pre-project Barriers to Sustainable Natural Resource Use

Barrier 1 – Insufficient legal / institutional framework for effective protection of endangered species and their habitats

- The roles and responsibilities of management authorities responsible for protection and management of endangered species in different areas are weak and unclear. Despite the importance of Key Biodiversity Areas

(KBAs) and PAs, there is currently a lack of awareness on how this can be applied to increase the effectiveness of conservation investment and reverse fragmentation of key species habitat.

Barrier 2 - Weak institutional capacity for management and reducing threats in the WQMM PA network

- While many NRs have been created in the WQMM landscape, their spatial patterns / locations are not ideal to conserve key species. Potential ECAs have been identified but no plans exist for them.
- There is limited capacity for acquiring and applying the KBA approach, or biodiversity data to guide PA planning. Such data at the provincial level is outdated with systematic monitoring missing for the landscape scale, especially on the distribution and status of wildlife populations
- The PAs / Forestry Bureaus lack full-time staff, independent budget, infrastructure and equipment (such as monitoring stations and ranger communications). This hinders management and implementation of conservation actions. Staff lack training in patrolling and law enforcement, habitat / species conservation and restoration, stakeholder engagement and conflict resolution

### 3.1.2 Project Design, Objective & Approach

Under the Project Identification Form (PIF), the project description summary of expected outcomes was:

Component 1 - Legal & institutional framework for reducing threats to endangered species and their habitats

- Strengthened framework (including legislation, and enforcement system) in place for endangered species, and KBAs and operationalized, with regulations, responsibilities clarified, and M&E system
- Biodiversity conservation integrated as a mainstream task in the 14<sup>th</sup> Gansu FYP with specific provision for made for enhanced protection of KBAs and endangered species
- Increased corridor habitat area by 10% (and gene exchange by 15%) for flagship species, such as Sichuan golden monkey, musk deer, serow, giant panda, black bear, Przewalski's horse

Component 2 - Strengthening the West Qinling - Minshan Mountains PA network and reducing threats

- Establishment of forest corridors and PA System expanded by 25,000 ha, increasing coverage of KBAs and with emphasis on connectivity
- Increased management effectiveness of at least 4 PAs (Axia, Chagangliang, Duoer, Wuwei and Yuhe NRs) with globally significant biodiversity covering ~355,530 ha and new PAs covering >25,000 ha).
- Improvement in status of endangered species and their habitats as measured by increased or stable populations of indicator species (Sichuan golden monkey, musk deer, serow, giant panda, black bear)
- Biodiversity threat reduction indicated by: (i) number of human-wildlife conflict (HWC) cases, (ii) incidence of illegal hunting and wildlife trade, (iii) attitudes of herders and farmers to biodiversity and endangered species

### 3.1.3 Design Assumptions & Risks

There were three risks with mitigation measures, outlined in the prodoc (p60). Of these, two were rated as moderate. A further risk concerning community engagement was considered low and proved to be so. The moderate risks are briefly commented on below:

Assumption / Risk with Mitigation	TE comment
<p>Securing administrative and legislative support from government agencies and collaboration in integrated approaches to environmental management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A wide range of government agencies have been engaged during project preparation, and they have shown commitment to be involved, thus securing strong project ownership</li> <li>- CPAR is supported by central government and will assist the local government to deliver new national policy towards developing an ecological civilization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Whilst there was support from officials, updates to legislation concerning conservation were more limited</li> <li>- GPNP Administration was fully not established, as the national administrative department was not in operation. This was an area where CPAR1 should have been working</li> </ul>
<p>Completion of legislative plans requires approval by provincial government. If not approved within the project period, this will negatively influence the impacts of the project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Government approval was expected for ECAs, but was not possible<sup>4</sup></li> <li>- Gansu BSAP was expected to be</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> Prodoc – 'Facilitate the development of proposals by Gansu FGB for the establishment of ecological corridors (after Provincial Govt review and State Council approval)' This could be considered a logframe killer assumption. i.e the intervention to create ECAs was not possible without central government legislative change.

- A list of required approvals was prepared during the PPG and refined and confirmed at the project stakeholder review workshop. This list will be regularly reviewed by the PSC and the NPD and PM will regularly engage senior officials at local and provincial levels to ensure that the required approvals are processed promptly and effectively	updated and approved
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There were also 10 risks listed from the UNDP SESP, three of which were considered high risk. The UNDP Risk Log (in UNDP Quantum Project Management System) also listed ten risks, three of which were considered high, effectively updating the SESP list. The latter risk log table is briefly presented and commented on:

Assumption / Risk with Mitigation	TE comment
PA expansion and ECA establishment may affect the rights and livelihood of ethnic minorities within this area. Minorities in NRs may face voluntary resettlement, which may change the way they use land and resources, affecting their livelihoods. Minorities account for more than 90% of beneficiaries in the SGPs in the NRs. - IPP designed four actions to protect the interests of indigenous people, including mitigating the negative effects of economic resettlement and flexible management of PAs	- There was no resettlement
According to the Overall Plan on the development of NPs, a total of 56,690 ha will be included in the GPNP. Residents in ecological restoration zone may face resettlement and change of land tenure - August 2022, the ESIA and IPP were finalized after being cleared by UNDP. The project updated the SESP and will carry out activities and monitor based mitigating risks - Translated the SAPA manual and have trained PA staff	- As above
Due to PA expansion and ECA establishment, communities, especially women may lose rights to land use and may not have full access to certain economic activities such as grazing - Gender Mainstreaming Action - the project has been ensuring equal pay. The ESMP designed activities to mitigate the impact, including FPIC consulting - Women are playing key roles (directors and deputy directors) in the project management committees established in each community. They safeguard women's rights and interests	- The gender plan results are discussed in this report

The plans mentioned included:

- Environmental & Social Impact Assessment (2022) pp119
- UNDP Social & Environmental Screening Procedure, pp22
- Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), pp31

### 3.1.4 Results Framework Indicators & Targets

The project objective was 'Strengthen conservation of globally significant biodiversity in Gansu through improving the legal & institutional framework, reforming and mainstreaming the PA system, enhancing habitat connectivity and reducing key threats'.

The three component outcomes were:

1. Improved legal and institutional framework for PAs, Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and globally threatened species, and mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation in provincial planning
2. Strengthened West Qinling - Minshan Mountains (WQMM) PA network and reduction of threats
3. Knowledge Management, Monitoring and Evaluation and Gender Mainstreaming

Within the results framework, at the objective level, there were three indicators. There were three outcomes in a three component structure, with nine respective outcome level indicators. A significant number of these indicators also had sub-parts. See **Annex 1**.

Output Activities under the four Outcome / Component structure

- |  |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Strengthened legal and enforcement framework for protection of globally threatened species and KBAs, with subsidiary regulations, and compliance monitoring and evaluation system</li> <li>1.2 Provincial Biodiversity Strategy &amp; Action Plan updated and integrated as a mainstreamed task in the provincial FYP with enhanced protection of KBAs and globally threatened species</li> <li>1.3 Provincial level plans for conservation, rehabilitation &amp; reintroduction of priority globally threatened species</li> <li>1.4 Assessments and plans completed for PA system functional integrity supported by an ECA network for the province</li> <li>1.5 Provincial PA system governance for threatened species conservation strengthened through capacity</li> </ol> |
|--|

	development for national park governance, professional competence standards, training and technical support to the Gansu Endangered Animals Protection Centre (EAPC)
2.1	Development and expansion of the PA and ECA Network by >25,000 ha, increasing coverage of KBAs and improving habitat connectivity
2.2	Strengthened coordination and management of the PA and ECA network in the WQMM
2.3	Effective community co-management and engagement in PA management achieving livelihoods improvement and threat reduction
2.4	Pilot interventions to demonstrate mechanisms for the prevention, management and compensation of human-wildlife conflict (HWC) damage adjacent to PAs and ECAs
2.5	Development of a landscape-scale biodiversity survey, monitoring and information system for WQMM demonstration area
3.1	Knowledge management is coordinated effectively through CPAR program
3.2	M&E system incorporating gender mainstreaming developed and implemented for adaptive project management

### Logframe and SMART Indicators

There were a number of issues with the logframe design and the indicators being SMART. These included:

- Five out of nine indicators (56%) were for Outcome 1 only, with most of these concerning legislation
- Apart from legislation, plans and knowledge management, the whole project was placed under Outcome / Component 2. Thus all tangible field outputs were somewhat crammed into this outcome, with only two indicators, one of which was the self-assessed METT scorecard
- Indicator 2 concerned PA expansion by only 25,000 ha. This is only 25 x 10 km<sup>2</sup>
- Indicator 10 – The target to reduce grazing cattle in Duor NR by 6% was too small

#### **3.1.5 Gender Design**

The project was classified as with the UN Gender Marker GEN 2, which expects a project to ‘make a significant contribution to gender equality and / or the empowerment of women and girls’. The words ‘gender’ and ‘women’ were mentioned 81 and 47 times respectively in the prodoc. As an annex to the prodoc, a Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan (2018, pp23) was prepared. It detailed gender-based indicators, baselines and targets for the project. The indicators with results are presented in the Gender Analysis section.

## **3.2. Project Implementation**

### **3.2.1 IA and EA Coordination & Operational Management**

The overall quality of implementation / execution was rated as **Satisfactory**, with both the quality of UNDP Implementation and PMO Execution rated as Satisfactory.

UNDP were the GEF Implementing Agency (IA). The 5-year UNDP-GEF project was under National Implementation Modality (NIM), with the FGB of Gansu Province as the Executing Entity and designated Implementing Partner (IP). The project was implemented by a PMO, led by a Project Manager (PM), appointed by the UNDP / IP and under the management of Gansu FGB. UNDP and the PMO were supported by a Project Steering Committee (PSC). Gansu FGB designated a national project director to formally collaborate with the PMO, and chair the PSC meetings. The project was supported by a PSC, with the PMO acting as the secretary.

#### **Coordination & Operational Management by Implementing Agency (UNDP)**

The project was under UNDP-supported NIM, in terms of GEF fund management (See Section 3.2.4 Finance), and oversight of: PMO staff selection and sub-contract selection.

Project Preparation Grant (PPG) Initiation Plan (February 2017 – March 2018) pp23

The overall objective of the CPAR Program to ‘transform China’s national PA system through systematic legal and institutional reform and innovation for conservation of globally significant biodiversity’. The four components of the CPAR Program were:

- Improved legal and Institutional framework at national and provincial level
- Systematic PAs planning & mainstreaming at national, provincial, county spatial planning and sectors
- Site level management and supervision standards raised for different PA types

- Program Coordination and knowledge management

The 2<sup>nd</sup> child project's (CPAR2 – Gansu) contribution to the overall program of reforming China's national system of PAs included:

- CPAR Component 1 - Formulation, approval and implementation of species conservation and recovery plans for priority endangered species and their habitats.
- CPAR Component 2: Expansion and consolidation of the PA system by 25,000 ha in WQMM to increase connectivity and coverage of KBAs and habitats of threatened species in core zones of target PAs
- CPAR Component 3: Increased effectiveness of managing at least four existing PAs, covering 380,116 ha and having globally significant biodiversity

The budget was \$100,000

#### Project Appraisal Committee

A project appraisal committee (PAC) meeting was held in December 2018. The meeting approved in principle the prodoc and SESP, subject to Yuhe NR content revision and review.

#### **Coordination & Operational Management by the Executing Agency / Implementing Partner (Gansu FGB / PMO)**

The project was under UNDP National Implementation Modality (NIM) with Gansu FGB as the Executive. The project was jointly managed by UNDP / Gansu FGB via a Project Implementation Office (PMO), with fund disbursement based on quarterly plans and invoicing.

#### Project Steering Committee (PSC)

The project document (prodoc) was signed in January 2019 by the International Finance Cooperation Department, Ministry of Finance; the Gansu FGB, and UNDP. The first PSC meeting held in May 2019. Further meetings were held in November 2020, March 2022, and March 2023. The PSC meetings were well attended with county representation (County Natural Resource Bureaus / FGBs), project NRs. Of note:

<b>PSC notes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1st meeting (2019) –</li> <li>- UNDP recommended CTA input increased from 2.5 days to 5 days / month</li> <li>- Recommended for a Monitoring &amp; Safeguards position for 1.5 months / year</li> <li>- Budget for PM and Landscape Coordinator switched</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting (2020) –</li> <li>- Agreed the 2020-2021 TYWPB</li> <li>- Issues caused by the current institutional reform have been resolved, and hopes to accelerate the project implementation</li> <li>- Delay caused by the poor management system in the early stage</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting (2022) –</li> <li>- PSC – new member list announced</li> <li>- MTR Rated project as satisfactory</li> <li>- 2022-23 WPB approved</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4<sup>th</sup> meeting (2023) –</li> <li>- Management Response to MTR included in TYWPB (2022-23)</li> <li>- TYWPB adopted; Review of TYWPB (2023-24)</li> <li>- ESIA, ESMP and Indigenous Peoples' Plan (IPP) updated. Project was high-risk during UNDP SESP, thus ESIA prepared</li> <li>- As of 31 December 2022, disbursement was 71% of GEF grant, &amp; 61% of government in-kind</li> </ul>

For example, attendance of PSC in March 2022 - Representatives of UNDP, Gansu FGB, PSC members, Gansu Forest Fire Prevention Warning & Monitoring Information Centre (FFWMC) (Gansu Foreign Funded Forestry Project Management Office) , representatives of PMUs and project subcontractors

#### Project Leadership and PMO Staffing

The leadership at NPD level changed five times during the project, which was not ideal, but at this higher level may have had limited impact. A Project Coordination Office (PCO) was established within the International Division of the Gansu Department of Finance (DoF), with the division chief as director. The PCO designated an official for supervising the project and coordinating fund disbursement.

The PMO was set up within the Gansu Forest Fire Warning & Monitoring Centre (FFWMC, as part of / within the



Gansu Foreign-funded FGB PMO). The director of the centre served as the PMO director, with the ability to execute project requests / decisions on behalf of government, thus making a workable arrangement (together with the PCO), as the PMO PM was a project-hired position. The PMO comprised of PM, CTA, Landscape coordinator and project assistant, of which the CTA was a part time position, but needed to be hands-on on a daily basis. Gansu FGB deployed one staff member to provide technical support for PMO, which helped support the project from a government perspective. Local coordination was established through eight local PMO offices, each with a coordinator. The PMO was also supported through the hire of national consultants and consultant firms / NGOs (~30 sub-contracts in total).

### 3.2.2 Institutional Mechanisms & Stakeholder Engagement

#### Gansu Forest & Grassland Bureau (FGB)

When the Forest Bureau became the FGB in 2018, there was a Forest Chief Scheme set-up with a designated political leader in each county to pay attention and solve problems. Problems solved included: In Hezheng valley there was a mine, which was suspended and restoration measures begun.

#### Community Co-management Committees (CCCs)

Community co-management committees (CCCs) were established for the four NRs and agreements signed between the NRs and the Village Administrative Committees to manage natural resource use and protect forest and wildlife, in return for participation and benefit from project activities and financial inputs towards socio-economic development in these communities. These CCCs were a key part of the functioning and future sustainability of the project.

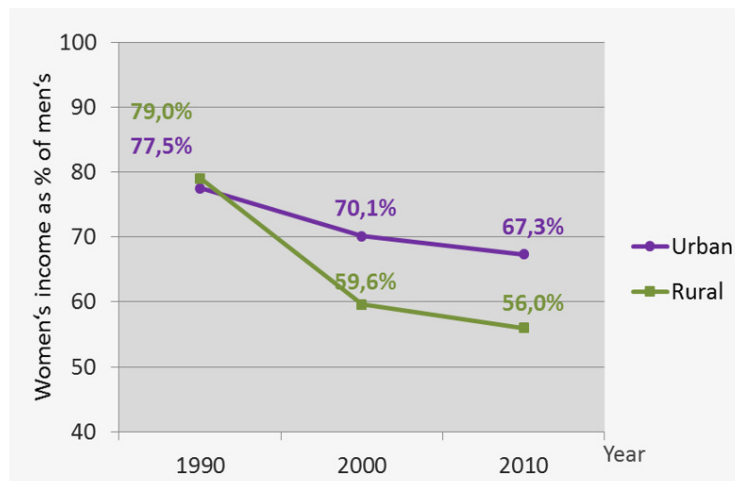
The list of key stakeholders is described in **Annex 8**.

### 3.2.3 Gender Analysis – Women’s Empowerment

During design, the project was UNDP-classified as having ‘gender equality as a significant objective’ (UN Gender Marker – GEN-2)

#### Gender Analysis & Plan

As an annex to the prodoc, a Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan (2018, pp23) was prepared. The report includes a very informative graph regarding women’s income as a percentage of men’s income:



(Source – ACWF 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> survey on status of women as cited in UNDP Project Gender Plan)

For rural women, their parentage of income in comparison to men has fallen from 79% in 1990 to 56% in 2010.

One indicator (No. 1) was suitable for gender-dis-aggregated data in the logframe

Indicator – Direct project beneficiaries	Target (Number)	Result
A / Communities in the four NRs	3,800 (60% women)	4,015 (of which 49% women)
B/ Training for Gansu FGB, Bailongjiang FA, EAPC staff and other stakeholders	750 (of which 40% women)	1,770 (of which 460 women at 26%)

Whilst the overall numbers for direct beneficiaries and those trained, including women exceeded targets, the final percentage breakdown on women beneficiaries / trained did not match this. For a full breakdown of the gender

plan results – see **Annex 5**.

### 3.2.4 Finance & Co-finance

#### UNDP / IP Financial management and Finance

The project formulated a Financial Management System which included approval procedures, accounting, internal control, asset management and file management. The project funds were under the supervision of the UNDP, PCO and PMO. The PMO formulated quarterly workplans (and budgets) were signed by the PMO and PCO and submitted to UNDP for approval, after which the grant funds were transferred to the Gansu DoF.

Expenditure vouchers were reviewed by the PCO and the UNDP FACE table was signed by both the PMO and PCO, before submission to UNDP. After approval, the PMO then submitted a request to PCO to fund release, in a reimbursement method.

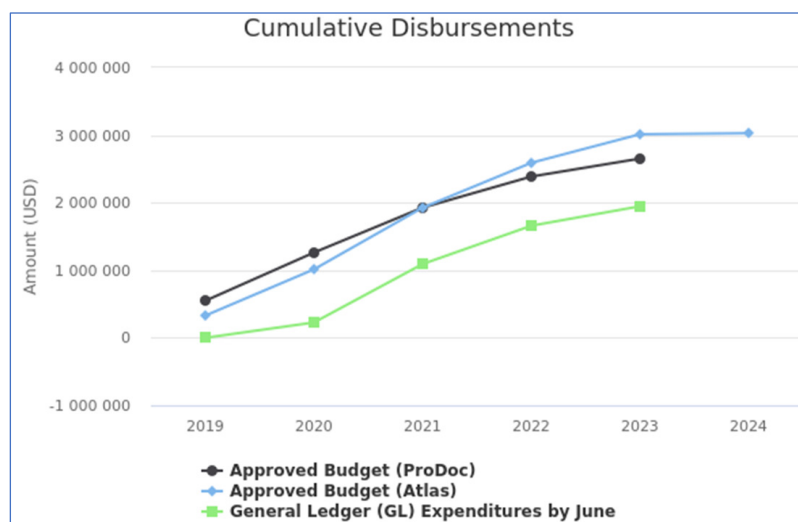
In June 2023, the financial management was handed over to the FGB's FFWMC, which was reported to be in accordance with their financial management regulations. The reason for this significant change was unclear, especially if the project was working well according to its quarterly planning and spending process, and as also indicated in the annual audits, including for 2022. However, from January – June 2023, PMO staff were not paid as the FFWMC objected to the PMO staffing budget (despite its TYWPB approval). This resulted in the pace of project implementation being slowed down and for example the resignation of the PMO's Landscape Coordinator in July 2023. The PMO confirmed that staff would be paid until February 2024, and that funds were sufficient. The project expected to utilise all funds by end of project.

#### Project spend by year against the prodoc plan

US\$ / Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total USD
Prodoc	547,930	713,865	664,815	459,927	265,757	2,652,294
Total Disbursed	132,538	599,113	825,544	341,067	61,611	1,959,873
Balance	415,392	114,752	-160,729	118,860	204,146	692,421
% remaining	75.8	16.1	-24.2	25.8	76.8	26.1

There was little variance between annual prodoc budgets and spending, apart from the common front-loading of planned spending in the first year.

The breakdown of planned and actual expenditures by year and component is provided in **Annex 4**.



Source – PIR to end June 2023

Cumulative GL delivery against total approved amount (in prodoc)	73.38%
Cumulative GL delivery against expected delivery as of this year	73.38%
Cumulative disbursement as of 30 June 2023	1,946,325

PPG Amount	100,000
GEF Grant Amount	2,652,294
Co-financing	18,045,000

### Audits

- 2022 – the audit reported – ‘the project’s internal control system was generally effective in providing timely information for project management and was generally effective in protecting project assets and resources’
- 2021 – the audit reported
  - o ‘the project’s internal control system was generally effective in providing timely information for project management and was generally effective in protecting project assets and resources’
  - o The project office did not record bank interest which was RMB 6,556
- 2020 – the audit recorded similar information to 2021

### Co-financing

Co-financing contributions, either as direct support funds (grant or in-kind) or as complementary funds (e.g. linking up with similar project in a nearby area), are not formally accounted for under GEF methods, with only the GEF and any UNDP funds accounted / audited. With this level of oversight, the extent of co-financing is based on FGB / PMO / PCO figures. Letters of co-financing were provided.

The government - Gansu Department of Finance (DoF) - in-kind / cash was estimated at (all recurrent):

Co-financing - Government only (\$)	Endorsement	18th July 2023
In kind	18,000,000	24,553,443
Cash	0	142,857
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,000,000</b>	<b>24,696,300</b>

The provincial co-financing funds were managed from the basic account of the FGB’s FFWMC and accounted for under provincial financial requirements. The proportion of cash co-financing was very small, with more discussion needed at PPG stage to increase this

UNDP Co-financing - As of end June 2023, UNDP spend was \$36,000 out of a planned \$45,000 (Source Gansu PMO Self Evaluation Report)

A breakdown of co-financing was provided as **Annex 3**.

### **3.2.5 M&E Systems – Design & Implementation**

The M&E system design and the implementation of the M&E system was rated as **Moderately Satisfactory**.

UNDP GEF projects have a particular M&E system that is report-based, centred around an annual PIR that runs mid to mid-year. The M&E system is based on a mixture of UNDP’s contractual compliance with GEF and its own systems, and checking the IP in terms of its contractual compliance of deliverables. These include annual workplans with budgets (AWPBs)<sup>5</sup>, PIRs, and audits, with an MTR and Terminal Evaluation (this report).

Apart from this, the project’s primary method of M&E was *ad hoc* PMO, UNDP staff and consultants ‘back to office’ mission / deliverable reports. There was no M&E specialist employed for this project.

It would have been useful for UNDP to have encouraged a spreadsheet tracking system, that ran annually and cumulatively with all the project numbers - inputs and outputs. For example, indicators (and their baselines and targets) are often number-based, whereas reporting is primarily text-based, with a few numbers ‘put-in’, but often not dated.

#### MTR & UNDP Management Response

An MTR was prepared in November 2021 (100pp), with the ratings given as: Objective – S; Outcomes 1 to 3 - S; UNDP / PMO Implementation – MS; Sustainability – L. [The TE ratings were similar, MS, MS, S, S, S and MU respectively]. The MTR recommendations included:

- Ecological Corridor Areas (ECAs) – Clarify how the establishment of the four corridors will be measured and include this in the results framework; develop an ecological objective for each corridor, including diagrams showing the corridor in the landscape and the wildlife populations that will benefit

The Management Response (MR) indicated for the ECAs to:

- Establish an ECA network committee (prior to June 2022) – Completed
- Identify the protection status of the EC (prior to December 2022) – Initiated

<sup>5</sup> In the case of this project, Two Year Workplan & Budgets were prepared, but updated annually

- Make diagrams with ECA location and restoration (prior to December 2022) – Not Initiated

### Exit Strategy

The PMO was in process to develop handover documents and a sustainability plan.

### Assets & Equipment

Two asset lists were produced – one for items above \$1,500 and one for items below this value

For selected equipment above \$1,500 (in US\$, up to end December 2022)<sup>6</sup>:

#### Equipment

- Tea leaf picking machine – Yunong Tea Farmers - \$7,490
- Cameras x 3 and lenses x 2 – YNR, CNR, ANR - \$46,359
- Combine harvester machine – Cuoxi Village Committee, Diebu County - \$15,190
- Sound equipment – Duo'er NR - \$6,115

#### Equipment (<\$1,500)

- Computers, laptops x 41 – for NRs, County FGB of Hezheng and Liangdang, NRB of Zhouqu County
- Field survey equipment – GPS, infrared x 8, binoculars, cameras
- Tea Drying machine (x2); rolling machine (x4); feeding machine; withering slot; sealing machine; tea processing machine; flat tea frying machine (x6) – Yunong Tea Cooperative
- Tents x 11; water pumps x 2 – Dayi Village Committee
- Tillers x 5 – Lamogaituo Village Committee
- Mobiles, USB, printers, desktops (x6 to EAPC), Farmer tricycle
- Other equipment

The equipment purchased was useful, especially to support farming intensification, tea processing, and SMART patrolling. However, the specification and procurement price for the 3 Canon cameras and 2 lenses at \$46,359, was excessive. Project vehicles were not purchased but rented, which would also have been expensive.

### **3.2.6 Adaptive Management (Work planning, Reporting & Communications)**

#### **Work planning**

##### Project duration

The project started in January 2019 and will end in January 2024.

##### Inception Workshop

The Inception Workshop report was dated May 2019, and included minutes of the PSC meeting from May 2019. The workshop included 38 participants.

##### Two-Year Workplan & Budgets (TYWPB)

There were five two year workplans and budgets (TYWPB) produced<sup>7</sup>, which were signed by UNDP and endorsed by the PMO Director. The TYWPBs were presented by Output (with Activities described) against the standard UNDP accounting codes (with division by Description, and amount / percentage). They were also divided financially by eight quarters. The responsible party tended to be either Gansu FGB PMO or the PMO PAs.

The TYWPB (2023-24) was signed by UNDP at the end of April 2023, almost four months after the beginning of the plan timetable. The TYWPB (2022-23) was signed early March 2022, which was better. The preceding TYWPB plan 2021-22 was signed without date of signature.

#### **Reporting**

##### Project Implementation Reviews (UNDP GEF PIRs)

Four PIRs were produced - To end-June 2020, end-June 2021, end-June 2022, end-June 2023. Pertinent information is presented in the relevant sections of this TE report. E.g. gender, risk, disbursement, social & environmental standards.

#### **Communications & Visibility**

The project used an on-line office automation (OA) system to receive / send reports, which the project instigated, updating from the FGB system. 'Docu sign' was also used.

The GEF and UNDP logos were present on project outputs such as the tea machines. The project was visible on

<sup>6</sup> The equipment is roughly grouped by beneficiary

<sup>7</sup> 2019-20; 2020-21; 2021-22; 2022-23; and 2023-24

social media. (see also Training & Awareness section)

### 3.3. Project Results

The TE assessed the three levels of the project results framework - Objective, Outcome and Output. This was guided by the indicators and targets set at each level. Project success is also built upon achievement of the outputs, according to 'framework logic.' The Objective and Outcome levels include a rating according to UNDP GEF guidance as described in **Annex 9**. UNDP / PMO were provided with two tables:

- Progress towards Objective and Outcomes (Indicator-based) which is described in **Annex 1**, and
- Progress towards Outputs which is described in **Annex 2**

According to TE guidance, these tables were rated and commented on. A detailed result-level analysis follows firstly of the Objective, Outcomes with their Indicators, and then the corresponding Outputs.

#### 3.3.1 Overall Result – Achievement of the Objective Indicators

##### Objective Level Indicators (Overall Result)

##### **Conservation of biodiversity through the legal & institutional framework, reforming and mainstreaming the PA system, enhancing habitat connectivity and reducing key threats (3 indicators)**

The overall grading is **Moderately Satisfactory**. There were three indicators attached to the objective level which were all rated as: satisfactory; moderately satisfactory; and moderately unsatisfactory (see **Annex 1**). The Satisfactory indicator concerned the numbers of PA staff and community members trained, which including for women was good and exceeded targets; the MS rating was for expansion of the PA network which included the project-outlined ECAs being encompassed within national park or public welfare forest (PWF) areas. The MU rating concerned the status of threatened species which for snow leopard the data was insufficient and for giant panda, their numbers fell.

##### **Number of direct project beneficiaries (Indicator 1)**

*(Baseline – 0; Target – (a) 3,800 (60% women) community persons in Axia, Chagangliang, Duoer and Yuhe NRs<sup>8</sup>; (b) 750 (40% women) persons trained from Gansu FGB, Bailongjiang FA, EAPC, PAs and ECAs*

##### *Result against Indicator*

a) 4,015 (49% women); b) 1,770 (26% women)

##### *Analysis*

For indicator 1b, 460 women were trained, which as a percentage of the target of 750 persons trained, is 61%

##### **Ecological Corridor Areas (ECAs) and PA System expanded by >25,000 ha, increasing coverage of KBAs with emphasis on habitat connectivity (Indicator 2)**

*(Baseline - 0; Target - added 25,000 ha of PA estate / ECA, of which Yuhe NR - 4,376 ha (NP corridor); Chagangliang NR / Zhouqu County – 6,920 ha; Liangdang County - c.2,973 ha; and Hezheng County - c.12,000 ha*

##### *Result against Indicator*

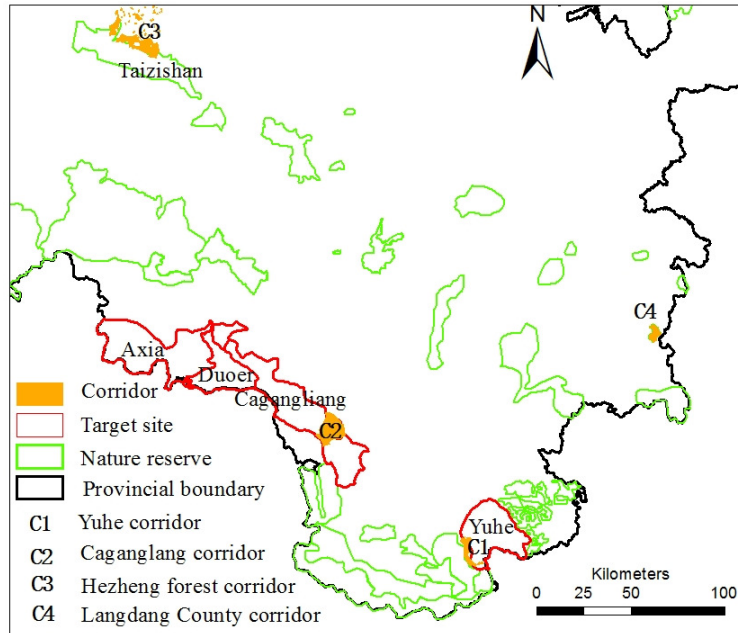
The view of the project was that these proposed ECAs have now gained a form of conservation status. Before the project, these areas were located outside PAs and were not included in the scope of Public welfare forest (PWF). Now the proposed areas are either included in PA or in PWF, which means that there should be specific funds for conservation and restoration, monitoring and patrolling and wildlife conservation regulation. ECAs:

	<b>Proposed ECA</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>Legal Status of ECA</b>
<b>Yuhe ECA (C1)</b>	ECA between Baishuijiang NNR and Yuhe PNR which was mostly community forest land	4,376 ha	7,426 ha	ECA integrated in to Panda NP
<b>Chagangliang ECA (C2)</b>	ECA between two parts of Chagangliang PNR and belongs to a SFU	6,920 ha	6,920 ha	ECA integrated in to Public Welfare Forest (PWF)

<sup>8</sup> Villages: Chagangliang NR: Duola (804), Jueerli (319), Chaping (716); Yuhe NR: Yanwan (546), Qiangjia (667), Zhangjiayuan (305); Duoer NR: Yangbu (909), Baigu (814), Zailiao (775); Axia NR: Kelang (515), Yala (533), Mogou (864).

<b>Hezheng Forest ECA (C3)</b>	Adjacent to Taizishan NNR and belongs to a SFU	12,000 ha	13,767 ha	ECA integrated into Public Welfare Forest
<b>Liangdang County ECA (C4)</b>	ECA between Lingguanxia NR and belongs to SFU (Xiaolongshan Forestry Protection Centre)	2,973 ha	8,384 ha	ECA (1,419 ha) integrated into Lingguanxia NR (2023); ECA (4,064 ha) integrated into PWF
		26,269	36,497	

### ECAs – Location Map



Source – Prodoc Annex R – Gap Analysis

### Analysis

It should be remembered that the ECAs are a conservation tool and in this case a project-construct. There were no actual ECAs legally designated, just areas that were identified as important to be protected as wildlife corridor area. Thereafter, the project-proposed ECAs were redefined as standard conservation or natural resource protection areas in terms of NP or PWF<sup>9</sup>. This also avoided any change in land jurisdiction.

### Status of threatened species (Indicator 3)

(Baseline – in 2017; Target – see table)

### Result against Indicator

Threatened Species	Baseline	Target	Result
Golden snub-nosed monkey EN	1006 YNR	Stable as baseline	Small increase, with ~1,100 monkeys, with no significant change in habitat range
Giant panda VU	5 ANR, 4 CNR, 10 DNR, 1 YNR (=20); (132 in Gansu in total)	“	Fall from 20 to 13 (Numbers based on scats) ~3 ANR, ~3 CNR, 7 DNR, and ~0-1 in Yuhe. These 4 PAs are marginal areas for the panda, plus bamboo has not regrown since flowering /dying in 2005, thus panda may have migrated to Jiuzhaigou and Ruoergai counties.
Forest musk deer EN	NA ANR, 200 CNR, 100 DNR, NA YNR	“	Slight increase from 300, now estimated at 375 deer (DNR, ANR and CNRs ~75 each; Yuhe NR ~150) Based on 11 deer on infrared cameras, 45 sets of faeces from transect monitoring, and survey data
Takin VU	2 ANR, NA CNR, 70 DNR, 75 YNR	“	Increase 180 ANR, 150 CNR, 246 DNR, 350 YNR
Black bear VU	10 ANR, NA	“	36 ANR, 20 CNR, 15 DNR, 33 YNR

<sup>9</sup> As an example of government recognition - In 2023, the Gansu Government issued the Reply of the Gansu People's Government on the Scope and Functional Zoning of Four NRs including Jianshan Mountain in Wenxian County, which stated that Longnan (Yuhe NR and the corridor area designed by the project, and Liangdang County are included in the PA estate.

	CNR, ~100 DNR		overall increase
Chinese Giant salamander CR	5 rivers in 5 km <sup>2</sup> of habitat YNR	“	Stable, possible increase, no increase in habitat The population suffered serious damage from 1990 - 2000, plus after 2010 hunting decreased
Snow leopard VU	306-576 QMNR	“	~600 with a confidence interval of 400-800 (Scientific Report of Qilian Mountain National Park prepared by Gansu and Qinghai FGBs)
Przewalski's horse EN	98 EAPC	Rise by 7	Increase to 145
Bactrian camel CR	19 EAPC	Rise by 5	increase to 26
Saiga antelope CR	107 EAPC	Rise by 30	Decrease to 50 due to disease

Key: Axia = ANR, Chaganliang = CNR, Duoer = DNR, Yuhe = YNR, QMNR = Qilian Mountains NR, Endangered Animal Protection Centre = EAPC); NA not available

The reason for the wide confidence level with snow leopard was due to the limitations of snow leopard research and survey methods and surveys not having started until recently. Concerning giant panda nutrition, whilst periodic bamboo flowering and subsequent die-off before regeneration from seed occurs, is a natural event, there is a lack of understanding in the conditions needed for re-growth.

#### Analysis

The result that stood out was the wide confidence level in the estimated number of snow leopard. This was the most worrying in terms of management effectiveness (for seasonal habitat and prey species maintenance). The other concerning result was the apparent loss of giant panda and its habitat.

To note also, without limiting factors, the annual natural population increase for Saiga is ~1.4, as its birth rate tends towards two calves<sup>10</sup>. The loss of Saiga through virtually all its regional populations such as in Central Asia due to a respiratory disease is well known, but not well understood.

### 3.3.2 Effectiveness – Achievement of the Outcome Indicators and Outputs

#### Effectiveness – Outcome 1 at the Indicator and Output Level

#### Outcome 1 - Legal & institutional framework for PAs, KBAs and threatened species, with mainstreaming of biodiversity into Gansu planning (5 indicators)

The overall grading is **Moderately Satisfactory**. There were five indicators attached to the Outcome 1 level which were rated as: moderately satisfactory (see **Annex 1**).

The expected results from Outcome 1 included:

- Five biodiversity-related laws revised with the provision for KBAs, threatened species, and responsible monitoring agency approved by government, with biodiversity also mainstreamed into the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP
- Gansu Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (BSAP) updated and approved
- Capacity development improvement for Gansu FGB, Bailongjiang Forestry Administration and Gansu EAPC
- Financial sustainability improvement including resource allocation for an expanded PA system, with KBAs

#### Legal, policy & institutional frameworks reflect national policy for biodiversity conservation (Indicator 4)

*(Baseline – Biodiversity laws out of date; No Gansu BSAP; No community co-management mechanism; Target – Revision of five biodiversity related laws submitted and approved by Gansu government; Gansu BSAP reflecting biodiversity policy is approved; Community co-management agreements for Axia, Chaganliang, Duoer & Yuhe NRs under implementation)*

#### Result against Indicator

Four pieces of legislation were updated: National Park Interim Administrative Measures (May 2022); Forest Law Implementation Measures (May 2021); Key Wetlands Management - Trial Implementation (December 2020); and Environmental Protection Regulations (December 2019). The project prepared a report on the Gansu Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (BSAP, 2020-30). It included a stronger focus on the recognition and designation of KBAs<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Source general internet literature and having experience of Saiga conservation projects

<sup>11</sup> As part of China's commitment to COP15 (2023), and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project requested the Foreign Environment Cooperation Centre of MEE to open bidding to update the Gansu BCAP (2020-30) as per the national BSAP. The plan is a point of reference for the Gansu Department of Ecology & Environment's Biodiversity Conservation Plan (2021-35)

### Analysis

The preparation and update of conservation legislation and plans was dispersed across seven indicators. The table below covers them all in one place:

#### Approvals for legislation required according to the project design and logframe indicators

Gansu Legislation to be prepared or revised	Responsible Party	Outcome (Indicator)	Status / Approval Date
Biodiversity conservation mainstreamed into 14 <sup>th</sup> Gansu FYP	Gansu government	1 (6)	2022
Regulations on Management of NRs (1999) Regulations on Environmental Protection (2004) Rules on Implementing the Forest Law (2002 & 2010) Rules on Implementing the Wildlife Law (1990, 2004) Regulations on Protection of Wetland (2003)	Gansu government	1 (4a)	Forest law (2021) Wetland (Trial, 2020) Environment (Adopted by Legal Affairs Committee, 2019)
Administrative Measures for NPs	Gansu government		NP Administrative Measures - Interim (2022)
Laws for wildlife conservation and NR management reflecting KBAs	Gansu government	1 (5)	Not completed. FGB's Draft Plan for KBAs and ECAs for habitat connectivity submitted by FGB to Ministry of Ecology & Environment (MEE). FGB to submit final plan in 2025
Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan to be revised	Gansu government	1 (4b)	Only just started - Out to tender in 2023 (Belongs to Department of Ecology & Environment, not FGB)
Sustainable financing plan for PA system expansion	Gansu FGB	1 (8)	Not completed. However financing plans for the 4 NRs were produced
Plans and regulations for PA expansion and ECAs establishment (for the areas specified)	Gansu FGB	2 (2)	ECAs were not formally created, but their areas were placed under NP or PWF control
Community co-management agreements with NR for four project sites		2 (4c)	4 signed in 2021

One policy was updated – 14<sup>th</sup> FYP. There were four pieces of legislation updated to various degrees: Forest law (2021) revised; Wetland law and NP Administrative Measures were revised but on an interim or trial basis; and updates for the Environment Law were approved, but not enacted.

Laws and / or plans reflecting KBAs and ECAs, such as FGB's draft plan for habitat connectivity and the Gansu BSAP were not approved, but rather pushed along to 2025 and required national level approval. A Gansu PA financing plan was not prepared although financing plans for the four project NRs were produced. At the local level community co-management agreements were created with the communities adjacent or inside the four NRs

The most notable omission was the lack of presentation of the BSAP or any update of it. This was one of the key design features of the project, but it was not undertaken. It also was not under the direct remit of the project partner – FGB, but rather under the Department of Ecology & Environment (DEE), thus the reason for lack of update was considered (by the TE) partly an institutional issue<sup>12</sup>.

#### Provincial laws for wildlife conservation and NR management with KBAs reflecting responsible agency for monitoring and reporting (Indicator 5)

*(Baseline – Legal framework doesn't include KBAs and ECA network in the PA system, no agency reporting requirement for KBAs and threatened species; Target - Revised provincial laws)*

#### Result against Indicator

The project prepared the 'Gap Analysis for Gansu Endangered Species Protection and for PA Planning', which was agreed in principle by FGB, but has yet to be formally adopted. The gap analysis supported the FGB's 'Plan for integration & optimization of PAs' which is part of a national effort. The draft plan has been agreed by the Ministry

<sup>12</sup> The PMO reason given was that because there was a new biodiversity framework under COP15, the project / DEE should wait until the national BSAP was updated first and the Gansu BSAP could follow. The TE view is that this was a very top-down approach and just avoided the project / DEE undertaking a major commitment according to the project design



of Ecology & Environment (MEE) and the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), with a final deadline for submission in 2025<sup>13</sup>. KBA coverage and the connectivity of threatened species' habitats will be increased under this plan.

#### Analysis

The inclusion of ECAs or KBAs into Gansu law was not evident.

Prodoc Annex - Report on PA and Biodiversity Conservation Situation Analysis (2017, pp52)

A useful document to understand key wildlife species habitat needs.

#### **Biodiversity mainstreamed into the Gansu FYP with protection of KBAs and species (Indicator 6)**

*(Baseline – Gansu 13<sup>th</sup> FYP describes projects on NRs, wildlife conservation and ecological function zones; Target – Safeguards for biodiversity conservation, KBAs and threatened species included in 14<sup>th</sup> FYP for key sectors)*

#### Result against Indicator

Gansu BSAP was mainstreamed into the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP for eight sectoral / departmental chapters in terms of objectives, direction, and priority areas. The departmental chapters included: Forest & Grassland Protection & Development Plan; Agriculture & Rural Sector; Water Conservancy Development; Transport Development Plan; Ecology & Environmental Protection Plan; Natural Resources Management; Economic & Social Development; and Culture & Tourism Development.

#### Analysis

The expectation of the indicator was that KBAs would be legally recognised or at least their areas included as conservation areas in planning, however the FYP is a policy document. The impact of inclusion of biodiversity protection in the higher-level FYP was difficult to determine. There was little evidence of KBAs being recognised<sup>14</sup>.

#### **Institutional capacity to administer the Gansu PA System and threatened species conservation (Indicator 7)**

*(Capacity to manage the PA System and threatened species, indicated by UNDP capacity development scorecard)*

#### Result against Indicator

Nature Reserve (%)	Baseline	Target	Result
Gansu FGB	53	84	89
Bailongjiang Forestry Administration	38	72	74
Gansu Endangered Animal Protection Centre	57	84	84

#### Analysis

According to the self-assessed scorecard, there was an improvement in institutional capacity to manage the PA system.

#### **PA system financing gap (Indicator 8)**

*(Baseline – The Gansu PA system is centrally financed and lacks funding diversification. PA system management cost financing gap is US\$81,740,000; Target - PA system financing gap reduced to US\$ 57,218,000 (30% reduction)*

#### Result against Indicator

The PA System management cost has a funding gap of US\$44.3 m. The project produced four NR Financing Plans which supported the financial planning of these reserves: Bailongjiang A'xia NR Sustainable Financing Plan; Chaganliang NR Sustainable Financing Plan; Yuhe Nature Reserve Sustainable Financing Plan; and Duo'er National NR Sustainable Financing Plan<sup>15</sup>.

#### Analysis

<sup>13</sup> The FGB submitted a draft plan for optimisation of PAs to the SFGA. However, it was deemed necessary to wait for the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Land Use Survey before approving provincial plan for PAs. This survey was finalized in 2022, but contains issues with land use for agriculture, forestry and grassland. Agreement is needed with the MNR and the SFGA to resolve by 2024. Thus the FGB plan will not be approved until 2025. The TE view is that this is another topdown approach which absolves the responsibility of the FGB to fully map important conservation areas and PAs.

<sup>14</sup> The project's expert report titled 'Feedback from the FGB's DoF & Planning on inclusion of KBAs in their chapter of the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP mentions ECAs three times, but not KBAs.

<sup>15</sup> Duoer NR - the GPNP part is under the FGB; A'xia and Chaganliang PAs are under the direct management of the Bailongjiang Forestry Management Bureau. According to the government's administrative process, there is no need for approval from DoF. Thus, the financing plans of the four NRs were approved by their line authorities, which is recognized by government.

The funding gap remains highly significant, albeit surpassing the indicator target. The issue with the plans was that there was no evidence of funding endorsement or implementation.

## Outputs under Outcome 1

### Output 1.1 - Legal regulations with compliance monitoring for protection of threatened species and KBAs

#### Result & Analysis

See Indicator 4

### Output 1.2 - BSAP updated with protection of KBAs and threatened species mainstreamed in the Gansu FYP

#### Result

As support towards updating the BSAP, the project produced – ‘Gap Analysis on the Protection of Endangered Species in PA Planning’ and the FGB produced – ‘PA Integration & Optimization Plan (See Indicators 5 and 6). Concerning the ‘existing BSAP’<sup>16</sup>, it was reported that the distribution and description of KBAs were clearly defined<sup>17</sup>.

#### Analysis

FGB’s draft plan for KBA coverage and ECAs for habitat connectivity was submitted to Ministry of Ecology & Environment (MEE), however FGB only need to submit the final plan in 2025. This plan, the project gap analysis and the existing BSAP were not made available to the TE to confirm or review.

### Output 1.3 – Plans for conservation, rehabilitation and reintroduction of priority threatened species

#### Result & Analysis

The project also produced two reports: Gansu Endangered Animal Protection Centre (EAPC) - Impact Assessment Report; and Re-introduction of Species report:

- EAPC Impact Assessment Report - Evaluates the progress of species reintroduction, including an overview of reintroduced species, the preparation of species before reintroduction, the work during the reintroduction, and the progress of work after reintroduction (with a focus on the flagship species of Saiga antelope, Przewalski’s horse, Bactrian camel, and Sichuan golden snub-nosed monkey).
- The impact of conservation activities was assessed, including biodiversity benefits. The management and funding situation, the implementation of the reintroduction work and the impact on the surrounding residents were evaluated. There were aspects that need to be optimized. Five suggestions were put forward<sup>18</sup>:
- Species Re-introduction Technical Advisory Report – Collation of international standards and guidelines for reference. A comparison diagram of the standardized work steps of species reintroduction was made, with a comparison chart, the conservation activities that should be conducted after species introduction/reintroduction, and the welfare reintroduction work that should be carried out during the process of species reintroduction were suggested.

### Output 1.4 – Assessment / Plan for PA system’s functional integrity supported by an ECA network

#### Result

#### Review of Plans

##### **Bailongjiang A’xia Nature Reserve Management Plan (2021-25)**

- Date of approval: November 26, 2020 and by Gansu Bailongjiang Forestry Administration
- A’xia NR covers an area of 135,536 ha, and its functional areas are divided into core area, buffer area and experimental area. The core area of A’xia NR is 51,699 ha, the buffer area is 45,020 ha, and the experimental area is 38,817 ha
- Including threat rating, limiting factors, protection targets, strategic actions; Not involving SMART monitoring system
- 22 objectives with 95 actions listed

<sup>16</sup> Or documents representing the BSAP such as the gap analysis and optimisation plan as previously mentioned

<sup>17</sup> In the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter, the distribution of 12 KBAs in Gansu, including Jinta, Minqin, Eastern Qilian Mountains, Heshui, Pingliang, Lianhuashan, Zhuoni, Gahai-Zecha, Minshan, Shouqu of Yellow River, Baishuijiang NR, and Longshengou NR, are described. The scope and distribution of key ecological function zones in Gansu and the distribution of priority protection areas in Gansu or part of the national protection priority areas in Gansu were introduced.

<sup>18</sup> (i) improve the management system, innovate the cooperation mechanism; (ii) – conduct a funding needs assessment, and ensure the sustainability of funds; (iii) - hardware construction, technical cooperation, and improve research monitoring capabilities; (iv) - increase training, strengthen cooperation, and improve scientific research; (v) - enhance the awareness of protection.

- The total investment is 39.23 million RMB, including 10.2 m RMB from national finance or project (mainly from the SFGA), 6.03 m RMB from the Gansu FGB, 18.21 m RMB from the state, county finance or project, 3.33 m RMB from the social organization, 0.8 m RMB from the horizontal cooperation, and 0.66 m RMB from self-financing.

**Yuhe Nature Reserve Management Plan (2021-25)**

- Date of approval: November 26, 2020 and by FGB of Wudu District, Longnan City
- Yuhe NR is 74,944 ha, and its functional areas are divided into core area, buffer area and experimental area. Core area of Yuhe NR is 20,352 ha, the buffer area is 20,426 ha, and the experimental area is 34,266 ha
- Including analysis of key protected objects and targets in the PA, the current status of PA, and the analysis of the problems; Not involving SMART monitoring system
- The SFGA invested 25.02 million yuan, the Gansu FGB invested 6.251 m yuan, the local government invested 13.208 m yuan, and self-raised 464000 yuan.

**Bailongjiang Chagangliang Nature Reserve Management Plan (2021-25)**

- Date of approval: December 1, 2020 and by Gansu Bailongjiang Forestry Administration
- Total area of Chagangliang NR is 83,054 ha, and its functional areas are divided into core area, buffer area and experimental area. The functional area of Chagangliang NR is divided into the core area of 27105 ha, the buffer area of 13,701 ha, and the experimental area of 42248 ha
- Including analysis of the current situation of NR, analysis of management problems in NR, and analysis of countermeasures for existing problems in NR management; Not involving SMART monitoring system
- The total estimated investment for project implementation is RMB 23,893,900, of which RMB 22,638,900 is from the central government, accounting for 94.74% of the total budget; Local finance is 262,000 yuan, accounting for 1.09% of the total budget; Self-raised funds of 993,000 yuan, accounting for 4.17% of the total budget.

Nature Reserve Sustainable Financing Plans

- **Bailongjiang A'xia Nature Reserve Sustainable Financing Plan (2021-25)**
- Date of approval: March 16, 2021 and by Gansu Bailongjiang Forestry Administration
- A'xia NR covers an area of 135,536 ha, and its functional areas are divided into core area, buffer area and experimental area. The core area of A'xia NR is 51699 ha, the buffer area is 45,020 ha, and the experimental area is 38,817 ha
- Including feasibility and necessity analysis, financial status analysis, financing channel evaluation, strategy and action plan, investment estimation, benefit analysis, and safeguard measures. Not involving SMART patrolling system
- The estimated total investment for sustainable financing activities in the A'xia NR is 13.845 million yuan, including 4.045 m yuan from fiscal funds, 350,000 yuan from social funds, 1 m yuan from private enterprises, and 8.45 m yuan from uncertain funds. This portion of funds may come from fiscal funds or social funds.

**Yuhe Nature Reserve Sustainable Financing Plan (2021-25)**

- Date of approval: March 26, 202 and by FGB of Wudu District, Longnan City
- Yuhe NR is 74,944 ha, and its functional areas are divided into core area, buffer area and experimental area. Core area of Yuhe NR is 20,352 ha, the buffer area is 20,426 ha, and the experimental area is 34,266 ha
- Includes risk management for the implementation of the Yuhe Nature Reserve Financing Plan. Not involving SMART monitoring system
- The National Forestry and Grassland Administration invested 500,000 yuan, the Gansu FGB invested 500,000 yuan, the local government invested 1.715 million yuan, and self-raised funds of 20,000 yuan.

**Chagangliang Nature Reserve Sustainable Financing Plan (2021-25)**

- Date of approval: March 16, 2021 and by Gansu Bailongjiang Forestry Administration
- Chagangliang NR is 83,054 ha, and its functional areas are divided into core area, buffer area and experimental area. Functional area of Chagangliang NR is divided into the core area of 27105 ha, the buffer area of 13,701 ha, and the experimental area of 42,248 ha
- Including the evaluation of investment status and gap analysis of Chagangliang NR, evaluation of financing channels of Chagangliang NR. Not involving SMART patrolling system
- The project requires a total financing of 23.75 million yuan. Among them, the central government's financing amount is 16.63 m yuan, accounting for approximately 70% of the total financing amount; Gansu financing amounted to 3.23 m yuan, accounting for approximately 13.6% of the total financing amount; The self-raised funds of social institutions and organizations are 3.9 m yuan, accounting for approximately 16.4% of the total financing amount.

**Duo'er National Nature Reserve Sustainable Financing Plan (2021-25)**

- Date of approval: March 16, 2021 and by Gansu FGB
- Duo'er NR has a total area of 54,575 ha, and its functional areas are divided into core area, buffer area and experimental

area. Core area of Duo'er NR is 19,390 ha, the buffer area is 9,496 ha, and the experimental area is 25,689 ha

- Including analysis of financial status of PA, assessment of financing for the PA. Not involving SMART monitoring system
- The plan is to raise a total of 34.88 million yuan, of which 27.7 m yuan is from government finance, accounting for 79.4% of the financing proportion; 840,000 yuan from international and social organizations, accounting for 2.4% of the financing proportion; The self-raised funds of the protected area are 690,000 yuan, accounting for 2.0% of the financing proportion; Corporate and other financing amounted to 5.65 m yuan, accounting for 16.2% of the financing proportion

### Analysis

According to procedures, the management and financing plans only require FGB approval, who in turn would prepare budget requests to the DoF. The actual status of funding approval was not presented. i.e. the status of the financing plans was not clear, but suggested financing gaps remain, as the plans describe needed funds not present funds, and also mention that a SMART monitoring system is not funded to continue after the project.

### Output 1.5 – Gansu PA system and threatened species conservation strengthened through capacity development, NP governance, professional competence standards, and training to the Gansu EAPC

#### Result

- PA System Capacity Development (Training) Plan with modules: Integrated Planning for Ecosystem Management in PAs; Design, Implementation & Management of ECAs; Smart Patrol & Law Enforcement; Performance Evaluation of PA Management; Biodiversity Monitoring; Information Management; Community-Based Natural Resource Management; Social Impacts of PAs, Safeguards, and Free Prior & Informed Consent (FPIC) Principles & Measures

### Analysis

The development of professional standards for conservation professionals and practitioners was good.

### Effectiveness - Outcome 2 Indicators and Outputs

#### Outcome 2 - Strengthened WQMM PA and ECA network and reduction of threats (2 indicators)

The expected results of Outcome 2 were: An added 25,000 ha of PAs, including ECAs; increased management effectiveness of four PAs with threats to biodiversity reduced. The overall grading is **Satisfactory**. There were two indicators attached to the Outcome 2 level concerning management effectiveness and threat reduction, which were rated as: satisfactory (2). (see **Annex 1**)<sup>19</sup>. The management effectiveness results were good. Concerning the threat reduction in the four NRs, here were only minor shortcomings in attaining the project's global objectives here. These were that the target and result for the removal of cattle from Duo'er NR was too low, and there was little indication that a standardised monitoring system had been established for the four NRs.

#### Increased management effectiveness of PAs covering ~355,530 ha (Indicator 9)

(GEF Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) Baseline, Target & Result see table for scores)

#### Result against Indicator

	Nature Reserve	Baseline (%)	Target (%)	Result (%)
A	Axia NR	42	67	75
B	Chagangliang NR	55	76	78
C	Duoer NR	45	71	76
D	Yuhe NR	52	79	81

### Analysis

This was a GEF Core Indicator. According to the GEF METT self-assessment, the management effectiveness of the four NRs has improved and surpassed the target

#### Threats to biodiversity reduced at Nature Reserves (Indicator 10)

(Baseline, Target and Result – see table for Threats - fuelwood, grazing cattle, medicinal herbs)

#### Result against Indicator

PA	Tons / number (annual)	Baseline	Target (% decrease by)	Result (% decrease by)
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<sup>19</sup> The indicators for Outcome 2 didn't quite match the expected results from Component 2, because the indicator for an added 25,000 ha of PA estate moved to the Objective level Indicator 2.

Axia NR	Fuelwood	4,439 t	20	38
	Grazing cattle	49,961	10	22
Changangliang NR	Fuelwood	2,205 t	30	48
	Grazing cattle	726	30	44
Duoer NR	Fuelwood	13,300 t	30	29
	Grazing cattle	15,200	6	7
Yuhe NR	Fuelwood	50 t	40	38
	Medicinal plants	10 t	60	62

Source for results – Project Threat Factors Monitoring Report (2023)

The report proposed that cattle numbers should continue to be monitored by the four NRs, and synchronised with their wildlife monitoring 2-4 times / year, and with community monitoring 1 time / year.

### Analysis

The statistic that stood out was the removal of only 1,064 (7%) grazing cattle from Duo'er NR, from a herd of 15,200 cattle. Furthermore the target was very low to begin with - to remove 6% of the 15,200 head of cattle grazing in the NR (i.e. remove 912 head). If the figures are accurate (evidence was specifically requested from the PMO by the TE), then the reduction in cattle grazing from Axia NR also stands out with the removal of 10,991 (22%) grazing cattle. The reduction in fuelwood collection from Axia, Changangliang and Duo'er NRs was also impressive, if again monitoring indicates that these figures are sustainable post-project.

The project had not established an on-going standardised threat monitoring survey which is needed annually. Thus cattle numbers could easily return to previous or higher numbers.

### Outputs under Outcome 2

#### Output 2.1 – Expansion of the PA and ECA network by 25,000 ha, increasing coverage of KBAs and improving habitat connectivity

#### Result

The project developed a plan for a WQMM ECA network, which manifested in to four ECAs, which were subsequently legally defined as NP or PWF areas. Note, Indicator 2 and Output 2.1 were the same, thus one of the ECAs is taken here as an example for added information.

#### Example ECA Planning Map for Corridor 3



Source - Daheigou Tree Farm

The evidence for improved protection was from: Hezheng County Government Notice on Pastoral Prohibition (2022); and Gansu management measures for public welfare forest (2017)

Government Notice of Hezheng County on Prohibiting Grazing in Areas of Afforestation and Young Forest

- In order to further implement the concept of clear waters and green mountains are as good as mountains of gold and silver, protect forest and grassland vegetation and the achievements of afforestation, maintain the ecological safety of forest and grassland, and promote the coordinated development of economy, society and ecological environment, according to the Forest Law, Grassland Law and other relevant laws and regulations, the relevant matters regarding the prohibition of grazing in areas of afforestation and young forest (hereinafter referred to as the prohibition of grazing) are hereby notified as follows:
- The scope of grazing prohibition referred to in this notice are the region closed for afforestation, newly planted forests, and young forest within the county. The prohibition period for grazing in this notice is five years
- Activities strictly prohibited in grazing prohibited areas are as follows: Grazing or free-range livestock; Unauthorized movement or destruction of grazing prohibition signs, boundary markers, and other grazing prohibition facilities; Other human activities that disrupt grazing prohibition
- Unit responsibilities: The county government is responsible for organizing and implementing the county wide grazing prohibition work, establishing the working mechanism, and including the grazing prohibition work in the annual forest chief system assessment goals of the townships (towns); The county FGB is responsible for supervising and guiding the prohibition of grazing within the entire county administrative area; The people's governments of each townships (towns) are responsible for organizing and implementing the grazing prohibition work within their jurisdiction, while also doing the work of planting, harvesting, and storage of forage crops within their jurisdiction, using straw to raise livestock, promoting the construction and promotion of standardized livestock housing, and focusing on the work of livestock; Each administrative village is a grassroots unit that organizes the implementation of grazing prohibition, implementing various grazing prohibition management measures, and doing a good job in the grazing prohibition work of the village.
- Responsibilities of forest rangers and grassland rangers: to promote laws, regulations, and policies related to forest and grassland protection; Regularly inspect the forests and grasslands in the responsible area; Stop and promptly report to the local townships (towns) people's government any violations of grazing prohibition, such as grazing in prohibited areas or damaging fence facilities.
- Punishment Regulations (Omitted)

#### Measures for the Management of PWF in Gansu

- Article 1 - In order to standardize the protection and management of PWFs, the Measures are formulated in accordance with the Management Measures for National PWFs and in combination with the situation in Gansu
- Article 2 - The PWFs referred to in the Measures refer to the shelter forests and forests for special purpose designated in accordance with the Measures for Defining the Division of PWFs in Gansu, including national and provincial PWFs
- Article 5 - FGB is responsible for the guidance, coordination and supervision of the management of PWFs; The municipal and county FGBs are responsible for the protection and management of the PWFs belonging to their respective jurisdictions
- Article 23 Forestry authorities at all levels organize and carry out annual monitoring of changes in the resources of PWFs; FGB organize and carry out regular and targeted monitoring and evaluation of the ecological status of PWFs, and release the results of monitoring and evaluation to society in accordance with the law.
- Article 27 - Management measures shall come into effect from date of issuance and shall be valid until December 2025.

#### *Analysis*

This was a GEF Core Indicator. There was no actual ECA legally designated for wildlife conservation and the seasonal movement of these key species and their prey. But rather the approach by the state to ECAs was summed up by Hezheng County who indicated they had 'protected ECAs through policy promotion, training, environmental relocation<sup>20</sup>, PWF zoning, and forest restoration'. They stated that their 'ECA' covered 5,150 ha, including 3,872 ha national 2<sup>nd</sup> level PWF, with the remaining areas being farmland, grassland, and village areas<sup>21</sup>. It would appear that apart from PWF which is patrolled, and subsidized by government, the remaining areas are more akin to a localized farmer habitat 'set-aside' scheme, due to the high number of villages / households involved. These selected areas may also be fragmented.

The TE visited Daheigou SFU and one of its pasture areas to find tree planting on grassland, and grazing on other areas, which were said to be outside the SFU boundary. The notice on grazing prohibition only refers to new forest

<sup>20</sup> Environmental out-migration of communities due to areas being harsh natural environments, without services, such as electricity or schools

<sup>21</sup> Hezheng County joined CPAR2 in 2018, and the ECAs involves five townships and 17 villages, including Luoiaji Township, Maijiaji Township, Xinying Township, Xinzhuang Township, and Songming Township, with approximately 4,233 households and 19,590 people.

plantation areas.

## **Output 2.2 – Coordination and management of the PA and ECA network in the WQMM**

### *Result*

- Statute of Gansu WQMM Corridor Network Coordination Committee
- Monitoring Report of Key Species (2023)
- Threat Factors Monitoring Report (2023)
- Community Co-Management Plans for - Bailongjiang Axia NR; Bailongjiang Chagangliang NR; Duo'er National NR, and Longnan Wudu District Yuhe Snub-nosed Golden Monkey NR
- Community Resource Co-Management Agreements - Duo'er Conservation Bureau & Dayi Village; Chagangliang Conservation Bureau & Duola Village; Axia Conservation Bureau & Cuoxi Village; Yuhe Conservation Bureau & Zhangjiayuan Village

### West Qinling - Minshan Mountains Landscape Area Corridor Network Implementation Plan (2021)

- Date of plan 2020-24; date of approval: November 25, 2020
- Included analysis of threat factors of ECAs, analysis of restrictive factors in ECAs. Not involving SMART monitoring system. Included investment budget and action schedule for the ECAs
- The ECA in Liangdang County covers 8,384 ha. The ECA in Hezheng County covers an area of 13,767 ha. The biodiversity corridor area of Yuhe NR is 7,426 hectares, and the biodiversity corridor area of Chagangliang NR / Zhouqu County is 6,920 ha.
- Liangdang ECA - attention should be paid to the connectivity of biodiversity between PAs. Looking north to the Heihe PA, extending to the vicinity of Liangdang County, then extending to the Lingguanxia White Pine NR, and looking south to the Xiaolong Mountain PA, the planned ECA covers an area of 2,973 hectares. The actual completed area is 8,384 ha
- Hezheng County ECA is planned to start from Zigou and Moujiagou in the west, passes through Wangjiagou, Changjiagou, and Zigou Gorge Sancha, extends Xigouliang through Dongwan Four Rivers in front of Dongwan Conservation Station to the Houdongwan Shibangou, passes through Xinying Xiaoxia Xihuaigou Yangshan Ridge and Xiaoniujungou, runs along the Daoliushuigou of the Daxia River, to the area from Xiuchun Gorge to the Tianqiaogou in Xinyingguan, to the Daheigou Tree Farm, and then to the Nanyang Mountain Forest Park and Geological Park. It includes Luojiatie Township, Bujiazhuang Township, Maijiaji Township, Xinying Township, Songming Township and Chengguan Township with an area of ~563 km<sup>2</sup>, of which the ECA covers an area of 12,000 ha. The actual completion is 13,767 ha.
- The Yuhe ECA is planned to be located in the connecting area between the Yuhe NR in Fengxiang Township, Wudu District and the Baishuijiang NR, with a ECA area of 4,376 ha, and 7,426 ha were actually completed.
- Chagangliang ECA - The area of 6,920 ha in the southern part of the 923 Forestry Farm, located between A'xia and Chagangliang, is designated as new PA.

### *Analysis*

The plan was a useful document in bringing together the project's ECA network.

## **Output 2.3 – Community co-management and threat reduction**

### *Result*

#### Review of Community Resource Use Co-management Agreement for Axia

- The co-management agreement was signed by the PMO, the Administration of PAs and the Community Demonstration Site to encourage the participation of the villagers, and the community participated in the project activities and the protection of forest resources. This increased the villagers' sense of ownership and responsibility for the activities, stimulated the enthusiasm and initiative of the people, effectively improved the relationship between the reserve and the community, and opened up a new model of nature conservation and harmonious development of the surrounding communities.
- The establishment of a co-management committee, in accordance with the principle of "fairness and openness", organize village representatives to elect a co-management committee, the committee is composed of the village party branch and village committee, the patrol personnel of the NR, and the responsible departments of the protection bureau, which provides a guarantee for the standardized development of the community co-construction and co-management work.
- Natural Resource Use
- The co-management agreement has five main sections that deal with the use of natural resources and land use for livestock. The details are as follows:

- Article 2 stipulates that the NR management bureau and the community jointly protect the wildlife resources, water resources, forest resources and other resources in the community.
- Article 4 During the period of joint management between Party A and Party B, they shall establish contact channels and communication platforms, and gradually form a long-term mechanism for this. The Party B may advise and record any illegal and irregular activities found in daily production and life, such as damaging the natural environment of the Axia NR, hunting, selling wild animals, polluting water sources, and unauthorized mining, and report the situation to the nearest Axia NR management department. A WeChat working group for co-management of PAs and communities has been established to communicate the progress of co-management of PAs and disseminate conservation knowledge: a protection hotline has been set up in Axia NR to facilitate communities to report relevant illegal acts.
- Article 8 Through the policy explanation and publicity and mobilization of community villagers, Party A widely recruits community villagers with strong awareness and high awareness of ecological protection to join in the community co-management work, further broadens the channels for increasing the income of community villagers
- Article 9 Party A shall take the initiative to understand the production and living conditions of Party B, and to help Party B solve the difficulties encountered in production and life in the form of ecological rangers through the forest farm in accordance with relevant national policies, and provide employment opportunities. Party A shall give priority to the villagers of Party B's community when employing labour in infrastructure construction and development projects.

### Analysis

The four NRs signed co-management agreements with communities in January 2021. Note grazing control was missing from the agreement.

### Result

- Benefit-Sharing Agreements - Axia Conservation Bureau & Cuoxi Village; and Dayi Village Duo'er Township Diebu County
- Chagangliang PA Area Qugaona Township Lamogaituo Village Prickly Ash Sales E-commerce Group
- Longnan Wudu District Farmers Tea Cultivation Specialized Cooperative Benefit-Sharing Agreement
- Yuhe Township Women's E-commerce Group of Yuhe NR
- Community Eco-tourism Implementation Plans: Dayi Village in Gansu Duo'er National NR; and Village in Gansu Axia NR
- A'xia NR & Cuoxi Village Benefit-Sharing Agreement
- Benefit-Sharing Agreement for Dayi Village, Duo'er Township, Diebu County
- Benefit-Sharing Agreement Between Women's E-commerce Group in Yuhe Township, Yuhe NR & Enrich Farmers' Tea Planting Farmers' Specialized Cooperative of Wudu District, Longnan City
- Prickly Ash (Hua Jiao) sales E-commerce Group in Lamogaituo Village, Qugongna Township, Chagangliang NR
- Benefit-Sharing Agreement for Prickly Ash in Lamogaituo Village, Qugaona Township, Zhouqu County
- Small Grants Program (SGP) agreement - Eco-Tourism Program of Dayi Village, Duo'er Township, Diebu County
- SGP agreement - Prickly Ash Improvement Program in Lamogaituo Village, Qugaona Town, Zhouqu County
- SGP agreement - Demonstration for Production and Marketing of Cherries by A'xia NR and Cuoxi Village
- SGP agreement - Demonstration of Yuhe Township PA-Friendly Tea through Media E-commerce Program
- Dayi Village in Gansu Duo'er National NR PRA Report
- Bailongjiang A'xia Nature Reserve Pilot Community PRA Report
- Chagangliang Nature Reserve Pilot Community PRA Report

### Analysis

The project undertook a number of IGAs which were considered very successful

## **Output 2.4 – Mechanisms for the prevention, management and compensation of human-wildlife conflict (HWC) damage adjacent to PAs and ECAs**

### Result & Analysis

- Wildlife Prevention in the West Qinling-Minshan Mountains Area – A handbook
- Contract for the Pilot Project of HWC Insurance Compensation in Diebu County

- The PMO established a wildlife public liability insurance management service system that combines prevention and compensation, scientific management measures, perfect service network, and timely and efficient claims settlement, so as to reduce the losses by wildlife in Diebu County.



- The main contents of insurance compensation include: the liability limit of 300,000 yuan per person for personal injury and death per accident, the liability limit for medical expenses per person for each accident is 30,000 yuan, the compensation limit for lost wages is 100 yuan/day, the cumulative compensation limit for the loss of crops or cash crops is 300,000 yuan, the cumulative compensation limit for livestock is 200,000 yuan, the cumulative compensation limit for other property losses is 200,000 yuan, the liability limit for each accident is 1 million, and the cumulative liability limit is 2 million.
- The insurance company is a VIP green service channel for Party A and the relevant departments in the insurance coverage. Party B shall set up a special service team for the 2023 Diebu County Wildlife Public Insurance Project, which will be established after the agreement takes effect, responsible for handling all insurance affairs, and will be terminated after the agreement ends. Attached to the contract is a detailed list of VIP service teams and contact numbers, as well as a reference standard for compensation. At present, the contract amount that has been paid is 337,500 yuan.

Between January – end August 2023, 210,000 RMB was paid out in Insurance compensation claims. The development of a mechanism for financially mitigating the impact of HWC, and therefore making the aggrieved parties, less antagonistic towards wildlife was very successful as a demonstration. However the sustainability of this pilot eco-compensation scheme was undetermined.

### Output 2.5 – Landscape-scale biodiversity survey, monitoring and information system for WQMM

#### Result

- FGB PA - Information Assessment Report
- Biodiversity Conservation Information System (BCIS) - Technical plan, and agreement for its development

- According to the agreement, the Biodiversity Conservation Information System has been developed, and the system has been established for the survey, monitoring and patrol of biodiversity in the WQMM landscape.
- The system mainly includes customized development, map service and display, large-screen display, wildlife protection, habitat modeling & analysis, picture management, patrol monitoring management, HWC management, comprehensive resource inquiry, forest fire prevention decision-making and command, grid management and patrol, forestry pest monitoring and management, authority operation and maintenance management and other modules.
- According to the agreement, the long-term positioning and observation equipment of forest ecosystems is configured, and be responsible for maintenance and training. At present, the PMO is actively communicating and coordinating, and is preparing to sign an additional contract with the development company to add the grassland monitoring module and the background analysis module.

#### Analysis

There were data storage issues for the system (in Axia NR) concerning the terminal, and Beido app software system

### Effectiveness - Outcome 3 Indicators and Outputs

#### Outcome 3 - Knowledge Management, M&E and Gender Mainstreaming (2 indicators)

The overall grading is **Satisfactory**. There were two indicators attached to the Outcome 3 level which were both rated as satisfactory (see **Annex 1**). The expected results for Outcome 3 were: 20 lessons learned disseminated on a CPAR project biodiversity knowledge platform, with 600 persons attending events where the lessons were presented; and Awareness of biodiversity conservation by government agencies and communities. To be measured by Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) surveys

#### Dissemination of lessons learned to other projects and stakeholders through the CPAR Program (Indicator 11)

(Baseline – no mechanism - 0; Target – see table)

#### Result against Indicator

	Indicator	Target	Result
A	Lessons learned disseminated on project website / CPAR biodiversity knowledge platform	20 lessons learned uploaded	Three lessons disseminated so far (15%)
B	Participants at meetings where lessons learned were presented	600	The project has shared project lessons with 372 people (62%)

#### Analysis

The project is in process to create and post the remaining 13 lessons, and disseminate them

## Awareness of biodiversity conservation among Gansu government and local communities (Indicator 12)

(Baseline – Target - KAP status to be established in year 1)

Result against Indicator

### KAP Scores

%	Baseline	Target	Result
Provincial authorities	55 / /50 / 50	65 /60 /60	66 / 62 / 61
Local government	50 / 40 / 45	65 /55 / 55	67 / 67/ 66
PA management agency	50 / 55 /55	70 / 75 / 70	70 / 70 /76
Community residents	35 /45 /30	50 / 60 / 40	50 / 60 / 48

The project undertook and produced - KAP Baseline Survey Report (2020) and (2023)

*Analysis*

The KAP scores increased.

### Outputs under Outcome 3

#### Output 3.1 – Knowledge management coordinated through the CPAR Program

*Result*

The project prepared a number of (cross-cutting) guidance documents:

- Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)
- Indigenous Peoples Program (IPP)
- Social Assessment of Protected Areas (SAPA) (translation)

*Analysis*

These documents were prepared with the support of UNDP.

#### Output 3.2 – M&E system with gender mainstreaming implemented for project management

*Result & Analysis*

The project produced: Protocol for monitoring implementation of the Gender Mainstreaming Plan; and a Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Plan (2019-20), updated 2021-22 and 2022-23. The full gender mainstreaming plan results are presented in **Annex 5**.

### 3.3.3 Training, Awareness & Knowledge Products

#### Training and awareness figures

There were 44 training courses

Component	No. of Courses	Participants	of which Women	% Women
<b>Total</b>	44	2,078	564	27%

Source – Project records

A full list of training events is presented in **Annex 5**.

#### Knowledge Products & Awareness Materials

- Project newsletter – 1<sup>st</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> issue
- COP15 Special Issue
- A promotional video; Story of a protected area video
- Classic case video of community co-management
- Project website - [www.gsgef6.com/](http://www.gsgef6.com/)

### 3.3.4 Efficiency, Relevance and Ownership

#### Efficiency

Implementation proceeded as planned, albeit with delays due to covid. Cumulative financial delivery was on target. The timing of key implementation milestones and risk management measures were on track. The project was managed efficiently and effectively. However, there were moderate short-comings in the achievement of expected Outcomes. In particular the expectation for updating legislation was not fully achieved against the prodoc design. Whilst the training results were excellent, there was too much emphasis on the higher-level 14<sup>th</sup> FYP, and not on tangible actions such as wildlife monitor data management and decision-making. Thus, the efficiency was rated as **moderately satisfactory**.

#### Relevance

The intervention was designed under international agreements (CBD, and Aichi targets 11 and 12). The expected outcomes were linked to GEF-6 focal areas: BD-1.1 - Financial Sustainability & Effective Management of National Ecological Infrastructure; and BD-1.2 - Expanding the Reach of the Global PA Estate. The project was in-line with national biodiversity conservation planning and UNDP country programming. The project design remained highly relevant. (See Section 2.1 Development Context)

#### Ownership

Government ownership was high, especially in terms of the development of livelihood alternatives, but government behavioural change in terms of on-the-ground expansion and management of PA estate was mainly limited to pre-project decisions. Formal recognition of ECAs and KBAs as expected by the prodoc design, were considered outside the state biodiversity legal planning system. A work-around was found for this issue, in project designating the proposed ECAs as other types of PA zone in the form of national park or PWF. Moreover the scale of expansion of these 'ECAs' for wildlife, was very limited. The ownership of the SMART patrol system in terms of data management, analysis and decision-making was an area that needed ownership.

#### Mainstreaming

Mainstreaming documents produced or supported by the project:

- Certificate of Adoption of the Achievement of the Legislative Affairs Committee of the Standing Committee of the Gansu People's Congress (2019) pp1
- Introduction to the Integration of the Gansu BSAP (2020-30) in Gansu into Local Legislation (2021) pp2
- Notice of the General Office of Government of Gansu on issuing the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP for Ecological & Environmental Protection in Gansu (2021) pp80; Report on Gansu BSAP (20-2030) integrated into the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP for Ecological Environment Protection (2021) pp17
- The 14<sup>th</sup> FYP for the Protection & Development of Forestry and Grassland in Gansu (2021) pp63; Feedback from the Planning & Finance Department of Gansu FGB (2022) pp2; Letter on Feedback on the Integration of the Gansu BSAP (2020-30) into the Outline of the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP Report of the Department (2021) pp1
- Notice of the General Office of Government of Gansu on Issuing the Development Plan for the Transport System of Gansu during the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP (2021) pp41; Report on Integrating the Gansu BSAP (2020-30) into the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP for Highway and Waterway Transportation Development in Gansu (2022) pp5
- Notice of the General Office of the Government of Gansu on Issuing the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP for Water Resources Development in Gansu (2021) pp40; Reply on the Integration of the Gansu BSAP (2020-30) into the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP for Water Resources in Gansu (2020) pp3
- Notice of the Gansu Department of Culture & Tourism on Issuing the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP Document and Tourism Development Plan of Gansu (2021) pp74; Report on the Integration of the Report on the Integration of the Gansu BSAP (2020-30) into the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP for Cultural and Tourism Development in Gansu Province (2022) pp4
- Notice of the General Office of the Government of Gansu on Issuing the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP for Science and Technology Innovation in Gansu (2021) pp48

### 3.3.5 GEF Additionality

GEF 'additionality' considers the added value of the GEF funding, above what it would have been without the investment. The concept is one where GEF finances the increment or additional costs associated with transforming a project with national benefit into one with added global environmental benefit. Such 'incremental cost funding' is a fundamental operating principle of the GEF. This 'additionally' can be broken down into six categories, and whilst they are covered within the report, they are summarised here against the project's 'incremental design'

Additionality	Design Increment	Result
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<u>Environmental</u> (interventions / services to achieve the global environmental benefits (e.g. CO <sup>2</sup> reduction))	- 25,000 ha PA estate expansion in the WQMM landscape, including with ECAs (covering expansion of Yuhe and Chaganliang NRs and creating two pilot ECAs in Liangdang and Hezheng counties)	- Project planned ECAs were incorporated into either NP or PWF
<u>Legal / Regulatory</u> (environmental improvement through legal change)	- Gansu Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan updated for 14 <sup>th</sup> FYP - KBA conservation and planning policy for ECAs - Ecological red-lines in planning - PA enforcement guidelines developed - PA sustainable financing plans	- Update of the BSAP was not fully undertaken, but rather preparatory work was with a view to complete by 2025. This was quite a push-back for this expected key output
<u>Institutional / Governance</u> (improvement via change in institutional behaviour or operational methods)	- PA staff training with competence standards	- Competence standards developed - Conservation professionals and practitioners underwent such training and certification
<u>Financial</u> (incremental cost which allows country benefits into global environmental benefits)	- NFPP (Phase II) supports PA staff salaries (Axia, Yuhe, Chaganliang NRs) and the SFUs (in Liangdang and Hezheng counties) - GEF project funds	- GEF funds utilized to provide added benefit, in terms of training inputs and equipment (as per the project design)
<u>Socio-Economic</u> (livelihoods & societal benefits)	- HWC compensation procedures - Community Co-management agreements with IGAs to reduce forest dependency, plus with direct conservation incentives (community rangers for patrolling)	- HWC damage mitigation insurance scheme piloted in Deibu County
<u>Innovation</u> (sustainable technologies, & overcoming bad practices)	- SMART patrol system with threat monitoring demonstration	- SMART patrol system developed with a reporting app, but analysis and use of data undetermined

## 4. SUSTAINABILITY

The overall rating is that sustainability is **Moderately Unlikely**<sup>22</sup>

### 4.1. Financial Risks to Sustainability

The rating is 'Financial Sustainability is Moderately Unlikely'

Financial sustainability was one of the central tenets of the project design, with Indicator 8 - PA system financing gap reduced to US\$57.2 million for basic management costs (30% reduction). The reported annual PA System funding gap was US\$44.3 m. However, the figure presented in the GEF METT table for the financing gap in basic management operational costs was US\$10.2 m (CNY 71,155,037). The fact that since 2017, a consolidated operating unit or overall management authority for the GPNP has not been created also suggests a more significant gap<sup>23</sup>.

#### METT – Section III – Financial Analysis of the PA system for Gansu

Gansu Available Finance for PA system	2016 (CNY)	2022 (CNY)	Source of data
(1) Total annual central government budget allocated to PA management (excluding donors PA generated revenue)	163,480,000	195,022,001	Planning & Finance Division of GFGB combined the data which were reported by the PAs of Gansu, the exchange rate of RMB against the US dollar is: \$1=7CNY.

<sup>22</sup> Sustainability is considered to be the likelihood of continued benefits post GEF funding. Under GEF criteria each sustainability dimension is critical, i.e. the overall ranking cannot be higher than the lowest one.

<sup>23</sup> Before the project and before the establishment of GPNP Pilot, the two PAs, Yuhe and Baishuijiang NRs existed. On creation of GPNP through institutional reform, these two NRs were merged. At this point funding for the GPNP increased. Duo'er, A'xia, and Chaganliang PAs also received a significant increase in financial investment in 2022 compared to 2017 (source: PMO / METT).

Of which Operational budget	92,834,750	112,759,963	“
Of which Infrastructure investment budget	70,645,250	82,262,038	“
(2) Extra budgetary funding for PA management	<b>0</b>	<b>5,936,322</b>	donor funds

Source METT Financial Scorecard; US\$1 ~ 7CNY

#### METT – Gansu PA Financing Gap

Gansu Costs & Finance Needs for PA system	2016 (CNY)	2022 (CNY)	Source of data
(1) Total annual expenditure for PAs by government	<b>163,480,000</b>	<b>200,958,322</b>	
(2) Estimation of PA system financing needs			
A. Estimated PA financing needs for <i>basic</i> management costs	<b>245,220,000</b>	<b>245,220,000</b>	basic management costs=baseline input (2016)*150%
PA central system level operational costs	98,088,000	98,088,000	Needs to be 40% of an adequate total, according to reports
PA site management operational costs	44,139,600	44,139,600	Needs to be 18% of an adequate total
PA site infrastructure investment costs	61,305,000	61,305,000	Needs to be 25% of an adequate total
PA system capacity building costs for central and site levels	41,687,400	41,687,400	Needs to be 17% of an adequate total
B. Estimated financing needs for <i>optimal</i> management costs	<b>326,960,000</b>	<b>326,960,000</b>	basic management costs=baseline input (2016)*200%
PA central system level operational costs	130,784,000	130,784,000	Needs to be 40% of an adequate total
PA site management operational costs	58,852,800	58,852,800	Needs to be 18% of an adequate total
PA site infrastructure investment costs	81,740,000	81,740,000	Needs to be 25% of an adequate total
PA system capacity building costs for central and site levels	55,583,200	55,583,200	Needs to be 17% of an adequate total
C. Estimated financial needs to expand the PA systems to be fully ecologically representative			There is no plan for full expansion of the PA system. Thus the area for expansion and land purchase are unknown
basic management costs for new PAs			According to the NP area basic management inputs cost USD 189 / ha
optimal management costs for new PAs			According to the NP area optimal management inputs cost USD724 / ha

#### Annual financing gap (financial needs – available finances)

(1) Annual financing gap for <i>basic</i> management	<b>81,740,000</b>	<b>44,261,678</b>	
Operations	91,080,250	71,155,037	
Infrastructure investment	9,340,250	26,893,359	
(2) Annual financing gap for <i>optimal</i> management	<b>163,480,000</b>	<b>126,001,678</b>	
Operations	152,385,250	132,460,037	
Infrastructure investment	11,094,750	6,458,359	
(3) Annual financing gap for basic management of an expanded PA system			No plan to base this on
(4) Projected annual financing gap for basic expenditure scenario in year X+5			Lack of data on trends on which to estimate annual financing gap
Financial data collection needs			Need to establish a basic NR database to collect financial data

## 4.2 Socio-economic Risks to Sustainability

The rating is ‘Socio-economic Sustainability is Moderately Unlikely’

The collection of socio-economic data provided snapshots of villagers' increases in income from IGAs. However, it was difficult for this evaluation to comment fully on socio-economic risks. A number of income generating activities were successful, especially for the leading protagonists. Successful IGAs included: prickly ash (Hua Jiao) plantation; ecotourism development families, especially in Dayi Village; income from tea production and internet-based marketing and sales for Golden Monkey Tea. In detail:

- During project implementation, Dayi Village received more than 500 tourists and Gaoji Village received more than 6,000. According to the per capita consumption of 150 yuan and 230 yuan, the tourism income of Dayi Village was 75,000 yuan, and that of Gaoji Village is 1.38 million yuan. The average annual income during the implementation period is 37,500 yuan and 690,000 yuan respectively. This is an increase of 56% and 15% respectively compared with the income of 24,000 yuan and 600,000 yuan in the two villages at the beginning of the project. (Eight households directly involved, plus 46 households from a cooperative with shares in a tourism company, and 36 households working together on a ecotourism scenic area development)
- During project implementation, the total income of ecotourism increased by 16.6%, the number of tourists received increased by 23.1%, and the number of tourists staying increased by 10%. After the influence of covid, the number of tourists steadily increased, which formed a basic for this IGA to become sustainable.
- From 2019-22, the project supported womens' e-commerce groups to conduct online sales of Yuhe tea through on-line platforms. Within Zhaoqianba community, four community women were trained to become sales anchors. They developed Yuhe Golden monkey friendly products, and sold tea on behalf of 63 community members. This IGA provided an alternative source of income which in part substituted forest use and livestock grazing. (The members receive 80% of the profits, with the four leaders taking a 20% share)
- Through the tea production and marketing, many women have engaged (stocking, warehousing, transportat and product-friendly development and sale of the tea on-line. This has enhanced community development in terms of its sustainability economy, particularly from an environmental viepoint.
- The Prickly Ash improvement project in Lamogaituo Village, Qugaona Town, Zhouqu County, increased income by 50 kg per mu of land under the spice production, with an increase of ~2,500 yuan per mu. The total output of Prickly Ash orchard can reach 1,250 kg, increasing the income of the community by about 62,500 yuan. At present, the improved Prickly Ash trees are in the growth period, with fruit-bearing due in 2025, and sales in 2026. This activity has been successful in increased market competitiveness of the local Prickly Ash, as well as in providing an alternative sustainable income source. (25 mu, with 87 households)
- A'xia Management & Protection Centre and Cuoxi Village of Wangzang Township jointly built a demonstration for cherry orchards. From 2021-23, eight mu of cultivated land was planted. It is estimated that the yield per mu will be 5,880 kg, and the income per mu will be 147,000 yuan. The total income of eight mu will be 1.18 million yuan. Fruit-bearing is expected in 2025, with sales in 2026. This activity provides an alternative income generation source.(58 households)

### 4.3. Institutional & Governance Risks to Sustainability

The rating is 'Institutional & Governance Sustainability is Moderately Unlikely'

Prodoc - . Sustainability of the project will be ensured through the updating and improvement of laws, policies and enforcement frameworks relating to biodiversity conservation and protected areas, incorporating recognition of needs for protection of KBAs and globally threatened species. The project will develop an updated Gansu BSAP and mainstream biodiversity into the 14<sup>th</sup> Gansu FYP, with specific attention towards increasing protection for KBAs and threatened species. The capacity of the main institutions administering the PA system will be enhanced, the financial sustainability of the PA system strengthened through removal of policy, regulatory and fiscal barriers (in coordination with the overall CPAR Program) and the financial gap for basic management of PAs significantly reduced.

The Master Plan of Establishing the National Park System was launched in September 2017, constituting the most important milestone on PA reform to date. The construction of the GPNP in Gansu involves two NRs (Baishuijiang National NNR and the Yuhe NR) and two SFUs. The Pilot Implementation Plan of GPNP (2017-20) has been adopted. According to this Plan, the three provinces of Sichuan, Shaanxi and Gansu will explore to establish a unified management system, and draft related legal regulations.

By 2023, the GPNP had yet to establish a fully operating management authority, however, in 2020 FGB was re-organised to improve its management capacity. These changes included:

- The management of GPNP is based on specialized management institutions, with sufficient personnel from the Gansu FGB to Longnan City. Before the creation of GPNP and project design in 2017, Yuhe NR and Baishuijiang NR existed, but were then merged to become the Yuhe and Baishuijiang branches of GPNP. In 2020, the government approved the establishment of these specialized management institutions, with personnel numbers increased.

- This development included Yuhe Bureau with 98 staff, three monitoring centers, 77 staff at at Luotang Protection Station, and 16 staff at Minbaogou Protection Station. (Yuhe Branch Organization Document No. 11, 2020).
- Under the Gansu Institutional Reform Plan, the FGB was re-organised with staffing and responsibilities re-assigned to them from from a number of other government offices. These included departments from Agriculture & Animal Husbandry, Land & Resources, Housing & Urban-rural Development, Water Resources, NRs, scenic spots, and natural heritage, and geological parks. Before institutional reform, the vast majority of PAs in Gansu were subordinate to the FGB, and mainly managed by the Animal & Plant Management Section. After reform, this section was renamed the Wildlife Conservation Station). Othe sections created were: National Park Office, NR Office, Wildlife & Wetland Office. All these office included staff re-assignment and an increase in staff numbers in order to allow the FGB to manage effectively.

Gansu FGB is a fairly new government unit, with staff (~100) having transferred from the Gansu Agriculture and Grassland Bureau and other offices, thus the skills and mandate now needed for conservation are likely to need to be developed.

FGB has a sound working system of professional forestry research institutions, consultant teams and technicians to manage and report the monitoring data of the province's forestry and grassland systems and PAs. The monitoring system for NRs is designed to use data and statistics from the various line offices of FGB, such as the National Park Office, PAs / NRs Office, Science & Technology Office and Wildlife & Wetland Office.

The data is collected and reported quarterly, usually in the form of documents, spreadsheets and analysis / work reports from these offices. The FGB's Forestry Ecological Resources Monitoring Centre has a technical team responsible for regular monitoring, collection, and organization of data from the PAs and forestry units, (in accordance with SFGA requirements). The results of the analysis are regularly reported back to the line offices, with key results passed up the hierarchy of FGB to its leaders.

However, the collection, collation and analysis of SMART data is new. SMART data is expected to be presented to county FGBs, who in turn are expected to report to the Gansu FGB, however it is not clear on how and who is undertaking this analysis and at what level. Also importantly is the question of data storage, management, access, and trend analysis. The SMART app software needed for this certainly needs development, otherwise the quality of information reaching the Gansu FGB is likely to be degraded (by reporting), and / or being in an unmanageable format.

The FGB instigated a 'Forest Chief Scheme', through which the responsible person also expected to receive the SMART patrol data. There is also the issue of the institutional division between NPs / National NRs under central state control, and the Gansu managed NRs / SFUs. It was indicated that the FGB have a NP management division, but again information may become siloed. Added to this is the fact that the GPNP is expected to cross provincial boundaries, thus a protocol on information housing and sharing etc would be needed.

### 4.3. Environmental Risks to Sustainability

The rating is 'Environmental Sustainability is Moderately Unlikely'

The GEF STAP screening response of the PIF indicated that the 'project focuses mainly on the connectivity of forest ecosystems within and between NRs, including the development of ECAs to connect key forest habitat. There are no precedents for the development of ECAs in China, but approaches can be adapted according to the objectives of specific ECAs. E.g. ECAs intended for use by giant panda would benefit from enrichment planting with bamboo species.

Sustainability has been considered as a key criterion of detailed project development. A combination of protection forest and sustainable use areas for NTFPs and community forestry is likely to provide the most sustainable solutions in populated areas. The planning and governance arrangements developed by the project would provide for the legal and institutional sustainability of such ECAs'.

The goal of the Gansu 13<sup>th</sup> FYP was to improve the ecological environment and complete the building of the ecological security barrier. By 2020, the main objectives concerned a 'more stable land ecological security barrier' and 'full implementation of forestry ecological protection red line'.

The report of the 19<sup>th</sup> CPC Congress (2017) mentioned – 'developing ecological corridors and biodiversity protection networks, so as to strengthen the quality and stability of our ecosystems'. Thus, these statements would suggest that ECAs could have been established as demonstration areas without new top-down legislation, and that conservation-enhanced ECAs could have been developed on the ground.

## **5. IMPACT & CATALYTIC EFFECT**

### **5.1. Impact**

The impact of the project was not considered significant from the wider viewpoint.

#### **Reduction in stress on ecological systems**

The reduction in cattle numbers and NTFP collection was recorded, but the validity of the statistics was not available for review, and the process to repeat to ascertain trends was undetermined.

#### **Policy and regulatory change at national / local level**

This was really limited in terms of impact. The key local level community co-management agreements didn't define livestock grazing numbers nor did the county government regulations.

### **5.2. Catalytic Effect**

Under this section, the following aspects of the project are presented: Theory of change; Scaling up & Replication; Demonstration; New Technologies / Approaches. The TE has constructed a new Theory of Change logic model<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> UNDP GEF Guidelines for Terminal Evaluations require the TE to prepare a Theory of Change model if there was not one in the prodoc to comment on or update



### Theory of Change Result

Parameter / Pathway	PA legal framework	Biodiversity Conservation in practice	Conservation incentives / alternatives
Concept	Landscape approach to PA management in the WQMM landscape area	To increase habitat connectivity for key species	To provide alternatives to natural resource use
Root causes & threats	Inadequate financing for PAs; KBAs missing and habitat fragmentation	Habitat degradation from people and livestock grazing practices	Over use, and lack of control (Use of common land)
Solution (Input to Output)	Updated policy and planning; Lack of KBA and ECAs included in policy and planning	To designate ECAs and create co-management agreements	Incentives in return for controlled resource use
Outcome required	New models for including key habitat in the PA system	ECA designation	Monitored cattle numbers, and extraction of fuelwood
Result	Biodiversity Conservation incorporated into 14 <sup>th</sup> FYP	Four proposed ECAs incorporated into PAs in terms of NP and / or PWF	Tea production with product marketing – Golden Monkey Tea
Impact	Limited to date as conservation only incorporated into higher level policy, although proposed ECAs included in new areas under higher conservation status, but this is not especially defined for key species, or demonstrated with enforcement	Unknown, due to proposed ECAs within areas with limited conservation control such as in NP Experimental Areas (only new settlement prohibited unless essential or within PWF with remaining focus on forest areas only	The link between villagers' conservation efforts and livelihoods should have been stronger. Very few guarantees

## Scaling-up and Replication

The PIF described the potential for scaling-up:

‘A range of outputs in the WQMM landscape could be upscaled to other key species areas. This includes support for community livelihoods and enterprise with agreements in place for sustainable NTFP harvest, ECA planning and operationalisation with supporting financing plans, application of an eco-compensation scheme and support to incentivise local peoples’ tolerance to wildlife induced damage and effective endangered species habitat restoration.

The achievements and lessons learned will be feed into work to improve and strengthen the PA system and more widely into the reformed framework for the PA system in China through the CPAR Program that this project is nested under.’

There were a no examples of scaling-up and replication.

### Demonstration

- Tea cooperative established with web-based platform to market tea sales
- HWC compensation scheme was put into operation and demonstrated

### New technologies / approaches

Concerning Innovation, the PIF indicated – ‘potential development of NR-friendly products from sustainable NTFP harvest. Support provided for livelihoods will aim to create linkages between sustainable PA management and diversified livelihoods, including through sustainable harvesting, responsible eco/nature tourism and habitat restoration. It will also apply innovative economic tools to reduce threats within NRs, including an eco-compensation mechanism that includes incentivising local peoples’ tolerance to wildlife-induced damage.

An innovative landscape scale biodiversity monitoring & information system will be developed, which will also feed into national biodiversity information tools developed under the PA Reform project, and be used to inform adaptive PA and species habitat planning and management. The establishment and operationalisation of ECAs in this fragmented landscape will be new to the area.’

There were a few eco-tourism development successes.

The SMART patrol system was introduced but was left to its own devices, with the biodiversity information system not completed or tested.

ECAs were not accepted *per se* as policy, but the project-designated areas were put under stronger conservation management under existing systems.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Analysis & Conclusions

#### Project design and approach

The project design was top-heavy on legislative change, somewhat light on tangible conservation actions and was compensated by an extensive training program with added IGAs for livelihood improvement.

For example, there were nine laws or plans that were expected to be revised or written (excluding the creation of township co-management agreements or mainstreaming biodiversity into the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP), which over the 5-year project duration should have been possible, as many of these only required update. The project’s legal consultant provided recommendations, which were adopted by the Gansu legislative affairs committee, however key plans such as the BSAP were not updated, and the expectation to include KBAs and ECAs in legislation was pushed back to 2025. In both of these cases, the responsible party was the DEE / MEE respectively. However, as national level policy change was required first, this was in effect a ‘killer assumption’ or fault in the project’s design.

The project design target area for new ECAs was unusually very small (25,000 ha which is only 25 x 10 km), possibly because it was expected to be a demonstration, or because it was not within the PA legal system and needed to ‘go under the radar’, or it was kept small simply because of land jurisdiction issues. The project identified 36,497 ha for ECA coverage, which were all re-assigned to accepted conservation designations as either NP or PWF. There was also a lack of tangible added change in conservation actions in these areas, which under reassignment meant existing regulation – as core, buffer, experimental zone rules for these areas with the GPNP, or no forest harvesting and no ‘official’ grazing within PWF.

Thus finally, the fall-back position of the project was in the provision of an extensive training program with added livelihood activities.

The GPNP Pilot Plan (2017-20) was adopted, however the GPNP has yet to be put into full operational status, so it has been a state NP for six years without an overall designated management authority in place. CPAR1 was the national level part of the CPAR program, which was expected to improve the institutional framework at national level and support PAs planning at national level. The same situation existed under CPAR3 with the Qilian Mountains National Park Pilot being 'under development without full operation for ~5 years'. The result was a project working in a NP without it having a separate operating unit to talk to. This also resulted in less tangible conservation actions within the proposed ECAs and a greater focus on training again.

The project had an excessive emphasis on the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP which was a higher-level policy document, when legislative change and adoption of plans were more important to the project design. The project design was limited and didn't fully incorporate GEF expectation for its biodiversity focal area. The PA estate was only directly expanded by the project to cover an added 36,497 ha, however these areas mostly were already delineated as within NP boundary or within PWF. The fact that throughout the project duration, the GPNP was not operating also indicated that the financial sustainability for this ecological infrastructure was not in place. The lack of a GPNP management authority created a somewhat of a vacuum for the project to work in. It meant that for the ECAs in this area, the project needed to coordinate between Yuhe NR, Wudu District FGB, Fengxiang Township, and Baishuijiang National NR, and the FGB's National Parks Office.

#### Project design and policy

The inclusion of KBAs and ECAs were not formally included in policy documents as to become PA estate, but rather an example conservation tools. Neither KBAs nor ECAs are legally recognised in China. Thus the heavy focus within the prodoc, on bringing these into policy was over-embellished and partly a distraction through implementation, in comparison to the physical tangible actions needed within these key conservation areas.

For example, under Outcome 1, Indicators 4, 5 and 6 were all very similar in mainstreaming conservation in to the legal framework, provincial laws, and 14<sup>th</sup> FYP. With such an emphasis, they skewed the project somewhat towards this aspect, as per most of the project objective, but not necessarily the aspect concerning field implementation of enhanced habitat connectivity. Plans for an ECA network were not definitive, but rather the project selected four ECAs as demonstrations, which was fine, but these areas were just subsequently redefined, thus avoiding any actual ECA delineation or communicate on habitat enhancement, or permitted conservation-friendly actions within.

#### Government Financing agreement

The UNDP Management Response also indicated that the management and financing plans for the NRs had been approved. However, there was a major difference in meaning between the project's PSC / FGB agreeing that the quality of a report was acceptable for approval (e.g. payment of the consultant), and the prodoc design meaning that a key plan or piece of legislation should be approved i.e. promulgated.

#### Giant Panda National Park (GPNP)

The designation of the GPNP had limited material difference on the conservation of Giant panda during the project. In 2017, in Axia NR / Wangzang SFU, there was a survey of bamboo dieback after flowering (which is a natural, but uncommon event) and a pilot to restore eight hectares of bamboo. The results of this and how it could have been applied to the project for panda, would have been useful<sup>25</sup>.

#### Cattle Grazing and farming

The reduction in the number of cattle grazing in Axia was good, but conversely poor in Duoer NR. The systems to maintain or continue to improve ecosystem health with reduced cattle numbers in conservation areas were not put in place. The co-management agreement didn't stipulate cattle numbers and the monitoring survey was a one-time consultant contract. Tea plantation expansion and hill farming on new land may also have had a negative impact.

#### GEF / China targets on red-lines

Was 25,000 ha of new ECA a sufficient target, bearing in-mind the already planned GPNP? Once biodiversity area is lost, recovery is near impossible, thus the phrase 'too little too late' would seem appropriate. This is only an

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<sup>25</sup> Bamboo species differ by altitude, which is key to understanding panda population habitat and nutritional needs.

area of 250 km<sup>2</sup>, which is ~ 25 x 10 km<sup>2</sup>. It is so small, especially when divided by four ECAs.

### SFU Capacity and Mandate

The SFUs are still working on a passive policy to look after areas with forest, without any clear monitoring guidelines on pasture control or health. The SFUs lag behind for protection controls and enforcement, especially for concerning pasture health. This is due to the lack of a government / FGB mandate, and a traditional focus on forested areas, and other land under SFU jurisdiction which can be converted to forest land to receive NFPP payments for staff and tree planting.

## **6.2 Lessons Learned**

### Prodoc and Policy direction

The expectation that FGB would be able to update so much legislation (five laws), when this was also partly dependent on the national level, was unrealistic. The prodoc was front-loaded with 5 out of 9 indicators (56%) for Outcome 1<sup>26</sup>, most of which concerned legislation. This was excessive and unnecessary, and detracted from time needed for tangible conservation returns. The returns to add conservation to policy, when it should already be there, was marginal. The over emphasis on the 14<sup>th</sup> FYP over-shadowed much more immediate actions. Update of the key BSAP was not even started, when it should have been the first plan to be considered.

### ECAs

The project circumnavigated the issue of ECAs having no legal status, but then didn't follow-up effectively in local conservation management rules for these areas. The existing legislation for the PWF only focused on forest plantation areas, which was an old standard SFA directive, and not based on their new mandate to conserve both forest and grassland areas.

### Training with competency standards

This was a clear success, with project first developing the standards and then putting conservation staff and practitioners through the training modules. This was a major gap in management, that PA financing was missing, and this was covered by the project as per its design.

### NFPP Payments

NFPP payments remain focused on tree plantation payments, and the covering of SFU staff salaries. They have yet to evolve towards the present ecological requirements or the government's new institutional structure of 'forest and grassland' administrations or bureaus. This needs major reform and understanding of where grasslands under SFUs stand. These are ecological red-line areas, but have not undergone any ecological conservation improvement change.

## **6.3 Recommendations**

The recommendations are listed [with the responsible party identified in brackets].

1. Concerning threat monitoring in the four NRs and the ECAs, an agreement between FGB and the four NRs and / or with a survey consultant is needed for five years to conduct the same survey annually, focusing on cattle numbers and fuelwood removal. There is a need for a responsible agency (FGB) to be given the mandate and funding to conduct this together with habitat (forest and grassland) health, according to set criteria [SFGA / FGB] (6 months)
2. The SMART patrol monitoring system needs development including a protocol concerning data storage, access, collation, analysis, and reporting with a responsible party. The protocol will need to encompass institutional differences between state and provincial mandates for protection of differing types of PA [FGB, with outline drafting by FGB] (6 months)
3. The BSAP update contract needs to be put in place [MEE / SFGA with preparation by FGB] (6 months)
4. The SMART patrol app and its functions needs update to include monitoring of cattle numbers, timing of seasonal movement into SFU PWF areas and grassland health. [PMO to revised contract with the service provider to add functions, and handover to FGB to manage and fund it] (12 months)

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<sup>26</sup>If ignoring the three 'repeat' Objective-level indicators

5. The SFUs responsible for two of the ECAs now designated as PWF need to utilise the SMART patrol app and report directly to FGB wildlife division [SFUs / FGB] (6 months)
6. Axia and Duoer NRs to monitor cattle numbers inside PAs / ECAs with township government / community ranger support [Axia and Duoer NRs with FGB support] (12 months)
7. Report on options for restoration of bamboo flowering / dieback in panda areas [FGB to put action in financial planning to DoF for 2024-25] (6 months)
8. SFUs to create alpine meadow land experimental research areas, which would require cattle grazing prohibition. This would be to avoid conversion of meadow land to forest land, just because NFPP payments are available for forest plantation. [SFUs with FGB mandate provided for them, by putting in financial plan for DoF] (6 months)

## 6. ANNEXES

### Annex 1: Delivery of Project Objective and Outcomes against Performance Indicators

**Assessment Key:**

**Green:** Completed / Achieved

**Yellow:** On target to be completed / achieved

**Red:** Not on target to be completed / achieved

Extracted from Prodoc SRF			IP to fill out this column with detail text on achievement	TE team	TE team fills
Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2023 End term Level & Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
<b>Objective: To strengthen conservation of globally significant biodiversity in Gansu Province through improving the legal and institutional framework, reforming and mainstreaming the protected area system, enhancing habitat connectivity and reducing key threats</b>					
<p>Indicator 1: Number of direct project beneficiaries (UNDP indicator):</p> <p>a) Targeted communities at project sites (Axia, Chagangliang, Duoer and Yuhe NRs)*</p> <p>b) Gansu FD, Bailongjiang FA and EAPC staff at demo PAs and Ecological Corridors and other stakeholders receiving training (GEF-7 core indicator 11)</p> <p>* Villages: Chagangliang NR: Duola (804), Jueerli (319), Chaping (716); Yuhe NR: Yanwan (546), Qiangjia (667), Zhangjiayuan (305); Duoer NR: Yangbu (909), Baigu (814), Zailiao (775); Axia NR: Kelang (515), Yala (533), Mogou (864).</p>		<p>Number (% women)</p> <p>a/ 3,800 (60%)</p> <p>b/ 750 (40%)</p>	<p>Completed and exceeded the goal.</p> <p>a) EOP (End of Project) target progress: Completed. 106%. 4015 (49% women)</p> <p>b) EOP target progress: Completed. 236%. 1770 (460 women, 26% of total beneficiaries)</p> <p>Please refer to INDICATOR 1A&amp;B-2023 in the evidence file. Under indicator a), the target number of beneficiaries in the community has been exceeded, although the percentage of beneficiary women has not yet reached 60%. Regarding Indicator b), the project has provided training for 1770 people including 460 women. In accordance with recommendation of the MTR consultants, due to the low proportion of women staff in PA agencies, instead of measuring the percentage of women of all the existing beneficiaries, this indicator should be adjusted and measured as 750*40%=300 women staff receiving training. As 460 women staff received trainings, its's clear that the project has outperformed against the adjusted target.</p>	<b>S</b>	<p>Number of direct project beneficiaries (Indicator 1)</p> <p>There were 4,015 (49% women) community persons trained in Axia, Chagangliang, Duoer and Yuhe NRs from a target of 3,800 (60% women)</p> <p>There were 1,770 (26% women) PAs staff trained from Gansu FGB, Bailongjiang FA, EAPC, PAs and ECAs from target of 750 (40% women). This indicated 460 women were trained, which as a percentage of the target of 750 persons trained, is 61%</p>
<p>Indicator 2: Ecological corridors (EC) established and PA System expanded by more than 25,000 ha, increasing coverage of KBAs and with emphasis on habitat connectivity (UNDP IRRF indicator: 1.4.1 Natural resources that are</p>	<p>Baseline area 2017: PA system: 10,033,410 ha</p> <p>Ecological Corridors: None</p> <p>Source: Situation analysis report (Annex</p>	<p>End of Project Target:</p> <p>a) Yuhe NR: 4,376 ha (NP corridor)</p> <p>b) Chagangliang NR / Zhouqu County – 6,920 ha</p> <p>c) Liangdang County: c.2,973 ha</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>a) Yuhe NR: 7,426 ha increase, due to Ecological Corridors planned were 'designated' within Giant Panda NP. (Yuhe also now within the NP)</p> <p>b) Chagangliang NR/Zhouqu County: 6,920 ha increase due to Ecological Corridors planned were placed in public welfare forest</p> <p>c) Liangdang County: 1,419 ha. - The area of the ecological corridor increased by 2,973ha compared with the baseline, of which 1,418.5ha has been integrated into the scope of Lingguanxia PNR (the area of Lingguanxia PNR was 2,973.3ha</p>	<b>MS</b>	<p>There was no actual ECA legally designated for wildlife conservation and the seasonal movement of key species and their prey. But rather the approach by the state</p>

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<p>managed under a sustainable use, conservation, access and benefit-sharing regime: a) Area of land and marine habitat under protection (hectares) (GEF-7 core indicator 1.1)</p>	<p>O) by Wang Yaolin, October 2017</p>	<p>d) Hezheng County: c.12,000 ha</p>	<p>before the expansion, see Annex M5 of the project document, and the total area of Linguanxia Protected Area was 4,391.8ha after the expansion, see Gansu Governmental Correspondence [2023] No.39). The remaining 4063.7ha has been included in the National Public Welfare Forest Management of Xiaolongshan Forestry Protection Center. Therefore, 2973ha of ecological corridors have been effectively protected.</p> <p>d) EOP target progress: Completed. Hezheng County: 13,767 ha increase compared with baseline. All 13,767ha of the ecological corridor planned by the project were included in the management of national public welfare forests, an increase of 13,767ha compared with the baseline.</p> <p>(Note: 1. Before the project was implemented, the planned ecological corridors were outside the protected areas or were not included in the management scope of the national public welfare forests, and were not effectively protected, so the baseline data is 0</p> <p>The Yuhe NR was integrated into the Giant Panda National Park; the Ecological Corridors in Chaganliang NR and Hezheng were designated as national public welfare forests (note: logging is prohibited, with forest patrols), and the Ecological Corridors in Liangdang County was approved to be integrated Linguanxia Provincial NR by the Gansu Provincial People's Government.</p>		<p>to ECAs was summed up by Hezheng County who indicated they they had 'protected ECAs through policy promotion, training, environmental relocation , public welfare forest zoning, and forest restoration'.</p>
<p>Indicator 3: Improvements in status of globally threatened species in Gansu Province as measured by: stable or increased populations of indicator species (at Axia = ANR, Chaganliang = CNR, Duoer = DNR, Yuhe = YNR, QMNR = Qilian Mountains NNR, Endangered Animals Protection Centre = EAPC)</p> <p>(UNDP IRRF indicator: 1.4.1 Natural resources that are managed under a sustainable use, conservation, access and benefit-sharing regime: e) Biodiversity (using appropriate units of measure))</p>	<p>Baseline year is 2017. Source: Wang Yaolin (Annex O)</p> <p>a) Golden snub-nosed monkey EN – 1006 YNR</p> <p>b) Giant panda VU – 5 ANR, 4 CNR, 100 DNR, 1 YNR (132 in Gansu)</p> <p>c) Forest musk deer EN – NA ANR, 200 CNR, 100 DNR, NA YNR</p> <p>d) Takin VU – 2 ANR, NA CNR, 70 DNR, 75 YNR</p> <p>e) Tibetan black bear VU – 10 ANR, NA CNR, c.100 DNR</p> <p>f) Chinese giant salamander CR – present in 5 rivers in 5.09km<sup>2</sup> of habitat YNR</p> <p>g) Snow leopard VU – 306-576 QMNR</p> <p>h) Przewalski's horse EN – 98 EAPC</p> <p>i) Bactrian camel CR –</p>	<p>All Stable – as baseline, except for reintroduced species: Przewalski's horse EN – increase of 7 at EAPC</p> <p>Bactrian camel CR – increase of 5 at EAPC</p> <p>Saiga antelope CR – increase of 30 at EAPC</p>	<p>a) Golden snub-nosed monkey EN - The population of golden snub-nosed monkey in the Yuhe Nature Reserve showed a steady and small increase during the project period, with a rough estimation of a population of about 1,000-1,200 monkeys, and no significant change in habitat range.</p> <p>b) Giant panda VU - 2-4 in Axia, 2-4 in Chaganliang, 7 in Duo'er, and 0-1 in Yuhe. Analysis suggests that these four protected areas are marginal areas for the distribution of giant panda populations, which are less stable, plus the habitat where the bamboo blossomed around 2005 has not yet been restored, and some of the individuals in their original habitat may have migrated to Jiuzhaigou County and Ruergai County, and the giant panda population is on a slight downward trend.</p> <p>c) Forest musk deer EN - Based on a total of 11 individuals found by infrared cameras, 45 piles of feces found by sample line monitoring, national terrestrial wildlife resource survey data, and interview information during the project period, the forest musk deer resources in the four protected areas of Duo'er NR, A'xia NR, Chaganliang NR, and Yuha NR are in the stage of bottoming out, with a population number of approximately between 250-500, of which Duo'er, A'xia and Chaganliang NRs are each about 50-100, and Yuhe NR is about 100-200, which is a slight increase compared with the early stage of the project. However, in the baseline data, there are 200 individuals in Chaganliang and 100 individuals in Duo'er, which are relatively high, while there are none in Yuhe and A'xia, which are relatively low.</p> <p>d) Takin VU - 180 in A'xia NR, 150 in Chaganliang NR, 246 in Duo'er NR, 350 in Yuhe NR, with an overall increase.</p>	<p>MU</p>	<p>The result that stood out was the wide confidence level in the estimated number of snow leopard. This was most worrying in terms of management effectiveness (for seasonal habitat and prey species maintenance). The other concerning result was the apparent loss of Giant panda and its habitat at present.</p>

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	19 EAPC j) Saiga antelope CR – 107 EAPC		<p>e) Tibetan black bear VU - 36 in A'xia NR, 20 in Chagangliang NR, 15 in Duo'er NR, and 33 in Yuhe NR, with an overall increase.</p> <p>f) Chinese giant salamander CR - Changes in the Chinese giant salamander population and habitat are difficult to analyze due to the lack of first-hand information. Based on the information from the visit, the wild population of the Chinese giant salamander suffered serious damage from the 1990s-2000s, and after 2010, poaching gradually decreased, the population of wild Chinese giant salamander showed a trend of recovery during the project period, the records of Chinese giant salamander found gradually increased, and the range and area of the habitat did not change much, and it was generally stable.</p> <p>g) Snow leopard VU - 400-800. This is the population of snow leopards in the Qilian Mountain National Park. The data comes from the draft Comprehensive Scientific Investigation Report of Qilian Mountain National Park jointly prepared by Gansu Forestry and Grassland Bureau and Qinghai Forestry and Grassland Bureau.</p> <p>h) Przewalski's horse EN –145 with an increase of 47 at EAPC.</p> <p>i) Bactrian camel CR –26 with an increase of 7 at EAPC.</p> <p>j) Saiga antelope CR – 50 with a decrease of 57 due to animal epidemics diseases.</p>		
<b>Outcome 1: Improved legal and institutional framework for Protected Areas (PAs), Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and globally threatened species, and mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation in provincial planning</b>					
Indicator 4: Extent to which legal, policy and institutional frameworks reflect current national policy for biodiversity conservation	<p>a) Five key biodiversity-related laws are out of date in relation to current national laws and require strengthening See PPG report in Annex R</p> <p>b) No provincial level full BSAP at present</p> <p>c) No formal community co-management mechanisms at sites, although a conservation society is active at Duoer NR</p>	<p>a) Proposals for updating and revision of five biodiversity related laws submitted and approved by Gansu Province People's Congress</p> <p>b) Updated Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Gansu fully reflecting national biodiversity policy is approved</p> <p>Community co-management agreements for Axia, Chagangliang, Duoer and Yuhe NRs under implementation</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>a) EOP target progress: Completed. The project's legislation proposals to the Regulations of Gansu Province on Environmental Protection were adopted by the Legal Affairs Committee of Provincial People's Congress Standing Committee on December 1, 2019. The revised Measures of Gansu Province for the Implementation of the Forest Law of the People's Republic of China was approved on March 31, 2021, and came into effect on May 1, 2021. The Administrative Measures for National Parks in Gansu Province (Interim)" has been issued and implemented by the General Office of the Gansu Provincial Government on May 28, 2022. Please refer to INDICATOR 4A-2022 in the evidence file.</p> <p>b) EOP target progress: Completed. Gansu Provincial Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) (2020-2030) has been finalized. It is considered as an important reference for preparation of Gansu Provincial Biodiversity Conservation Plan (2021-2035) by the Provincial Department of Ecology and Environment (DEE). As part of China's commitment to the COP15 framework, on June 19, 2023, the project commissioned the Foreign Environmental Cooperation Center of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment through an open bidding process to update the Gansu Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2020-30) in accordance with the national BSAP and the latest Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The updated Gansu Provincial BSAP will be released before the end of the year. Relevant evidence has been submitted in 2021.</p>	MS	<p>Four pieces of legislation were updated: The project prepared the Gansu Biodiversity Conservation Strategy &amp; Action Plan (BCSAP, 2020-30). However the BCSAP was not promulgated as a legal document for implementation. The four NRs signed co-management agreements with communities in 2021.</p>



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			c) EOP target progress: Completed. The four target NRs have signed co-management agreements with local communities in January 2021. Relevant evidence has been submitted in 2021.		
Indicator 5: Revised provincial laws for wildlife conservation and NR management reflecting KBAs including agency responsibilities for monitoring and reporting on KBA and globally threatened species status	Existing policy and legal framework is evolving but does not yet reflect KBAs or the need to include them in the PA system and EC network, no agency reporting requirement for status of KBAs and globally threatened species	Revised provincial laws for wildlife conservation and NR management reflecting KBAs and the need for their coverage by the PA system and EC network and requires agency reporting on KBA and globally threatened species status	<p>In progress, 80%. EOP target progress: In progress,80%. The Intended Plan for Integration and Optimization of Natural Protected Areas is a national effort. In this plan prepared by the PA Management Division of GFGB, KBA coverage and connectivity of endangered species habitats has been increased. At present, it has been preliminarily approved by the Ministry of Ecology and Environment and the Ministry of Natural Resources. The deadline for submitting the finalized Plan is 2025. The Gansu Province Endangered Species Protection Gap Analysis and PA Planning has passed the panel review including the participation of experts from the PA planning division of the provincial forest and grass agencies and has been finalized. It supplements the Intended Plan for Integration and Optimization of Natural Protected Areas in Gansu Province as an important reference. Meantime, it will serve as technical guidance for the PA system planning of Gansu Province in the future. Besides, the BSAP prepared by the biodiversity mainstreaming/planning consultant also indicates more focus on KBA and increase of KBAs. The Gansu BSAP mainstreaming report has been submitted in 2021. Next step, the GEF project will promote GFGB to officially adopt the Gansu Province Endangered Species Protection Gap Analysis and PA Planning for the Provincial PA system planning.</p>	MS	The legal framework to include KBAs and a ECA network in the PA system was not achieved. FGB has a draft plan for optimisation of PAs however, it will not be submitted to national government until 2025
Indicator 6: Biodiversity conservation integrated as a mainstreamed task in the Provincial Five-Year Plan (FYP) with provision for enhanced protection of KBAs and globally threatened species	The Outline of Gansu 13th FYP Chapter 17 describes key projects on NRs and wildlife conservation and key ecological function zones	Safeguards for biodiversity conservation, KBAs and globally threatened species included in 13th and 14th FYP for key sectors Note: Key sectors should include at least Environmental Protection, Forestry and Agriculture. The finalization of sectors to include will be decided by the Task Force responsible for this activity.	<p>EOP target progress: Completed. 8 provincial departmental 14th FYP have mainstreamed Gansu Provincial BSAP developed by GEF Biodiversity mainstreaming specialist in terms of direction, objectives, key areas, principles, priority areas etc. The 8 sectoral 14th FYPs include Gansu Provincial Economic And Social Development Outlines, Gansu Province's "14th Five-year Plan" For Ecology And Environmental Protection Plan, Gansu Province's "14th Five-year Plan" For Forestry And Grassland Protection And Development Plan, Gansu Province's 14th Five-year Plan For Water Conservancy Development, Gansu Province's 14th Five-year Plan For Cultural And Tourism Development, Gansu Province's "14th Five-year Plan" For Comprehensive Transportation System Development Plan, Gansu Province's "14th Five-year Plan" For Agriculture And Rural Sector, And Gansu Province's "14th Five-year Plan" For Natural Resources Management. Please refer to INDICATOR 6-1-2022 in the evidence file for the feedback of government agencies and INDICATOR 6-2-2022 for the integration report.</p>	MS	The BCSAP was mainstreamed into the Gansu 14th FYP. The expectation of the indicator was that KBAs would be legally recognised or at least their areas included as conservation areas in planning, however the FYP is a policy document. There was little evidence of KBAs being recognised.
Indicator 7: Improved institutional capacity to	a) 53% b) 38%	a/ 84% b/ 72%	Completed.	S	Institutional capacity was improved through

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administer the provincial PA System and globally threatened species conservation, indicated by UNDP capacity development scorecard (see Annex N) for: a) Gansu Forestry Department b) Bailongjiang Forestry Administration c) Gansu EAPC	57%	c/ 84%	a) 89% b) 74% c) 84%		the development of professional competence standards, and training.
Indicator 8: PA system financing gap	The provincial PA system is centrally financed with little diversification of funding sources. PA system financing gap of USD 81,740,000 for basic management costs	PA system financing gap reduced to at least USD 57,218,000 for basic management costs (30% reduction)	EOP target progress: Completed. Funding gap for the basic management costs of the Protected Area System reduced to US\$ 44,261,678 and the funding gap for the Protected Area System is below the target set by the project (US\$ 57,218,000)	MU	The reported annual PA System funding gap was US\$44.3 m. The project produced four NR financing plans, however, the plans were not government endorsed or financing agreed
<b>Outcome 2: Strengthened West Qinling Mountains-Minshan Mountains PA and Ecological Corridor Network and reduction of threats</b>					
Indicator 9: Increased management effectiveness of targeted PAs covering approx. 355,530 ha indicate "sound" management (as measured by the GEF Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) – see Annex B): a) Axia NR b) Chagangliang NR c) Duoer NR d) Yuhe NR	METT baseline scores: a) 42% b) 55% c) 45% d) 52%	METT target scores: a) 67% b) 76% c) 71% d) 79%	Completed.  a) 75% b) 78% c) 76% d) 81%	S	Significant improvement
Indicator 10: Threats to biodiversity reduced at project demonstration sites Threats: firewood, grazing cattle, medicinal herbs. Mid term targets expected to be less than half of EoP targets. (see also Table A of METT forms in Annex B)	a) Axia NR i) Firewood: 4,439t ii) Grazing cattle: 49,961 b) Chagangliang NR i) Firewood: 2,205t ii) Grazing cattle: 726 c) Duoer NR i) Firewood: 13,300t ii) Grazing cattle: 15,200 d) Yuhe NR i) Firewood: 50t ii) Medicinal herbs: 10t	a) Axia NR i) Firewood: 20% decrease ii) Grazing cattle: 10% decrease b) Chagangliang NR i) Firewood: 30% decrease ii) Grazing cattle: 30% decrease c) Duoer NR i) Firewood: 30% decrease ii) Grazing cattle: 6% decrease	a) A'xia NR Firewood: 38% decrease Grazing cattle: 22% decrease b) Chagangliang NR Firewood: 48% decrease Grazing cattle: 44% decrease c) Duo'er NR Firewood: 29% decrease Grazing cattle: 7% decrease d) Yuhe NR Firewood: 38% decrease Medicinal herbs: 62% decrease	S	The target for catttle removal from Duo'er NR, was too low. The reduction in fuelwood collection from Axia, Changangliang and Duo'er NRs was impressive, if again monitoring indicates that these figures are sustainable post-project.

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		d) Yuhe NR i) Firewood: 40% decrease ii) Medicinal herbs: 60% decrease			The project had not established an on-going standardised threat monitoring survey which was needed annually. Thus cattle numbers could easily return to previous or higher numbers
<b>Outcome 3: Knowledge Management, M&amp;E and Gender Mainstreaming</b>					
Indicator 11: Extent of documentation and dissemination of project lessons learned to other projects and stakeholders through the C-PAR Program: a) Number of lessons learned disseminated via project website/C-PAR biodiversity knowledge platform b) Number of participants attending meetings where lessons learned were presented.	0	a) 20 lessons learned completed and uploaded to project website/C-PAR biodiversity knowledge platform; and usage statistics indicate increasing reach of C-PAR program lessons learned. b) 600	In progress, 27%. a) EOP target progress: In progress, 15%. The project has generated 3 and has disseminated through website. Other lessons will be summarized and will be posted on project website successively. b) EOP target progress: In progress, 62%. 372. The project has shared project lessons with 372 people.	S	Three lessons from a target of 20 had been produced. The project is in process to create and post the remaining 13 lessons, and disseminate them.
Indicator 12: Improved awareness of the value of biodiversity conservation among key target groups including: a) Gansu provincial government decision makers, b) local government agencies, and c) local communities at project sites, indicated by Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) surveys conducted at the start and end of the project	The ratio of knowledge, attitude and practice in different bodies: a) Provincial authorities 55%/50%/50% ; b) Local government 50%/40%/45% ; c) PA management agency 50%/55%/55% ; d) Community residents 35%/45%/30%;	The ratio of knowledge, attitude and practice in different bodies: a) Provincial authorities 65%/60%/60% ; b) Local government 65%/55%/55% ; c) PA management agency 70%/75%/70% ; d) Community residents 50%/60%/40%;	a) Provincial authorities 66.37%/62.09%/61.18%; b) Local government 66.9%/66.67%/66.42% c) PA management agency 70.39%/70.16%/75.85%; d) Community residents 50.1%/59.54%/47.69%.	S	Improvement in KAP results

## Annex 2: Delivery of Outputs

Outputs	Achievements Reported by IP	TE Comment
<b>Project Objective:</b>		
<b>Component 1: Improved legal and institutional framework for Protected Areas (PAs), Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and globally threatened species, and mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation in provincial planning</b>		
Output 1.1: Strengthened legal and enforcement framework for protection of globally threatened species and Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), with subsidiary regulations, and compliance monitoring and evaluation system	Recommendations of project legal experts and financing experts were adopted by the Legislative Affairs Committee of the Standing Committee of the Gansu Provincial People's Congress. Measures for the Implementation of the Forest Law of the People's Republic of China in Gansu Province, revised with the participation of members of the Environmental Legal Financing Expert Group, which came into effect on May 1, 2021, and the Measures for the Management of Provincially Important Wetlands in Gansu Province (for Trial Implementation), which were formulated with the participation of members of the legal task force, which were issued on Dec. 15, 2020.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ See Indicator 4</li> </ul>
Output 1.2: Provincial Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan updated and biodiversity conservation integrated as a mainstreamed task for key sectors in the Provincial Five-Year Plan (FYP) with provision for enhanced protection of KBAs and globally threatened species	Gansu Provincial Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2020-2030), Gansu Provincial Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2020-2030) Integrated into the Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development in Gansu Province and the Long Range Objectives for 2035, Feedback Strategy Integrated into the Department's 14th Five-Year Plan - Provincial Department of Ecology and Environment, Feedback Strategy Integrated into the Department's 14th Five-Year Plan - Provincial Department of Science and Technology, Feedback Strategy Integrated into the Department's 14th Five-Year Plan - Provincial Forestry and Grassland Bureau, Feedback Strategy Integrated into the Department's 14th Five-Year Plan - Legislative Affairs Committee of the Standing Committee of the Gansu Provincial People's Congress, Feedback Strategy Integrated into the Department's 14th Five-Year Plan - Provincial Department of Water Resources, Feedback Strategy Integrated into the Department's 14th Five-Year Plan - Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, Feedback Strategy Integrated into the Department's 14th Five-Year Plan - Provincial Department of Transportation, Feedback Strategy Integrated into the Department's 14th Five-Year Plan - Provincial Department of Education, in-depth update and release of BSAP based on the Kunming - Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (in progress).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As support towards updating the BSAP, the project produced – 'Gap Analysis on the Protection of Endangered Species in PA Planning' and the FGB produced – 'PA Integration &amp; Optimization Plan (See Indicators 5 and 6).</li> <li>▪ Concerning the 'existing BSAP' , it was reported that the distribution and description of KBAs were clearly defined .</li> </ul>
Output 1.3: Provincial level plans for conservation, rehabilitation and reintroduction of priority globally threatened species	Impact Assessment Report on Conservation Activities of Gansu Endangered Animal Protection Centre, Technical Consultation Report on Reintroduction of Species, KAP Baseline Survey Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The project also produced two reports: Gansu Endangered Animal Protection Centre (EAPC) - Impact Assessment Report; and Re-introduction of Species report:</li> </ul>
Output 1.4: Assessments and plans completed for PA system functional integrity supported by an ecological corridor network for the province	Gap Analysis of Gansu Endangered Animal Protection and Planning of Protected Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Management and financing plans for the 4 NRs were completed</li> </ul>

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Outputs	Achievements Reported by IP	TE Comment
Output 1.5: Provincial PA system and threatened species conservation strengthened through capacity development, support for national park governance, introduction of professional competence standards, provision of training modules and technical support to the Gansu Endangered Animals Protection Centre (EAPC)	Protected Area System Capacity Development Plan, Training Course Module-1: Integrated Planning for Ecosystem Management in Protected Areas, Training Course Module-2: Design, Implementation and Management of Ecological Corridors, Training Course Module-3: Smart Patrols and Law Enforcement, Training Course Module-4: Performance Evaluation of Protected Area Management, Training Course Module-5: Biodiversity Monitoring, Training Course Module-6: Information Management and Publicity, Training Course Module-7: Integrated Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Training Course Module-8: Social Impacts of Protected Areas, Safeguards, and FPIC (Free Prior and Informed Consent) Principles and Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development of professional standards for conservation professionals and practitioners was good.</li> </ul>
<b>Component 2: Strengthened West Qinling Mountains-Minshan Mountains PA network and reduction of threats</b>		
Output 2.1: Development and expansion of the Protected Area and Ecological Corridor Network by over 25,000 ha, increasing coverage of KBAs and improving habitat connectivity	Implementation Plan for the West Qinling - Minshan Mountains Corridor Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project developed a plan for a WQMM ECA network, which manifested in to four ECAs, which were subsequently legally defined as NP or PWF areas. Note, Indicator 2 and Output 2.1 are the same</li> </ul>
Output 2.2: Strengthened coordination and management of the PA and ecological corridor network in the West Qinling – Minshan Mountains	Statute of Gansu West Qinling - Minshan Mountains Corridor Network Coordination Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The plan was a useful document in bringing together the project's ECA network.</li> </ul>
Output 2.3: Effective community co-management and engagement in PA management achieving livelihoods improvement and threat reduction	Gansu Bailongjiang Axia Provincial Nature Reserve Community Co-Management Plans, Gansu Bailongjiang Chagangliang Provincial Nature Reserve Community Co-Management Plans, Gansu Duo'er National Nature Reserve Community Co-Management Plans, Longnan Wudu District Yuhe Golden Monkey Provincial Nature Reserve Community Co-Management Plans, Community Resource Co-Management Agreement - Duo'er Conservation Bureau & Dayi Village, Community Resource Co-Management Agreement - Chagangliang Conservation Bureau & Duola Village, Community Resource Co-Management Agreement-Axia Conservation Bureau & Cuoxi Village, Community Resource Co-Management Agreement-Yuhe Conservation Bureau & Zhangjiayuan Village, Community Eco-tourism Implementation Plan of Dayi Village in Gansu Duo'er National Nature Reserve, Community Eco-tourism Implementation Plan of Gaogi Village in Gansu Axia Provincial Nature Reserve, Benefit-Sharing Agreement of Axia Conservation Bureau & Cuoxi Village, Benefit Sharing Agreement of Dayi Village Duo'er Township Diebu County, Yuhe Township Women's E-commerce Group of Yuhe Nature Reserve & Longnan Wudu District Enrich Farmers Tea Cultivation Farmers' Specialized Cooperative Benefit-Sharing Agreement, Chagangliang Protected Area Qugaona Township Lamogaituo Village High Quality Prickly Ash Sales E-commerce Group & Zhouqu County Qugaona Township Lamogaituo Village High Quality Prickly Ash Benefit-Sharing Agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The four NRs signed co-management agreements with communities in January 2021. Note grazing control was missing from the agreement.</li> <li>The project was successful in developing IGAS</li> </ul>
Output 2.4: Pilot interventions to demonstrate mechanisms for the prevention, management and	Handbook on Wildlife Prevention in the West Qinling-Minshan Mountains Area and Contract for the Pilot Project of HWC Insurance Compensation in Diebu County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development of a mechanism for financially mitigating the impact of HWC,</li> </ul>

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Outputs	Achievements Reported by IP	TE Comment
compensation of human-wildlife conflict (HWC) damage adjacent to PAs and Ecological Corridors		and therefore making the aggrieved parties, less antagonistic towards wildlife was very successful as a demonstration.
Output 2.5: Development of a landscape scale biodiversity survey, monitoring and information system for West Qinling Mountains-Minshan Mountains demonstration area	Consulting Service Contract for the Preparation of Technical Programs for the Development of Biodiversity Conservation Information System in Protected Areas of Gansu Province, and Agreement on the Development of Management System of Biodiversity Conservation Information System in Protected Areas of Gansu Province.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The BCIS was not well developed</li> </ul>
<b>Component 3: Knowledge Management, Monitoring and Evaluation and Gender Mainstreaming</b>		
Output 3.1: Knowledge management is coordinated effectively through the GEF China – Protected Area Reform Programme	ESIA, IPP, SAPA (translation)	Largely completed
Output 3.2: M&E system incorporating gender mainstreaming developed and implemented for adaptive project management	Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Plan for Gansu Protected Areas Project (2019-2020 Edition) and Protocol for Information Collection (Monitoring) of the Project's "Gender Mainstreaming Plan", Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Plan for UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project (2021-2022 Edition), Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Plan for UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project (2022-2023 Edition), Bi-annual Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan Progress Report on the Implementation of the Gender Mainstreaming Plan of Action (2021), and Biennial Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan Progress Report on the implementation of the Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan of the Gender Mainstreaming Plan of Action (2023).	Completed

### Annex 3: Co-financing Table

Sources of Cofinancing <sup>1</sup>	Name of Cofinancer	Description of Cofinancing	Type of Cofinancing <sup>2</sup>	Confirmed at CEO Endorsement (US\$)	Amount at MTR (USD)	At time of TE (30th June 2023)	New Investment or Recurrent Expenditure	% of Expected Amount USD
	<b>UNDP</b>	Project	Grant	\$45,000	\$22,500	\$45,000		100
<b>UNDP &amp; Partner Sub-Total</b>				<b>\$45,000</b>	<b>\$22,500</b>	<b>\$36,000</b>		<b>80</b>
<b>National Government</b>	<b>Gansu Provincial Government</b>	Department of Finance	Grant/In-kind	\$18,000,000	\$11,042,000	\$24,696,300	100 recurrent	137
		of which	Cash	\$0	\$0	\$142,857	n/a	n/a
<b>Government / Other Sub-Total</b>				<b>\$18,000,000</b>	<b>\$11,042,000</b>	<b>\$24,696,300</b>		<b>137</b>
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$18,045,000</b>	<b>\$11,064,500</b>	<b>\$24,732,300</b>		<b>137</b>

1. Sources of Co-financing may include: Bilateral Aid Agencies, Foundation, GEF Partner Agency, Local/ National Government, Civil Society Organization, Multi-lateral agencies, Private Sector, Other
2. Type of Co-financing may include: Grant, Soft Loan, Hard Loan, Guarantee, In-Kind, Other
3. Government funding was not audited by the project
4. Excludes PPG

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**Annex 4: Planned Budget and Expenditures at End-term**

Outcome	2019 USD	2020 USD	2021 USD	2022 USD	2023 USD	2024 USD	Total USD
<b>Indicative Breakdown of Project Budget in Project Document:</b>							
<b>Outcome 1</b>	\$165,995	\$192,495	\$168,995	\$62,494	\$50,021		<b>\$640,000</b>
<b>Outcome 2</b>	\$272,458	\$472,458	\$399,208	\$351,521	\$132,355		<b>\$1,628,000</b>
<b>Outcome 3</b>	\$75,817	\$26,852	\$73,352	\$23,852	\$60,127		<b>\$260,000</b>
<b>Project Management</b>	\$33,660	\$22,060	\$23,260	\$22,060	\$23,254		<b>\$124,294</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$547,930</b>	<b>\$713,865</b>	<b>\$664,815</b>	<b>\$459,927</b>	<b>\$265,757</b>		<b>\$2,652,294</b>
<b>Outcome</b>							<b>Cumulative Totals at End June 2023</b>
<b>Annual Work Plan Budgets and Actual Expenditures Incurred through Endterm:</b>							
<b>Outcome 1:</b>							
Annual Work Plan	\$148,651	\$138,801	\$208,146	\$169,218	\$120,825	\$51,071	<b>\$836,713</b>
Disbursed	\$39,314	\$168,311	\$155,357	\$105,178	\$17,172	\$0	<b>\$485,332</b>
Balance (AWP-Disbursed)	\$109,337	-\$29,511	\$52,790	\$64,040	\$103,654	\$51,071	<b>\$351,381</b>
<b>Outcome 2:</b>							
Annual Work Plan	\$83,491	\$489,584	\$584,064	\$375,805	\$232,718	\$211,544	<b>\$1,977,206</b>
Disbursed	\$35,788	\$417,739	\$590,427	\$178,880	\$38,979	\$0	<b>\$1,261,812</b>
Balance (AWP-Disbursed)	\$47,703	\$71,845	-\$6,363	\$196,925	\$193,739	\$211,544	<b>\$715,394</b>
<b>Outcome 3:</b>							
Annual Work Plan	\$71,674	\$35,609	\$94,682	\$89,975	\$71,068	\$23,008	<b>\$386,017</b>
Disbursed	\$41,545	\$30,420	\$68,418	\$25,610	\$5,227	\$0	<b>\$171,220</b>
Balance (AWP-Disbursed)	\$30,129	\$5,189	\$26,264	\$64,364	\$65,842	\$23,008	<b>\$214,797</b>
<b>Project Management</b>							
Annual Work Plan	\$24,410	\$20,742	\$26,124	\$28,887	\$32,530	\$11,267	<b>\$143,960</b>
Disbursed	\$12,529	\$26,466	\$21,370	\$20,146	\$233	\$0	<b>\$67,982</b>
Balance (AWP-Disbursed)	\$11,881	-\$5,724	\$4,754	\$8,741	\$32,297	\$11,267	<b>\$75,978</b>
<b>ERD (exchange rate difference)</b>							
	\$3,362	-\$43,824	-\$10,027	\$11,251			
<b>Grand Totals:</b>							
Annual Work Plan	\$328,226	\$684,736	\$913,017	\$663,885	\$457,142	\$296,890	<b>\$3,343,896</b>
<b>Total Disbursed</b>	<b>\$132,538</b>	<b>\$599,113</b>	<b>\$825,544</b>	<b>\$341,067</b>	<b>\$61,611</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,959,872</b>
<b>Balance (AWP-Disbursed)</b>	<b>\$195,688</b>	<b>\$85,623</b>	<b>\$87,473</b>	<b>\$322,818</b>	<b>\$395,531</b>	<b>\$296,890</b>	<b>\$1,384,024</b>

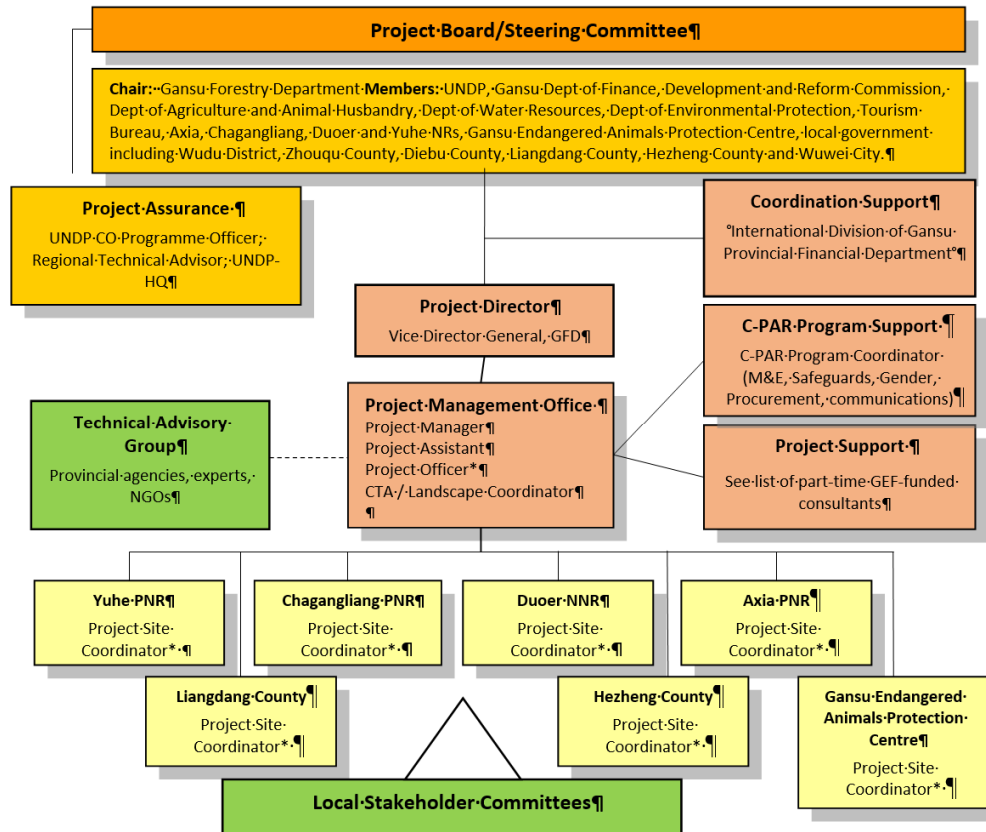


## Annex 5: Brief review of Plans, Technical reports, Training materials, Misc.

### Contents

- Project Organisational Structure
- Consultant Reports
- List of Consultancies
- Gender Plan
- Training data

### Project Organisational Structure



### Consultant Reports

- 1 Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Report (2020) pp 2, Chinese Version
- 2 Collection Template for Gender Mainstreaming Information Collection (2020) pp5, Chinese Version
- 3 Gender Training Materials for Development of Information Management System (2022) pp35, Chinese Version
- 4 Gender Training Materials on Gap Analysis for Conservation of Endangered Species (2021) pp6, Chinese Version
- 5 Gender Training Materials for Ecotourism in Protected Communities (2021) pp19, Chinese Version
- 6 Village Project Management Committee Information Collection Template (2020) pp2, Chinese Version
- 7 Biennial Work Plan for Gender Integration Projects (2022) pp2, Chinese Version with English Abstract
- 8 Gansu GEF Project Expert Technical Report - Gender Mainstreaming (2022) pp13, Chinese Version
- 9 Gansu Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan-Final Draft (2020) pp50, Chinese Version
- 10 Gansu Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan Training Materials (2020) pp42, Chinese Version
- 11 Expert Technical Report on Biodiversity Mainstreaming and Planning (2022) pp21, Chinese Version
- 12 Expert Summary Report on Biodiversity Mainstreaming and Planning (2022) pp17, Chinese Version
- 13 PRA Survey Implementation Program – Yuhe (2023) pp3, Chinese Version
- 14 PRA Survey Implementation Program – Chagangliang (2022) pp3, Chinese Version

- 15 PRA Survey Implementation Program - A'xia (2022) pp7, Chinese Version
- 16 PRA Survey Implementation Program - Duo'er (2022) pp18, Chinese Version
- 17 PRA Reporting Outline (2023) pp3, Chinese Version
- 18 PRA Survey Training PPT - Develop a PRA Survey Plan (2022) pp10, Chinese Version
- 19 PRA Survey Training PPT - Survey Report Outline (2022) pp10, Chinese Version
- 20 PRA Survey Training PPT - Concepts and Processes (2022) pp24, Chinese Version
- 21 Model Protected Areas Biodiversity Threat Factor Monitoring Report (2023) pp12, Chinese Version
- 22 Model Protected Area Biodiversity and Target Species 2022 Annual Monitoring Report (2023) pp19, Chinese Version
- 23 Report on the human resources analysis of the Duo'er Protected Area (2023) pp5, Chinese Version
- 24 Corridor Community Co-administration Agreement – Template (2023) pp4, Chinese Version
- 25 Statute of the Coordinating Committee of West Qinling- Minshan Mountain Corridor Network of Gansu Province (2023) pp4, Chinese Version
- 26 Gansu GEF Project Expert Technical Report-Updated Version (2020) pp59, Chinese Version
- 27 Gansu GEF Project Expert Technical Report (2021) pp22, Chinese Version
- 28 Gansu GEF Project Expert Progress Report (2021) pp15, Chinese Version
- 29 West Qinling-Minshan Mountain Corridor Network Implementation Plan (2020) pp29, Chinese Version
- 30 Proposed Budget and Schedule of Actions - Yuhe Corridor (2020) pp6, Chinese Version
- 31 Proposed Budget and Schedule of Actions - Chaganliang Corridor (2020) pp6, Chinese Version
- 32 Proposed budget and schedule of actions - Hezheng Corridor (2020) pp6, Chinese Version
- 33 Proposed budget and schedule of actions - Liangdang Corridor (2020) pp6, Chinese Version

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List of Consultancies

	Name of Contracts	Name of Outputs (including reports, plans, etc.)
1	Office equipment procurement contract	
2	Microsite construction contract	
3	Development of A'xia NR Management Programme Agreement	Gansu Bailongjiang A'xia Provincial Nature Reserve Management Plan (2021-2025) (2021) pp107, Chinese Version with English Abstract
4	Development of Chaganliang NR Management Programme Agreement	Gansu Bailongjiang Chaganliang Provincial Nature Reserve Management Plan (2021-2025) (2022) pp 101, Chinese Version
5	Development of Yuhe NR Management Programme Agreement	Gansu Yuhe Provincial Nature Reserve Management Plan (2021-2025) (2020) pp 121, Chinese Version with English Abstract
6	Monitoring equipment procurement contract	
7	Patrol equipment procurement contract	
8	Office equipment procurement contract	
9	Consultancy services contract for the establishment of community co-management mechanism between the project's protected areas and local communities	<p>Gansu Bailongjiang A'xia Provincial Nature Reserve Community Co-Management Plan (2020-2024) (2020) pp 34, Chinese Version</p> <p>Gansu Bailongjiang Chaganliang Provincial Nature Reserve Community Co-Management Plan (2020-2024) (2020) pp 35, Chinese Version</p> <p>Gansu Duo'er National Nature Reserve Community Co-Management Plan (2020-2024) (2020) pp 41, Chinese Version</p> <p>Community Co-Management Plan of Yuhe Snub-Nosed Monkey Provincial Nature Reserve, Wudu District, Longnan City (2020-2024) (2020) pp 31, Chinese Version</p> <p>Community Resource Co-Management Agreement – Dayi Village, Duo'er Township, Diebu County (2021) pp 3, Chinese Version</p> <p>Community Resource Co-Management Agreement – Duola Village, Dayu Town, Zhouqu County (2021) pp 3, Chinese Version</p> <p>Community Resource Co-Management Agreement – Cuoxi Village, Wangzang Township, Diebu County (2021) pp 3, Chinese Version</p> <p>Community Resource Co-Management Agreement – Zhangjiayuan Village, Fengxiang Township, Wudu District, Longnan City (2021) pp 3, Chinese Version</p>
10	Consultancy services on monitoring project knowledge, attitudes and practices using the KAP framework	<p>KAP baseline survey report (2020) pp 149, Chinese Version with English Abstract</p> <p>KAP baseline survey report (2023) pp 146, Chinese Version with English Abstract</p>
11	Conducting impact assessment of conservation activities for Gansu Endangered Animal Protection Center and providing technical support and consulting services for species introduction.	<p>Impact assessment report on the conservation activities of Gansu Endangered Animals Conservation Center (2020) pp 93, Chinese Version with English Abstract</p> <p>Technical Advisory Report on Species Reintroduction (2020) pp 54, Chinese Version with English Abstract</p>
12	Contract for consultancy services for capacity development and training module development for PA system	Protected area system capacity development plan 2020-2023 (2020) pp 101, Chinese Version with English Abstract

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		Comprehensive plan for ecosystem management in protected areas (2020) pp 74, Chinese Version with English Abstract
		Ecological corridor design, implementation and management (2020) pp 80, Chinese Version with English Abstract
		Intelligent patrol and law enforcement course (2020) pp 75, Chinese Version with English Abstract
		Performance evaluation of protected area management (2020) pp 48, Chinese Version with English Abstract
		Biodiversity monitoring (2020) pp 83, Chinese Version with English Abstract
		Information management and dissemination (2020) pp 102, Chinese with English Abstract
		Community-based integrated planning for natural resource management (2020) pp 67, Chinese Version with English Abstract
		Social Impacts, Safeguards and FPIC (Free, Prior and Informed Consent) Principles and Methodologies for Protected Areas (2020) pp 55, Chinese Version with English Abstract
13	Consultancy service contract for the preparation of technical solutions for the development of information management system for Gansu PA biodiversity conservation	Gansu Forestry and Grassland Bureau Natural PA Information Assessment Report (2020) pp 22, Chinese Version Technical Plan for the Development of the Gansu Provincial Biodiversity Conservation Information System (2021) pp 58, Chinese Version with English Abstract
14	Contract for consultancy services for the project to build capacity for marketing agroforestry products in PA communities	
15	Consultancy services contract for the HWC management demonstration project in the West Qinling-Minshan Mountains PA	Wildlife Prevention Manual (2022) pp 8, Chinese Version
16	Project mobile assisted office system development and operation and maintenance service contract	
17	Consultancy services contract for PA system personnel training	
18	A'xia NR sustainable financing program agreement	Gansu Bailongjiang A'xia Provincial Nature Reserve Sustainable Financing Plan (2021~2025) (2021) pp 142, Chinese Version with English Abstract
19	Duo'er NR sustainable financing program agreement	Gansu Duo'er Nature Reserve Sustainable financing plan (2021~2025) (2022) pp 163, Chinese Version with English Abstract
20	Chagangliang NR sustainable financing program agreement	Sustainable financing plan for the Caigangliang Nature Reserve (2021-2025) (2022) pp 103, Chinese Version with English Abstract
21	Yuhe NR sustainable financing program agreement	Gansu Yuhe Provincial Nature Reserve Sustainable Development Financing Plan (2021-2025) (2021) pp 70, Chinese Version with English Abstract
22	Additional office equipment procurement contract	
23	Diesel tricycles procurement contract	
24	Additional monitoring equipment procurement contract	
25	Agreement on joint construction of cherry production and marketing demonstration base by Axia Protection Bureau and Cuoxi Village	
26	Yuhe Township PA friendly tea demonstration promotion and e-commerce new media marketing project agreement	

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27	Agreement on prickly ash improvement project in Lamogaituo Village, Qugaona Township, Zhouqu County	
28	Agreement on Ecotourism Support Program in Dayi Village, Duoer Township, Diebu County	
29	Agreement on the benefit sharing of high-quality prickly ash in lamogaituo Village, Qugaona Township, Chagangliang PA, between the e-commerce group for sales of high-quality pepper & lamogaituo Village, Quqaona Township, Zhouqu County	High-Quality Prickly Ash Sales E-commerce Group in Lamogaituo Village, Qugongna Township, Chagangliang Nature Reserve & Benefit-Sharing Agreement for High-Quality Prickly Ash in Lamogaituo Village, Qugaona Township, Zhouqu County (2021)pp 6 , Chinese Version
30	Agreement on benefit sharing in Dayi Village, Duoer Township, Dibe County	Benefit-Sharing Agreement for Dayi Village, Duo'er Township, Diebu County (2021) pp 5, Chinese Version
31	Yuhe Township Women's E-commerce Group in Yuhe NR & Benefit Sharing Agreement for Enrich Farmers Tea Planting Professional Cooperative in Wudu District, Longnan City	Benefit-Sharing Agreement Between Women's E-commerce Group in Yuhe Township, Yuhe Nature Reserve & Enrich Farmers' Tea Planting Farmers' Specialized Cooperative of Wudu District, Longnan City (2021) pp 6, Chinese Version
32	Procurement contract for benefit sharing of Chagangliang community	
33	Procurement contract for benefit sharing of Duoer community	
34	Procurement contract for benefit sharing of Yuhe community	
35	Agreement on gap analysis of endangered animal species conservation and preparation of PA management in Gansu Province	Gansu Province endangered species conservation vacancy analysis and protected area planning (2022) pp 466, Chinese Version Threat Factors Monitoring Report (2023) pp 15, Chinese Version with English Abstract Monitoring Report of Key Species (2023) pp 32, Chinese Version with English Abstract
36	Agreement on the development of information management system for biodiversity conservation in PAs of Gansu Province	
37	UNDP-GEF Gansu PA project promotional video production program	
38	Agreement for the preparation of an implementation plan and capacity building for community ecotourism in Pas	Implementation Plan for Ecological Tourism in Dayi Village Community of Duo'er National Nature Reserve in Gansu Province (2021) pp 162, Chinese Version Implementation Plan for Ecological Tourism in Gaoji Village Community of A'xia National Nature Reserve in Gansu Province (2021) pp 134, Chinese Version
39	Community Benefit Sharing Agreement for Cuoxi Village, Wangzang Township, A'xia NR	A'xia NR & Cuoxi Village Benefit-Sharing Agreement (2022) pp 6, Chinese Version
40	A'xia Community Benefit Sharing Procurement Contract	
41	5.22 International Day for biological diversity awareness-raising activities implementation and video production agreement	
42	Project mobile assisted office system operation and maintenance service contract	
43	Service contract for the pilot underwriting services program for HWC insurance indemnification in Diebu County	
44	Contracts for the expansion of official accounts content	
45	Project website and servers upgrade service contract	
46	Supplemental agreement on gap analysis of endangered animal species conservation and preparation of PA management in Gansu Province	
47	UNDP-GEF Gansu PAs project updates Agreement on Gansu Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2020-2030)	Report in progress

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48	Contracts for the expansion of official accounts content	
49	Participatory Rural Assessment (PRA) Survey Agreement of Yuhe Golden Monkey Provincial Nature Reserve Management Bureau in Wudu District, Longnan City	Participatory Rural Assessment (PRA) Survey Agreement of Yuhe Golden Monkey Provincial Nature Reserve Management Bureau in Wudu District, Longnan City (2023) pp 37, Chinese Version with English Abstract
50	Supplemental agreement on the project of building a demonstration base for cherry production and marketing between the Axia Conservation Bureau and Cuoxi Village	
51	Supplemental Agreement for PA friendly tea demonstration and promotion and e-commerce new media marketing program in Yuhe Township	
52	Supplemental agreement for prickly ash improvement project in Lamogaituo Village, Qugaona Township, Zhouqu County	
53	Supplemental agreement on ecotourism support project in Dayi Village, Duoer Township, Diebu County	
54	Environmental Law and Policy Consultants Contract	Certificate of Adoption of the Results of the Legal Affairs Working Committee of the Standing Committee of the Gansu Provincial People's Congress (2019) pp 3, Chinese Version Certificate of Adoption of the Results of the Legal Affairs Working Committee of the Standing Committee of the Gansu Provincial People's Congress (2019) pp 3, Chinese Version
55	Biodiversity Mainstreaming and Planning Consultants Contract	Gansu Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2020-2030) (2020) pp 91, Chinese Version Gansu Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2020-2030), Integration into 8 sectoral reports (2021) pp 84, Chinese Version Gansu Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2020-2030), Integration into the Report on "14th Five-Year Plan for Ecological and Environmental Protection in Gansu Province". (2021) pp 17, Chinese Version Letter from Gansu Provincial Department of Science and Technology on Feedback on the Integration of Gansu Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2020-2030) into the Outline of the Sectoral "14th Five-Year Plan" Report (2021) pp 1, Chinese Version Feedback from Planning and Finance Division of Gansu Forestry and Grassland Bureau (2022) pp 2, Chinese Version Briefing on the Integration of Gansu Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2020-2030) into Local Legislation of the Province (2022) pp 2, Chinese Version Reply Letter on the Integration of Gansu Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2020-2030) into the 14th Five-Year Plan for Water Resources Development in Gansu Province (2020) pp 3, Chinese Version Report on the Integration of Gansu Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2020-2030) into the 14th Five-Year Plan for Culture and Tourism Development in Gansu Province (2022) pp 4, Chinese Version Report on the Integration of Gansu Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2020-2030) into the 14th Five-Year Plan for Highway and Waterway Transportation Development in Gansu Province (2022) pp 5, Chinese Version Gansu Province Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2020-2030) into Education 14th Five-Year Development Plan Report (2022) pp 2, Chinese Version
56	Biodiversity Planning Consultant (Local) Contract	West Qinling-Minshan Mountains Corridor Network Implementation Plan (2020) pp 106, Chinese Version

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57	Social Integration Consultant (Local) Contract	Social Assessment of Protected Areas (SAPA) (2022) pp 102, Chinese Version
		C-PAR 2 Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Report (2022) pp 119, English Version
		Indigenous Peoples Plan (2022) pp 64, English Version
58	Gender and Safeguards Consultant Contract	Implementation Plan for Gender Mainstreaming of Gansu Protected Areas Project (2019-2020 Edition) and Protocol for Information Collection (Monitoring) of the Project's Gender Mainstreaming Plan (2020) pp 10, Chinese Version
		Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Plan for UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project (Edition 2021-2022) (2021) pp 12, Chinese Version
		Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Plan for UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project (Edition 2022-2023) (2022) pp 12, Chinese Version
59	Printing Contract	Project Briefing 2019 Issue No. 1 (2019) pp 22, Chinese Version
		Project Briefing 2019 Issue No. 2 (2019) pp 36, Chinese Version
		Project Briefing 2020, Issue No. 1 (2020) pp 37, Chinese Version
		Project Briefing 2020, Issue No. 2 (2020) pp 34, Chinese Version
		Project Briefing 2021, Issue No. 1 (2021) pp 40, Chinese Version
		Project Briefing 2021, Issue No. 2 (2021) pp 54, Chinese Version
		Project Briefing 2021, Issue No. 3 (2021) pp 40, Chinese Version
		Project Briefing 2021, Issue No. 4 (2021) pp 40, Chinese Version
		Project Briefing 2022, Issue No. 1 (2022) pp 32, Chinese Version
		Project Briefing 2022, Issue No. 2 (2022) pp 32, Chinese Version
		Project Briefing 2023, Issue No. 1 (2023) pp 42, Chinese Version
		COP15 Special Edition (2022) pp 27, English Version
		Exhibition Boards of monitoring of project knowledge, attitudes and practices utilizing the KAP framework for the implementation of outcome (2020) pp 2, Chinese Version
		Exhibition Boards of the Project Component 1 Indicator Completion Status (2023) pp 10, Chinese Version
		Exhibition Boards of the Project Component 2 Indicator Completion Status (2023) pp 10, Chinese Version
		Exhibition Boards of the Project Component 3 Indicator Completion Status (2023) pp 4, Chinese Version
		Exhibition Boards of Gansu Province Protected Areas Biodiversity Conservation Information Management System (2021) pp 2, Chinese Version
		Preparation of the implementation plan for community ecological tourism in protected areas and carry out capacity building (2021) pp 3, Chinese Version
		Exhibition Boards for the Construction of Marketing Capacity for Agricultural and Forestry Products in the Protected Area Community of the Project (2021) pp 3, Chinese Version
		Exhibition Boards of the HWC Demonstration Project in the West Qinling-Minshan Mountains Protected Areas (2021) pp 3, Chinese Version
Co-management Program Exhibition Board (2022) pp 1, Chinese Version		
Exhibition Board of Curriculum Module Development Project (2023) pp 1, Chinese Version		
60	Participatory Assessment (PRA) Survey Work Plan for Dayi Village in Duo'er National	Gansu Duo'er National Nature Reserve Participatory Assessment (PRA) Survey Program for Dayi Village (2022)

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	Nature Reserve, Gansu Province	pp 23, Chinese Version
61	Participatory Assessment (PRA) Survey Work Plan for Axia Provincial Nature Reserve in Bailongjiang, Gansu Province	Gansu Bailongjiang Asha Provincial Nature Reserve Participatory Appraisal (PRA) Survey Program (2022) pp 23, Chinese Version
62	Participatory Assessment (PRA) Survey Work Plan for the Insertion of Gangliang Nature Reserve of the UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Area Project	Participatory Appraisal (PRA) Survey Program for Chagangliang Protected Area of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project (2022) pp 17, Chinese Version
63	Participatory Rural Assessment (PRA) Survey Agreement of Yuhe Golden Monkey Provincial Nature Reserve Management Bureau in Wudu District, Longnan City	Participatory Assessment (PRA) Investigation Report on Zhangjiayuan Village, Yuhe Golden Monkey Provincial Nature Reserve, Wudu District, Longnan City (2023) pp 46, Chinese Version with English Abstract

### Gender Plan

Actions	Indicators	Targets	Baseline	Achievement by end of Aug 2023	Responsible agencies	Conclusion	Information sources
<b>Outcome 1: Consolidated PA sub-system recognizing connectivity and KBAs and mainstreamed into provincial planning</b>							
• Ensure equal participation of women in the project-level training programme	# and % of female trainee	50% of female trainee proportional to the trainee groups	0	In total 531F (27%) trainees of project-level bio protection related professional trainings.	PMO, PA, gender focal points,	Not achieved, due to the low % of women staff in PA protection stations	PMO
• Ensure equal participation of women in the international training	# and % of female trainee	50% of female trainee	0	20F, 51%; one international training delivered on international PA best practice, 39trainees total, 20 women;	PMO, PA, gender focal points,	Achieved	PMO
<b>Outcome 2: Strengthened and more participatory management of the expanded PA sub-system in the Qilian Mountains-Qinghai Lake landscape</b>							
• Equal women representation on village committees and herder groups	# and % of women representatives on committees/groups	50%	0	29F, 50%	PMO, PA, gender focal points, pilot village project management committee	Achieved	PMO
• Equally engage female villagers in the ecotourism pilot initiative	# and % of female villagers engaged in the initiative	50% of female villagers in the relevant villages	0	18F, 50%	PMO, PA, gender focal points, pilot village project management committee	Achieved	PMO
• Equally engage female staff in developing and implementing the human-wildlife conflict management plan	# and % of female staff engaged in	% of female staff engaged no less the percentage of female staff in the agencies	0	50F, 40%	Relevant PAs, Relevant provincial and local government agencies	Not achieved, because less women staff in	PMO



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	developing the plan					local agencies for HWC management plan developing	
• Ensure women's equal participation in the community collaborative management	# and % of women participants	50% of women participant	0	1952F, 50%	PMO, PA, gender focal points, pilot village project management committee	Achieved	PMO
• Equal participation of women in designing and implementing the grassland restoration	# and % of women participants	50% of women in the relevant communities	0	48F, 50%	PMO, PA, gender focal points	Achieved	PMO
• Equal participation of women in sustainable livelihood alternatives and equal attainment of micro-financing grants	# and % of women participants, # and % of micro-grants	50% of women in the relevant communities	0	203F, 50%	PMO, PA, gender focal points	Achieved	PMO
• Organize and train women groups to brand and market their products on the internet and/or on Wechat	# of women groups	At least one group in Dayu Village in Qinghai Lake NNR	0	42F, 82%. Two trainings were delivered, one for Business, Market and Women's Leadership, one for Electronic Business Operation, total trainees 49, and 42 females.	PMO, the project manager, the GEI if they are recruited by the project and the gender specialist	Achieved	PMO
<b>Outcome 3: Enabling conditions strengthened through improved monitoring &amp; evaluation and reporting, knowledge management, and social inclusion</b>							
• Ensure women's equal participation in the project inception workshop, and annual project stakeholder workshops	# and % of women participants	50% of female participant no less than the percentage of women in the workforce	0	22F, 48% higher than women percentages in the relevant agencies	PMO, project manager, project-level gender specialist, gender focal points	Not Achieved.	PMO
• Equal consideration of women in the KAP survey	# and % of women respondent	50% of women respondent	0	4681F, 43%	PMO, project-level gender specialist, KAP survey organizers	Not Achieved. Questionnaires were distributed equally to men and women, while the No. of returned copies from women is less than from men	PMO

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure women's equal participation in the landscape level and program level knowledge management initiatives</li> </ul>	# and % of women participant	50% of female participant no less than the percentage of women in the agencies	0	15F, 79% one knowledge management specialist, two case study specialists engaged in the KM, three KM product reviewing meetings organized, total participants is 19, women 15.	PMO, project manager, project-level gender specialist	Achieved	PMO
<b>For all outcomes and outputs</b>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit a project-level gender specialist</li> </ul>	# of gender specialist	1 gender specialist	0	1	The project PMO	Recruited in 2020	TBD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designate one gender focal point by each PMO/PA</li> </ul>	# of gender focal point	1 in PMO, 1 in Qinghai Lake NNR, 1 in Qilian Mountains PNR/NP	0	6 in total, 1 in PMO, 1 in Qinghai Lake NNR, 1 in Qilian Mountains PNR/NP, and the other three in Menyuan County, Haiyan County and in Gangcha County	PMOs	Done	PMO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop TORs for the gender focal points</li> </ul>	# of TOR	1 for each of the gender focal point	0	6 in total	Gender specialist, PMOs Project manager	Done	PMO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>protocol (questions, information gathering system) for gender focal points to collect / report gender information including the project affected people, beneficiaries, participants of each project activity</li> </ul>	# of the protocol	1 for each of the gender focal point	0	1 for each	Project manager, Gender specialist	Done	PMO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide training to the management staff and the gender focal points on gender equality</li> </ul>	# of training # of participant	Once a year All people in the PMO, all managers of the 2 PAs	0	6 trainings in total to all people in the PMO, all managers of the 2 PAs	Project manager, Gender specialist	Done	PMO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide technical support to the management staff to integrate gender into the project two-year work plans</li> </ul>	Times of support provided	Once a year	0	Once a year	Project manager, Gender specialist	done	PMO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide technical advice on gender whenever needed</li> </ul>	Times of support provided	Once a month	0	Over 50	Project manager, Gender specialist	Done	PMO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record all data disaggregated by gender</li> </ul>	Sex-disaggregated data	At least, sex-disaggregated project direct beneficiaries, sex-disaggregated data on the project-related trainings, workshops, community activities, KAP surveys	0	Yes, sex-disaggregated project direct beneficiaries, sex-disaggregated data on the project-related trainings, workshops, community activities, KAP surveys were collected	Project manager, gender focal points Gender specialist	Done	PMO

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• Monitor and evaluate implementation of the GMAP	Included in the APRs, MTE, TER	Included in the APRs, MTE, TER	0	Yes, included	Project manager, gender focal points Gender specialist	Done	PMO
• Include gender sensitive indicators in the Project Strategic Results Framework	# and % of the project direct women beneficiaries	50% of women beneficiaries	0	50%	PPG experts	Done	

### Training Data

	Subject Title	Content focus	Men	Women	Total	No. of Days	Location	Date
1	Project management	Training on UNDP-GEF project management, project finance and bidding management, and project introduction and implementation	51	17	68	2	Lanzhou City	February 28- March 1, 2019
2	WWF&UNDP-GEF Cooperation - Strengthening Capacity Building for Biodiversity Conservation in Gansu PA"	Training on snow leopard and its prey monitoring and survey techniques, biodiversity conservation, animal field identification and survey techniques, bird field identification, monitoring methods and research progress, field patrol techniques, law enforcement issues in NR, integration of communities around PA and community participation	51	11	62	3	Lanzhou City	July 24-26, 2019
3	Gender mainstreaming	Training on the meaning of gender, the meaning of gender equality, the GEF, UNDP gender policy, the general requirements of the project, the Gansu GEF-6 Project Gender Mainstreaming Action Programme and its meaning, and the specific requirements and expectations of the GEF for gender action.	20	14	34	2	Lanzhou City	August 28-30, 2019
4	Project management	Training on project financial management, publicity skills, and operation of the project website and official account port	17	12	29	1	Lanzhou City	April 28-29, 2020
5	Gender mainstreaming	Training for advisory bodies is tailored to specific tasks and work programs - for project subcontractors	8	13	21	1	Lanzhou City	30-Jul-20
6	International society and environment protection experts	Online training of ESIA & ESMP, etc for international experts	2	1	3	1	Online	18-Nov-20
7	Training organized by Hezheng County	Comprehensive and detailed training on wildlife protection, forest and grassland fire prevention, forestry administration and law enforcement, management of rangers, and the development of the Piteguo (kind of fruit, belongs to Pyrus ussuriensis Maxim) specialty industry	51	10	61	2	Hezheng County	November 20-22, 2020
8	Training course on biodiversity monitoring in Axia	Laws and regulations of NRs, protection and management of wildlife resources in Gansu, classification and field identification of birds, field monitoring and patrolling techniques, working principles and application guidelines of infrared cameras, forest resource management and forest law enforcement, operation of remote sensing monitoring and supervision system for human activities in NRs and field verification, application of drone technology in monitoring and patrolling, and field operation of drones, infrared cameras and GPS.	32	5	37	3	Zhouqu County	December 15-18, 2020

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9	Protection and monitoring capacity in Chaganliang	Laws and regulations of NAs, protection and management of wildlife resources in Gansu, classification and field identification of birds, field monitoring and patrolling techniques, working principles and application guidelines of infrared cameras, forest resource management and forest law enforcement, operation of remote sensing monitoring and supervision system for human activities in NAs and field verification, application of drone technology in monitoring and patrolling, and field operation of drones, infrared cameras and GPS.	27	3	30	3	Zhouqu County	December 28-30, 2020
10	Yuhe staff skills upgrading training	Skills training in six areas: geographic information systems (GIS), laws and regulations, computer office applications, monitoring and patrol training, animal and plant identification, and natural ecology photography techniques	92	30	122	6	Longnan City	Jan 30-Feb 5, 2021
11	Duoer-Chengdu Training	Training on wildlife conservation, monitoring patrol training, animal and plant identification	12	2	14	1	Chengdu City	12-Apr-21
12	First training of PA system personnel	Training and learning on Integrated Planning for Ecosystem Management in NRs and Ecological Corridor Design, Implementation and Management	77	34	111	1	Lanzhou City	May 19-21, 2021
13	Liangdang County Natural Resources Agency	Capacity enhancement training was provided to relevant operational staff in PAs and field research was done - training interview	4	2	6	1	Liangdang County	19-May-20
14	Yuhe NR training interview	Capacity enhancement training was provided to relevant operational staff in PAs and field research was done.	13	5	18	1	Longnan City	20-May-20
15	Duoer NR training interview	Capacity enhancement training was provided to relevant operational staff in PAs and field research was done.	8	3	11	1	Diebu County	22-May-20
16	Axia NR training interview	Capacity enhancement training was provided to relevant operational staff in PAs and field research was done.	12	4	16	1	Zhouqu County	25-May-20
17	Chaganliang NR training interview	Capacity enhancement training was provided to relevant operational staff in PAs and field research was done.	9	1	10	1	Zhouqu County	25-May-20
18	Chaganliang NR training interview	Capacity enhancement training was provided to relevant operational staff in PAs and field research was done.	17	7	24	1	Hezheng County	27-May-20
19	Duoer Protection Bureau Shaanxi Study Tour	NR management organizations, learning in the areas of management and protection, patrol and monitoring, scientific research and education, community co-management, ecotourism, community industry development, etc.	14	5	19	1	Xi'an City	7-Jun-21
20	Axia Conservation Bureau training seminar	The training experts gave detailed lectures on wildlife conservation and NR laws and regulations, the status and conservation management of wildlife resources, participatory management of PAs and case studies, community co-management projects, the basis of nature education in NR, and the design of nature education curricula for the trainees.	36	17	53	6	Dujiangyan City	June 14-19, 2021
21	Second training for PA personnel	Interpretation of policies and regulations on the protection and management of NRs	55	11	66	Half-day	Online	June 28, 2021 AM
	Second training for PA personnel	Module VIII: social impacts of PA, safeguards and FPIC principles and methodologies	53	11	64	Half-day	Online	June 28, 2021 PM
	Second training for PA personnel	Community co-management practice and theory	47	8	55	Half-day	Online	June 29, 2021 AM
	Second training for PA personnel	Social operation of community protection: turn the community's affairs into social affairs	43	7	50	Half-day	Online	June 29, 2022 PM
	Second training for PA personnel	Module VII: community-based natural resource management	38	8	46	Half-day	Online	2021/6/30 AM

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22	Liangdang County Natural Resources Bureau biodiversity	Theoretical knowledge lectures focusing on the meaning of biodiversity, the significance of conservation, and the methods of biodiversity investigation and conservation, practical activities for biodiversity field investigation	10	16	26	2	Liangdang County	July 22-23, 2021
23	Third training for PA personnel - Zhangjiayuan Village	1. NR patrol management; 2. Ecological ranger policy and practice; 3. Construction and management of NRs; 4. Basic knowledge of national public welfare forests and requirements for filling in the logbook for patrolling and forest checking; 5. NR management - community co-management; 6. Knowledge of NR management; 7. NR forest and grassland fire prevention plan and disposal measures (PAs).	17	2	19	1	Zhangjiayuan Village	8-Sep-21
24	Third training of PA personnel - Lamogaituo Village	1. NR patrol management; 2. Ecological ranger policy and practice; 3. Construction and management of NRs; 4. Basic knowledge of national public welfare forests and requirements for filling in the logbook for patrolling and forest checking; 5. NR management - community co-management; 6. Knowledge of NR management; 8. NR forest and grassland fire prevention plan and disposal measures (PAs).	12	15	27	1	Lamogaituo Village	9-Sep-21
25	Third training of PA personnel - Cuoxi Village	1. NR patrol management; 2. Ecological ranger policy and practice; 3. Construction and management of NRs; 4. Basic knowledge of national public welfare forests and requirements for filling in the logbook for patrolling and forest checking; 5. NR management - community co-management; 6. Knowledge of NR management; 9. NR forest and grassland fire prevention plan and disposal measures (PAs).	8	10	18	1	Cuoxi Village	10-Sep-21
26	Third training of PA personnel - Dayi Village	1. NR patrol management; 2. Ecological ranger policy and practice; 3. Construction and management of NRs; 4. Basic knowledge of national public welfare forests and requirements for filling in the logbook for patrolling and forest checking; 5. NR management - community co-management; 6. Knowledge of NR management; 10. NR forest and grassland fire prevention plan and disposal measures (PAs).	14	9	23	1	Dayi Village	11-Sep-21
27	Project Office training on PA and procurement for community personnel	On-line Training on PA and procurement of equipment for community personnel	7	4	11	1	Online	25-Nov-21
28	Conservation Monitoring Capacity Training Course & SAPA - Chagangliang	Field monitoring patrol techniques, SAPA training	26	0	26	1	Zhouqu county	25-Dec-21
29	Participatory Rural Appraisal PRA survey training	PRA training	12	1	13	1	Longnan City	21-Jun-22

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30	Fourth training of PA personnel- Zhangjiayuan	Training on 1. knowledge training topics on information collection in PAs 2. knowledge training topics on publicity in PAs 3. filling in patrol records and sample line surveys 4. topics on intelligent patrol in PAs 5. learning the Management Rules of Ecological Rangers in Gansu Province (Interim) and so on.	17	6	23	1	Zhangjiayuan Village	24-Jun-22
31	4 <sup>th</sup> training of PA personnel - Cuoxo, Paga and Wangzang Conservation Stations	Training on 1. knowledge training topics on information collection in PAs 2. knowledge training topics on publicity in PAs 3. filling in patrol records and sample line surveys 4. topics on intelligent patrol in PAs 6. learning the Management Rules of Ecological Rangers in Gansu Province (Interim) and so on.	14	9	23	1	Cuoxo, Paga and Wangzang Conservation Stations	25-Jun-22
32	Fourth training of PA personnel- Dayi	Training on 1. knowledge training topics on information collection in PAs 2. knowledge training topics on publicity in PAs 3. filling in patrol records and sample line surveys 4. topics on intelligent patrol in PAs 7. learning the Management Rules of Ecological Rangers in Gansu Province (Interim) and so on.	15	5	20	1	Dayi Village	26-Jun-22
33	Fourth training of PA personnel- Lamogaituo Village	Training on 1. knowledge training topics on information collection in PAs 2. knowledge training topics on publicity in PAs 3. filling in patrol records and sample line surveys 4. topics on intelligent patrol in PAs 8. learning the Management Rules of Ecological Rangers in Gansu Province (Interim) and so on.	17	5	22	1	Lamogaituo Village	27-Jun-22
34	Online training for PA system personnel - 1-5 sessions	1. National conservation land policy laws and regulations; 2. Forestry and rural revitalization; 3. Effectiveness of PA management; 4. Mechanisms for value of ecological products; 6. Gender mainstreaming; 7. Nature education in PAs; 8. New concepts and methods of national park management; 9. Concession projects of the Yellow River Source Park; 10. Declaration, Implementation and Management of PA Projects; 11. Policies for the Construction and Management of PAs or NPs	428	154	582	5	Online	November 1-December 12, 2022
35	Fifth training for PA system personnel	Training was conducted on Module III: value of ecological products; Module IV: performance evaluation of PA management	13	7	20	3	Lanzhou City	February 22-24, 2023
36	Gender Mainstreaming Training Exchange Meeting	Gender Mainstreaming Training	8	10	18	Half-day	Lanzhou City	7-Mar-23
37	First out-of-province exchange	Experience in PA management, wildlife monitoring and patrol and resource management, community co-management	10	2	12	5	Tangjiahe NNR, Sichuan; Pingwu County Laohegou Conservation Center; Wanglang NNR, Sichuan	April 23-27, 2023
38	Sixth training for PA system personnel	Participatory methods, guidance and conflict resolution	15	6	21	2	Hezheng County	July 4 - 6, 2023
39	Seventh training for PA system staff - Zhangjiayuan Village	Training on the new forest law, wildlife protection law, wild plant protection regulations; tea planting techniques	17	4	21	1	Zhangjiayuan Village	1-Aug-23
40	7 <sup>th</sup> training for PA system staff - Lamogaituo Village	Training on the new forest law, wildlife protection law, wild plant protection regulations; pepper planting techniques	13	1	14	1	Lamogaituo Village	2-Aug-23
41	Seventh training of Pa system staff - Axia Forestry	Training on the new forest law, wildlife protection law, wild plant protection regulations; alfalfa planting techniques and Juema pig input-output ratio	20	1	21	1	Axia Forestry	3-Aug-23

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42	7 <sup>th</sup> Training for PA System Staff - Dayi Village	Training on the new forest law, wildlife protection law, wild plant protection regulations; alfalfa planting techniques and Juema pig input-output ratio	11	8	19	1 天	Dayi Village	4-Aug-23
43	(SAPA) Training Community Interview	Share the results of the PA/PA household questionnaire with neighboring communities; verify and validate these results. Work on resolving issues mentioned at community meetings regarding assessment surveys.	14	5	19	1	Longnan City	4-Aug-23
44	Environmental and social risk response and alternative livelihoods	1. Training in sheep-raising techniques; 2. Training in legal knowledge for migrant workers	7	43	50	1	Hezheng County	13-Aug-23
	<b>Total</b>		<b>1514</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>2078</b>	<b>72</b>		

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**Annex 5a: Location Data & Geo-coordinates**

Region	District	Sub-district	Village	Area (ha)	Geo-coordinates	Date Established	Responsible Office	Note
Lanzhou, Gansu Province	Chengguan District	Qin'an Road			Lanzhou City	Feb-19	Gansu Forest Fire Monitoring Centre (Gansu Foreign-Funded Forestry PMO)	Provincial Project Office
Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province	Diabe County, Zhouqu County	National Highway 345		135,536	Zhouqu County	02-Mar-19	Project Office	Gansu Bailongjiang A'xia Provincial Nature Reserve Management and Protection Center
-"-	Wangzang Town, Diebu County		Cuoxi Village		Wangzang Town, Diebu County		Project Office	Model Village
-"-	Zhouqu county	Chengguan Town		83,054	Chengguan Town	04-Mar-19	Project Office	Gansu Bailongjiang Chagangliang NR Management and Protection Center
Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province	Qugaona Town, Zhouqu County		Lamogaituo Village		Qugaona Town, Lamogaituo Village		Project Office	Model Village
Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province	Diabe County	Dianga Road, Dianga Town		54,575	Denga Road, Denga Town, Dibei County	06-Mar-19	Project Office	Gansu Duoer National Nature Reserve Management and Protection Center
Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province	Diebu County	Duoer Township	Dayi Village			07-Mar-19	Project Office	Model Village
Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province	Diebu County	Duoer Township	Houxizang Village			08-Mar-19	Project Office	Model Village
Longnan City, Gansu Province	Wudu District	Dongjiang Town		51,058	Dongjiang Town Resettlement Area No. 3	09-Mar-19	Project Office	Giant Panda Qilian Mountains National Park, Gansu Provincial Administration, Yuhe Branch Office
Longnan City, Gansu Province	Wudu District	Fengxiang District	Zhangjiayuan Village		Fengxiang District, Zhangjiayuan Village		Project Office	Model Village
Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province	Hezheng County	Cultural centers, libraries and youth centers			Hezheng County	11-Mar-19	Project Office	Hezheng County Forestry and Grassland Career Development Center
Longnan City, Gansu Province	Liangdang County				Liangdang County	12-Mar-19	Project Office	Liangdang County Department of Natural Resources
Longnan City, Gansu Province	Zhouqu County				Zhouqu County	13-Mar-19	Project Office	Zhouqu County Department of Natural Resources
Wuwei City, Gansu Province	Liangzhou District	Qingyuan			Liangzhou District	14-Mar-19	Project Office	Gansu EAPC



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**Annex 6: List of Persons Interviewed**

Name	Position / Organization	Location
<b>10<sup>th</sup> Sep., 2023</b>		
Yin Dehuai	Director of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
Gao Songxia	Chief of Project Department of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
Li Li	Deputy Section Chief of the Project Department of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
Wang Wei	Project Department Engineer of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
Liu Huan	Project Finance Officer of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
Xia Yi	Assistant Engineer of the Project Department of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
Zhang Min	Landscape Coordinator of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
Ma Yulong	Assistant of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
Ding Wenguang	President of Gansu Yishan Yishui Center for Environmental and Social Development	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
Shi Yanli	Assistant Tianshui City Longyou Environmental Conservation Association	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
Li Xiaopeng	Senior Engineer of Lanzhou Qianyuan Ecological Technology Co., Ltd.	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
Dan Zeng	Project Leader Qinghai Gangri Neichog Research and Conservation Center	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
Fan Longqing	CTA of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
Wang Qianqian	Communications Consultant of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	Lanzhou JJ Sun Hotel
<b>11<sup>th</sup> Sep., 2023</b>		
Fan Longqing	CTA of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	Yuhe Town Honey Processing Plant, Yuhe Town Tea Processing Plant, E-commerce Live Broadcast Room
Ma Yulong	Assistant of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	Yuhe Town Honey Processing Plant, Yuhe Town Tea Processing Plant, E-commerce Live Broadcast Room
Jia Yuhua	Group Leader of Women's E-commerce Group in Yuhe Town, Yuhe Nature Reserve	Yuhe Town Honey Processing Plant, Yuhe Town Tea Processing Plant, E-commerce Live Broadcast Room
Zhou Anyin	Cooperative President	Yuhe Town Honey Processing Plant, Yuhe Town Tea Processing Plant, E-commerce Live Broadcast Room
Luo Linguo	Deputy Mayor of Yuhe Town	Yuhe Town Honey Processing Plant, Yuhe Town Tea Processing Plant, E-commerce Live Broadcast Room
Yin Yujun	President of the Beekeeping Association	Yuhe Town Honey Processing Plant, Yuhe Town Tea Processing Plant, E-commerce Live Broadcast Room
Ma Yulong	Assistant of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	E-commerce Poverty Alleviation Service Point in Fengping Village, Yuhe Town
Jia Yuhua	Group Leader of Women's E-commerce Group in Yuhe Town, Yuhe Nature Reserve	E-commerce Poverty Alleviation Service Point in Fengping Village, Yuhe Town
Liu Xiaorong	Member of Women's E-commerce Group in Yuhe Town, Yuhe Nature Reserve	E-commerce Poverty Alleviation Service Point in Fengping Village, Yuhe Town
Sun Diaoxia	Member of Women's E-commerce Group in Yuhe Town, Yuhe Nature Reserve	E-commerce Poverty Alleviation Service Point in Fengping Village, Yuhe Town
Pan Yuling	Member of Women's E-commerce Group in Yuhe Town, Yuhe Nature Reserve	E-commerce Poverty Alleviation Service Point in Fengping Village, Yuhe Town
<b>12<sup>th</sup> Sep., 2023</b>		
Fan Longqing	CTA of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	Caoshiba Management and Protection Office of Wangzang Protection Station in Cuoxi Village, Diebu County and Axia Provincial Nature Reserve
Ma Yulong	Assistant of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	Caoshiba Management and Protection Office of Wangzang Protection Station in Cuoxi Village, Diebu County and Axia Provincial Nature Reserve
Gazha Xi	Village Secretary	Caoshiba Management and Protection Office of Wangzang Protection Station in Cuoxi Village, Diebu County and Axia Provincial Nature Reserve
Li Lanshuang	Bureau Chief	Caoshiba Management and Protection Office of Wangzang Protection Station in Cuoxi Village, Diebu County and Axia Provincial Nature Reserve
Yao Wenbin	Officer	Caoshiba Management and Protection Office of Wangzang Protection Station in Cuoxi Village, Diebu County and Axia Provincial Nature Reserve

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Bai Zhaolin	Officer	Caoshiba Management and Protection Office of Wangzang Protection Station in Cuoxi Village, Diebu County and Axia Provincial Nature Reserve
Zeng Wei	Chief of the Scientific Research and Education Department of the Management Center of the A'xia Provincial Nature Reserve	Caoshiba Management and Protection Office of Wangzang Protection Station in Cuoxi Village, Diebu County and Axia Provincial Nature Reserve
Du Kai	Deputy Chief of the Scientific Research and Education Department of the Management Center of A'xia Provincial Nature Reserve	Caoshiba Management and Protection Office of Wangzang Protection Station in Cuoxi Village, Diebu County and Axia Provincial Nature Reserve
Tian Lei	Deputy Chief of the Scientific Research and Education Department of the Management Center of Axia Provincial Nature Reserve	Caoshiba Management and Protection Office of Wangzang Protection Station in Cuoxi Village, Diebu County and Axia Provincial Nature Reserve
Yin Dehuai	Director of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Duo'er National Nature Reserve Management Center
Li Li	Deputy Section Chief of the Project Department of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Duo'er National Nature Reserve Management Center
Yang Tao	Deputy Chief of Management Department of the Project Department of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Duo'er National NR Management Center
Zhao Shuping	Director of the Management Center of A'xia Provincial Nature Reserve	Duo'er National NR Management Center
Zeng Wei	Chief of the Scientific Research and Education Department of the Management Center of the A'xia Provincial Nature Reserve	Duo'er National Nature Reserve Management Center
Du Kai	Deputy Chief of the Scientific Research and Education Department of the Management Center of A'xia Provincial Nature Reserve	Duo'er National Nature Reserve Management Center
Tian Lei	Deputy Chief of the Scientific Research and Education Department of the Management Center of A'xia Provincial Nature Reserve	Duo'er National NR Management Center
Yang Xiaofeng	Director of the Management Center of Duo'er National Nature Reserve	Duo'er National NR Management Center
Leng Bai	Deputy Director of the Management Center of Duo'er National NR	Duo'er National NR Management Center
Jiabao Ciren	Office Secretary of the Management Center of Duo'er National NR	Duo'er National NR Management Center
Li Huihua	Deputy Section Chief of the Management Center of Chaganliang Provincial NR	Duo'er National NR Management Center
Feng Yongfu	Section Member of the Management Center of Chaganliang Provincial NR	Duo'er National NR Management Center
13 <sup>th</sup> Sep., 2023		
Fan Longqing	CTA of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	Hezheng County Dahigou Forest Farm
Ma Yulong	Assistant of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	Hezheng County Dahigou Forest Farm
Ji Xiaodong	Deputy Director of Hezheng County Forestry & Grassland Development Center	Hezheng County Dahigou Forest Farm
Ma Zhanlin	Director of Daheigou Forest Farm in Hezheng County	Hezheng County Dahigou Forest Farm
Bai Fengyuan	Former Deputy Director of Hezheng County Forestry Bureau	Hezheng County Dahigou Forest Farm
Zhu Falong	Engineer of Hezheng County Forestry and Grassland Development Center	Hezheng County Dahigou Forest Farm
Shi Shanshan	Engineer of Hezheng County Forestry and Grassland Development Center	Hezheng County Dahigou Forest Farm
Yang Yonghui	Deputy Director of Fire Prevention Office of Hezheng County Forestry and Grassland Development Center	Hezheng County Dahigou Forest Farm
Ma Yiqing	Herdsmen	Hezheng County Dahigou Forest Farm
14 <sup>th</sup> Sep., 2023		
Yin Dehuai	Director of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Gansu Forestry and Grassland Bureau
Li Li	Deputy Section Chief of the Project Department of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Gansu Forestry and Grassland Bureau
Wang Wei	Project Department Engineer of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Gansu Forestry and Grassland Bureau
Liu Huan	Project Finance Officer of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Gansu Forestry and Grassland Bureau
Xia Yi	Assistant Engineer of the Project Department of Gansu Provincial Forest Fire Warning and Monitoring Information Center (Gansu Provincial Foreign-Funded Forestry Project Management Office)	Gansu Forestry and Grassland Bureau
Zhang Min	Landscape Coordinator of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	Gansu Forestry and Grassland Bureau
Ma Yulong	Assistant of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	Gansu Department of Ecology and Environment
Fan Longqing	CTA of UNDP-GEF Gansu Protected Areas Project	Gansu Department of Ecology and Environment
Zhang Ruhai	Director of the Ecological Department of Gansu Provincial Department of Ecology and Environment	Gansu Department of Ecology and Environment

## **Annex 7: List of Documents Reviewed**

1. Project Identification Form (PIF) and GEF FA strategic program objectives
2. UNDP Initiation Plan and Implementing/Executing partner arrangements / contract
3. UNDP Project Document and Logframe revisions
4. CEO Endorsement Request
5. UNDP Environmental and Social Screening results
6. Project Inception Report
7. Project Implementation Reports (PIRs)
8. Annual Project Reports
9. Minutes of the Project Board Meetings and other meetings (i.e. Project Appraisal Committee meetings)
10. Atlas Risk Register
11. Quarterly progress reports and work plans of the various implementation task teams
12. Annual Work Plans
13. Mid Term Review (MTR) Report
14. MTR Management Response
15. M&E Data management system
16. Audit reports
17. Tracking Tools (e.g. GEF METT, UNDP Scorecard)
18. Oversight mission reports by the project manager, RTA, and others
19. Monitoring reports prepared by the project
20. Financial and Administration guidelines used by Project Team
21. Co-financing realized, itemized according to template provided by TE team
22. Financial expenditures, itemized according to template provided by TE team
23. Project operational guidelines, manuals and systems
24. UNDP Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF/ICF) and Evaluation
25. UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) and Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP)
26. Project site location maps
27. Project activity maps with management actions and intervention
28. Technical consultancy reports
29. Training materials (PPTs etc.)
30. News and Awareness materials / Photo library / Video films about the projects
31. Project Summary PowerPoint files for the TE

## Annex 8: Stakeholder List

Stakeholder	TE Interest
<b>National level</b>	
Ministry of Finance (MoF)	MoF is the GEF Operational Focal point of China responsible for coordinating the programming of GEF resources and overseeing the China GEF portfolio with the GEF Agencies. MoF is the recipient of GEF grant on behalf of the Chinese Government.
Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE; formerly Ministry of Environmental Protection, MEP)	This ministry was created at the end of the PPG phase. Key partner of the overall C-PAR Program, of which this project will demonstrate many of the ongoing and planned national reforms.
Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)	The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) was created on 17 March 2018, replacing the Ministry of Land & Resources, State Oceanic Administration (SOA), the National Surveying and Mapping Bureau and many functions of several other ministries and agencies, and is responsible for overseeing the development and protection of China's natural resources, setting up a spatial planning system and establishing a system for payment of ecosystem services. This ministry is mandated with responsibility over the national PA system, through the subordinate State Forest and Grassland Administration / State National Park Authority.  This ministry was created at the end of the PPG phase and is a key stakeholder during implementation of all outputs.
State Forestry and Grassland Administration (SFGA)	SFGA was a key stakeholder in the project at the national level, overseeing the provincial forestry system, as well as the Gansu Endangered Animals Protection Center.  Until 17 March 2018, the State Forestry Administration (SFA) was the competent authority for forestry under the State Council, responsible for supervising the establishment and management of nature reserves of forests, terrestrial wild animals, and wetlands.  Following the national institutional reform, the State Forestry and Grassland Administration was established on April 10, 2018. The new Administration is mainly responsible for the monitoring and management of forest, grassland, wetland and desert; the development, utilization and protection of wildlife; ecological protection, restoration, reforestation, as well as National Park management. It is under the management of the Ministry of Natural Resources.
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – China Country Office	UNDP is GEF Agency for the project and is therefore responsible for oversight and monitoring project implementation and ensuring adherence to UNDP and GEF policies and procedures. The UNDP CO Communications Division will support the development of communications strategy and plans across the C-PAR Program.
<b>Gansu</b>	
Gansu Forestry and Grassland Bureau (GFGB)	The executing agency for the project, responsible for overall management of project implementation on a daily basis, led by NPD and supported by PMO.
Gansu Provincial Department of Finance	A key partner in reviewing and approving project budgets and ensuring project finance management to be in line with requirements of the government of China and UNDP, in increasing regular financial resources for PAs, and to coordinate other relevant provincial departments to take concerted actions to support the project implementation. This will support Outputs 1.1 & 1.2
Gansu Development and Reform Commission (GDRC)	Will provide this project with lessons and experiences from other international and national projects, mobilize future government-supported projects to support implementation of recommendations and strategies proposed by this project and partner in drafting and promoting legislative and regulatory changes that may be necessary to achieve the project's objectives. This will support Outputs 1.1 and 1.2.
Gansu Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs	Coordinates programs to reduce overgrazing inside PAs, and replicates lessons and experiences from this project in their own projects and daily work. This will support Outputs 1.1 and 1.2
Gansu Provincial Department of Water Resources	Partners in drafting and promoting legislative and regulatory changes that may be necessary to achieve the project's objectives. This will support Outputs 1.1 and 1.2.
Gansu Provincial Department of Ecology and Environment	Coordinates all PA work in the province; partners in drafting and promoting legislative and regulatory changes that may be necessary to achieve the project's objectives and replicate lessons and experiences from this project in their projects and daily work. Relevant to all outputs
Gansu Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism	Partners in inter-sectoral mechanism and coordination to mainstream biodiversity concerns into development planning with relevance to tourism, developing tourism plans for pilot sites, and reviewing policy on generation and allocation of tourism revenues, and in drafting and promoting legislative and regulatory changes that may be necessary to achieve the project's objective.

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Gansu Provincial People's Congress	Partner in reviewing, assessing, approving laws, and spreading lessons and experiences from this project to others. Key stakeholder for legislative, regulatory and planning changes required to achieve the project's objectives.
Gansu Provincial Department of Justice	Partner in drafting and promoting legislative and regulatory changes that may be necessary to achieve the project's objectives. This will support Outputs 1.1 and 1.2.
<b>Districts / Counties / Local Level</b>	
Pilot PAs: Axia, Duoer, Chagangliang and Yuhe Nature Reserves	Key partners involved in the project design, formulation, and implementation. Key partners for PA planning and site management and outreach and work with local communities under Component 2 -all outputs
	Axia NR, established in 2004, lies between the northern part of the Minshan range and the southern margin of the Dieshan Mountains in the Bailongjiang river basin. It is built on Diebu Forestry Bureau under the Bailongjiang Forestry Administration, a state-owned enterprise, formerly engaged in logging. Its financing comes from the provincial government budget with no other revenue. It has a staff of 30 and is based in Diebu County.
	Duoer NR, established in 2004, is located on the eastern margin of the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau and in the northern Minshan mountains. It belongs to the Duoer water system, a tributary of the Bailongjiang River. It has a staff of 33 and the NR office is based in Diebu County town. Its current financing mainly comes from Diebu County government budget. It was upgraded to National Nature Reserve in July 2017.
	Chagangliang NR, established in 2005, is located in the transitional zone between the western wing of the Qinling Mountains and Minshan Mountains in the Bailongjiang river basin. It is supported by Zhouqu Forestry Bureau under the Bailongjiang Forestry Administration, a state-owned enterprise, formerly engaged in logging. Its finance comes from the provincial government budget with no other revenue. It has a shared staff with Zhouqu Forestry Bureau and is based in Zhouqu County.
	Yuhe NR, established in 2002, is in the convergence zone between the Qinling mountains and the Minshan mountains. It has a staff of 15, of which 10 are in place and is based in Luotang town. Its financing mainly comes from the Wudu District government budget. It will become part of the Giant Panda National Park.
Local governments, including prefecture, county and township levels, especially Wudu District, Zhouqu County, Diebu County, Liangdang County and Hezheng County and Wuwei City	Critical participants in the project at the local level, participate in the development and implementation of nature reserve business plans, sustainable livelihood development, securing national support for ESAs, and spatial planning for ecological corridor establishment (Component 2 – all outputs) There are 7 nature reserves in the Gansu part of the landscape, of which Yuhe NR is under Wudu District Forestry Bureau, Duoer is managed by Diebu County Government, while Axia and Chagangliang are both under the administration of Bailongjiang Forestry State Enterprise. The proposed pilot ecological corridor areas are located in Liangdang County and Hezheng County and will be led by their respective Forest Bureaus. The Gansu EAPC is located in Wuwei City, including two nature reserves for endangered species under its management.
Pilot ECAs in Liangdang County and Hezheng County and will be led by their respective Forest Bureaus.	
Gansu Endangered Animals Protection Center (EAPC)	SFA Gansu Endangered Animal Protection Centre was established by State Forestry Ministry (before SFA) and Gansu Govt – Provincial Forestry Dept and Wuwei City in Oct 1987. In April 2005 it was identified as a terrestrial wild animal epidemic sources and disease monitoring station; and in January 2013, Gansu Wuwei Animal Rescue Station was established. Its functions and responsibilities are: Breeding and protection of wild animals; Naturalizing wild animals; Scientific research and external exchange; Desertified land control; Development of ecological tourism; and Monitoring of epidemic sources and disease of local terrestrial wild animals; and Wild animal rescue. It manages two areas for species conservation: District 1 – 147,000 Mu, core breeding zone with the Centre located here, outside Wuwei City on the SW edge of Tengger Desert; and District 2 – 200,000 Mu – separate from District 1, to the NE, an experimental free range base. Key participant for globally threatened species action planning in 1.3, capacity development for species recovery and reintroduction in 1.5, and support for threatened species conservation programmes at sites in 2.2.

## Annex 9: Rating Scales

The following UNDP-GEF grading scales were applied in the evaluation

### Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Definition
<b>Effectiveness - Objective</b>	- The extent to which an objective has been achieved or how likely it is to be achieved.
<b>Effectiveness - Outcomes</b>	- Results include direct project outputs, short to medium-term outcomes
<b>Relevance</b>	- The extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time. - The extent to which the project is in line with the GEF Operational Programs or the strategic priorities under which the project was funded.  (Retrospectively, relevance often becomes a question as to whether the objectives of an intervention or its design are still appropriate given changed circumstances.)
<b>Efficiency</b>	- The extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible; also called cost effectiveness or efficacy.
<b>Sustainability</b>	- The likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion - Projects need to be environmentally, as well as financially and socially sustainable
<b>Impact</b>	- The positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen changes to and effects produced by a development intervention. - Longer term impact including global environmental benefits, replication effects and other local effects.

### Rating Scale for Outcomes (Overall, Effectiveness & Efficiency)

<b>Highly Satisfactory (HS)</b>	The project had no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of effectiveness (outcomes), or efficiency. The project is expected or has achieved its global environmental objectives. The project can be presented as 'good practice'.
<b>Satisfactory (S)</b>	There were only minor shortcomings The project is expected or has achieved most of its global environmental objectives.
<b>Moderately Satisfactory (MS)</b>	There were moderate shortcomings The project is expected or has achieved most of its relevant objectives but with moderate / significant shortcomings or modest overall relevance. The project isn't going to achieve some of its key global environmental objectives
<b>Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)</b>	The project had significant shortcomings The project is expected to achieve its global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to achieve only some of its major global environmental objectives.
<b>Unsatisfactory (U)</b>	There were major shortcomings in the achievement of project objectives in terms of effectiveness, or efficiency The project is not expected to achieve most of its global environment objectives
<b>Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)</b>	The project had severe shortcomings The project has failed to achieve any of its major environment objectives

Or Not Applicable (N/A); Unable to Assess (U/A)

### Note

**Overall Outcome:** Achievement of the project objective will be rated HS to U.

**Effectiveness:** Each of the project's three outcomes will be rated HS to U. The colour coding of the individual indicator targets in **Annex 1** will partially help determine the grade. Each of the outcome indicators will also each be given a grade (in the justification column), however the final rating for each of the three outcomes will be due to appropriate weighting in terms of attaining project objectives. This means that professional judgement of the TE team will also be a key consideration.

**Efficiency:** An overall rating for cost-effectiveness will be provided

**Rating Scale for Outcome (Relevance)**

Relevant (R)	Not relevant (NR)
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**Rating Scale for Implementing Agency (IA) and Executing Agency (EA) Execution**

<b>Highly Satisfactory (HS)</b>	The agency had no shortcomings in the achievement of their objectives in terms of quality of implementation or execution. Implementation of all five given management categories – IA or EA coordination & operational matters, partnership arrangements & stakeholder engagement, finance & co-finance, M&E systems, and adaptive management (work planning, reporting & communications, including update to project design) – has led to an efficient and effective project implementation. The agency can be presented as providing ‘good practice’
<b>Satisfactory (S)</b>	The agency had only minor shortcomings in terms of the quality of implementation or execution. Implementation of most of the five management categories has led to an efficient and effective project implementation
<b>Moderately Satisfactory (MS)</b>	The agency had moderate shortcomings Implementation of some of the five management categories has led to a moderately efficient and effective project implementation
<b>Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)</b>	The agency had significant shortcomings Implementation of some of the five management categories has not led to efficient and effective project implementation
<b>Unsatisfactory (U)</b>	There agency had major shortcomings in the quality of implementation or execution Implementation of most of the five management categories had not led to efficient and effective project implementation
<b>Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)</b>	The agency had severe shortcomings with poor management leading to inefficient and ineffective project implementation

**Rating Scale for Monitoring & Evaluation**

<b>Highly Satisfactory (HS)</b>	The M&E system – its design and implementation had no shortcomings in the support of achieving project objectives. The M&E system was highly effective and efficient and supported the achievement of major global environmental benefits. The M&E system and its implementation can be presented as ‘good practice’.
<b>Satisfactory (S)</b>	The M&E system – its design and implementation had minor shortcomings in the support of achieving project objectives. The M&E system was effective and efficient and supported the achievement of most of the major global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings
<b>Moderately Satisfactory (MS)</b>	The M&E system – its design and implementation had moderate shortcomings in the support of achieving project objectives. The M&E system supported the achievement of most of the major relevant objectives, but had significant shortcomings or modest overall relevance
<b>Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)</b>	The M&E system – its design and implementation had major shortcomings in the support of achieving project objectives. The M&E system supported the achievement of most of the major environmental objectives, but with modest relevance
<b>Unsatisfactory (U)</b>	The M&E system – its design and implementation had major shortcomings and did not support the achievement of most project objectives. The M&E system was not effective or efficient
<b>Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)</b>	The M&E system failed in its design and implementation in terms of being effective, efficient or supporting project environmental objectives or benefits.

**Rating Scale for Sustainability**

<b>Likely (L)</b>	Negligible risks to sustainability with key Outcomes achieved by the project 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
<b>Moderately Unlikely (MU)</b>	Significant risk that key Outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs should carry on
<b>Unlikely (U)</b>	Severe risks that project Outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained

According to UNDP-GEF evaluation guidelines, all risk dimensions of sustainability are critical: i.e., the overall rating for sustainability is not higher than the lowest-rated dimension.

Ratings should take into account both the probability of a risk materializing and the anticipated magnitude of its effect on the continuance of project benefits.

Risk definitions:

- a) Whether financial resources will be available to continue activities resulting in continued benefits
- b) Whether sufficient stakeholder awareness and support is present for the continuation of activities providing benefit
- c) Whether required systems for accountability / transparency & technical know-how are in place
- d) Whether environmental risks are present that can undermine the future flow of the project benefits.

**Rating Scale for Impact<sup>1</sup>**

Significant (S)	Minimal (M)	Negligible (N)
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Project Impact is rated as Significant; Minimal or Negligible, but also the positive or negative aspect of the impact will be stated.

Concerning impact, the TE will consider the extent of

- a) Verifiable improvement in ecological status; and/or
- b) Verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems
- c) Regulatory and policy changes at regional, national and/or local levels

Process indicators will be specified to demonstrate achievement of stress reduction and/or ecological improvement.

Part of the impact assessment, will concern catalytic effect. The TE will consider if the project exhibited

- a) Scaling up (to regional and national levels)
- b) Replication (outside of the project),
- c) Demonstration, and/or
- d) Production of a public good, such as new technologies /approaches)

<sup>1</sup> The rating scale for Impact has been discontinued under the 2020 guideline



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**Annex 10: Mission Itinerary**

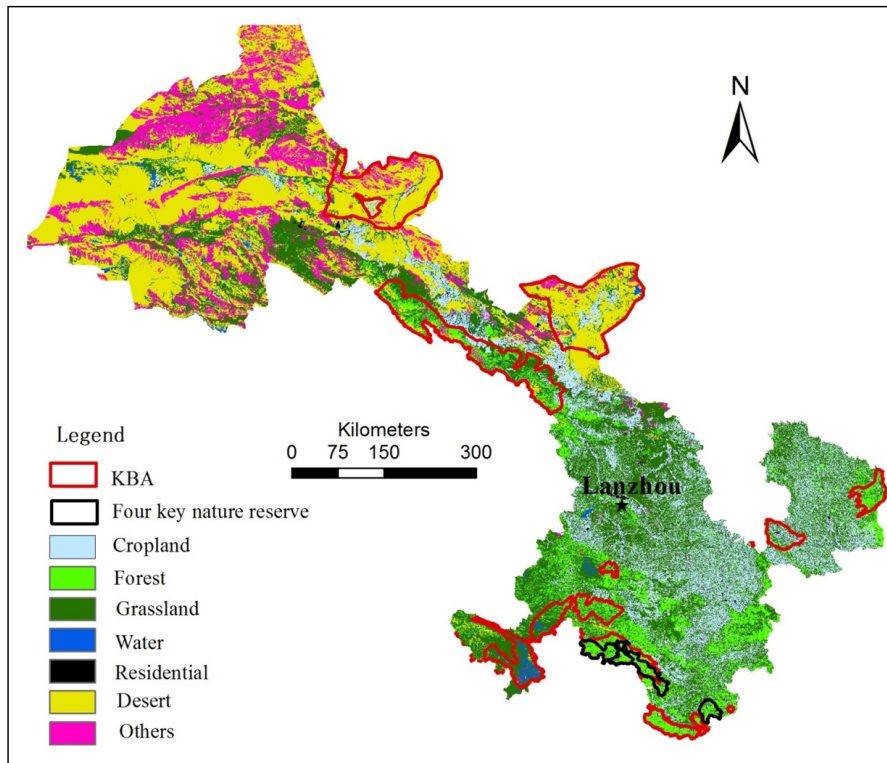
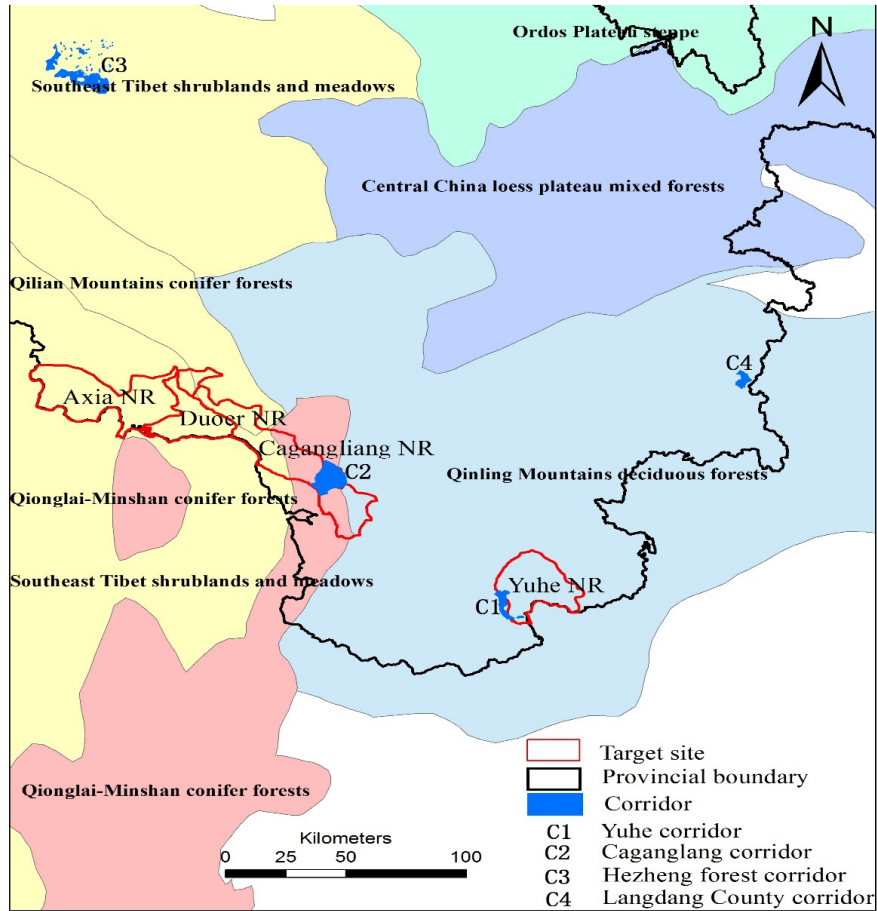
Date	Time	Activities	Location	Participants
Sept 3 (Sun)		International IC Arrival in Beijing		
Sept 4 (Monday)	Morning 10:00- 11:00	Pick-up from Hotel 8:30 AM Briefing with UNDP CO (8:40 - 9:40AM) Depart for airport Time 9:45AM	Beijing	
	Afternoon	Flight to Qinghai - Xining CA1203 - 11:50: 14:30	Xining	16:00-17:00 Check in 17:00-19:00 Dinner
Sept 5 (Tuesday)	Morning	QINGHAI - PMO presentation of project to TE; documentation	Xining	TE consultants, relevant leaders of GFGB, PMO, CTA
	Afternoon	14:00-15:30 PPT Briefing by PM      15:30-17:00 TE interview with Provincial Stakeholders /Project Consultant/Subcontractors	Xining / Menyuan County 17:00-18:30 From Xining to Menyuan County by car and accommodation in Menyuan.	TE consultants, PMO, CTA, Provincial stakeholders
Sept 6 (Wednesday)	Morning	8:30-10:30 go to the Gangshika Snow Peak with Dongtan herder patrolling groups. 11:00-12:00 Inspecting grassland restoration and forage grinder project in Dongtan village	Menyuan county /Dongtan village	TE consultants, PMO ,CTA, Local stakeholders
	Afternoon	12:00-15:00 - Ecological tourism demonstration household, Embroidery project for women 15:00-17:00 Tibetan fragrant pig breeding project of women and Laohugou management & protection station	Menyuan county / Sujiwan village	TE consultants, PMO ,CTA, Local stakeholders
Sept 7(Thursday)	Morning	8:30-12:00 - TE interview with the representatives from County, township, and village three level	Menyuan county	TE consultants, PMO ,CTA, Local stakeholders
	Afternoon	14:00-16:00 From Menyuan to Gonghe county	Traveling by car for 4 hours Accommodation in Gonghe county	TE consultants, PMO ,CTA, Local stakeholders
Sept 8 (Friday)	Morning	7 AM Depart. 7:00-12:00 - Demonstration sites in Qieji township for fence move and ecological corridor	7 a.m - 5 hours by car Qieji Township / Stay Gonghe County	TE consultants, PMO ,CTA, Representatives of herder patrolling groups Local stakeholders
	Afternoon	13:00-15:30 Human wildlife conflict sit 15:30-18:00. Representatives from County, township, and village three level	Qieji County	TE consultants, PMO ,CTA, Local stakeholders
Sept 9 (Sat)	Morning	Depart 7 AM 8:30-10:30 Inspecting Nan'an management and protection station 10:30-12:30 From Gonghe County to Xining City	Gonghe county	TE consultants, PMO ,CTA, Local stakeholders
	Afternoon	13:30-15:30 Indicative Questions with PMO Manager 17:50-18:59 From Xining city to Lanzhou city	Xining City /Lanzhou city	TE consultants, relevant leaders of GFGB, PMO, CTA
Sept 10 (Sunday)	Morning	GANSU Convene TE meeting - Presentation by PMO; Documentation discussion		TE consultants, relevant leaders of GFGB, Provincial Project Office, project experts, representatives of subcontractors, etc.
	Afternoon	Head for Yuhe Zhaoqianba community	Travel by car, about 7.5 hours drive, accommodation in Yuhe Town	TE consultants, provincial project office

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Sept 11 (Monday)	Morning	Zhaoqianba community - Yuhe Town PA Friendly Tea Demonstration and Promotion and E-commerce. Tea production & plantation, bee-keepingProgram"	Yuhe Town Zhaoqianba Community (- is most south area in the visit, then other areas are closer to to Lanzhou)	TE consultants, Provincial Project Office, representatives of Yuhe Town
	Afternoon	1. Leave for Axia Nature Reserve Management and Protection Center 2. Convene TE symposia	Zhouqu county Travel time: 3.5 hours	TE consultants, Provincial Project Office, Axia Management and Protection Center
Sept 12 (Tuesday)	Morning	Axia cuoxi Village - project of the Axia Conservation Bureau and the Cuoxi village - demonstration of production and marketing of cherries".	Travel time: 1.4 hours; accommodation in Zhouqu County	
	Afternoon	Convene TE symposia	-	TE consultants, Provincial Project Office, Yuhe Branch Office, Chagangliang Management & Protection Center, Duoer Management and Protection Center
Sept 13 (Wed)	Morning	Leave for Hezheng Department of Natural Resources	AM travel from Zhouqu to Hezheng	
	Afternoon	Inspect the ecological corridors in Hezheng County	Hezheng Department of Natural Resources; Travel time 1.5 hours Accommodation: Hezheng County	TE consultants, representatives of Provincial Project Office and of Hezheng County Natural Resources Bureau
Sept 14 (Thursday)	Morning	Return to Lanzhou	Travel time: 1.5 hours	
			Provincial Department of Finance	TE consultants, Provincial Project Office, representatives Provincial Department of Finance
	Afternoon	Visit to stakeholders	Provincial Department of Ecology	TE consultants, Provincial Project Office, representatives of Provincial Department of Ecology
		Feedback session Lanzhou	Indicative questions with PMO Manager; Accommodation in Lanzhou	TE consultants, leaders of GFGB, Project Office, project experts, representatives of subcontractors
Sept 15 (Friday)	Morning	Arrival in Beijing Flight time?		
	2:00-3:00	TE-De-briefing with UNDP CO		
Sept 16 (Saturday)		International IC depart Beijing	Depart for airport	

**Annex 11: Map**

Project sites and ECAs



**Annex 12: Indicative TE Evaluation Matrix**

This questionnaire was used as a general aid during the field visit with the results described in section 3. (Note there is no further information to be presented in the blank boxes.)

Evaluation Question	Response / Finding	Conclusion/ Recommend
<b>Relevance: How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF FA, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national levels?</b>		
<b>Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?</b>		
<b>Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards?</b>		
<b>Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?</b>		
<b>Impact: Are there indications that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress toward, reduced environmental stress and / or improved ecological status</b>		
<b>Findings discussion – 3 areas - Project formulation, project implementation, and project results.</b>		
<b>Project Strategy</b>		
<b>Project Design:</b>		
To what extent is the project in line with national and local priorities?		
To what extent is the Project aligned to the main objectives of the GEF focal area?		
Have synergies with other projects and initiatives been incorporated in the design?		
Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?		
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?		
Have issues materialized due to incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document?		
<b>Results Framework:</b>		
Are the project objective / outcomes clear, practicable, & feasible within its time frame?		
Were the project's logframe indicators and targets appropriate? How "SMART" were the midterm and end-of-project targets (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound)? Any amendments?		
<b>Progress towards Results</b>		
<b>Progress towards Outcomes Analysis:</b>		
Review the logframe indicators against delivery at end-of-project targets using the Results Matrix (see Annex).		
Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline, MTR and End.		
Which barriers hindered achievement of the project objective		
<b>PROJECT FORMULATION</b>		
Were the project's objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its time frame?		
Were the capacities of the executing institution(s) and its counterparts properly considered when the project was designed?		
Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated in the project design?		
Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project approval?		
Were counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities), enabling legislation, and adequate project management arrangements in place at project entry?		
Were the project assumptions and risks articulated in the PIF and project document?		
Whether the planned outcomes were SMART		
<b>ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS</b>		
As per logframe - Logical and robust, and have helped to determine activities and planned outputs.		
Externalities (i.e. effects of climate change, global economic crisis, etc.) which are relevant to the findings.		
<b>Project Implementation &amp; Adaptive Management</b>		
<b>GEF Partner Agency / Implementing Entity – UNDP</b>		
Has there been an appropriate focus on results?		
Has the UNDP support to the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner and Project Team been adequate?		
Has the quality and timeliness of technical support to the Executing Agency/ Implementing Partner and Project Team been adequate?		
How has the responsiveness of the managing parties to significant implementation problems (if any) been?		
Has overall risk management been proactive, participatory, and effective?		
Are there salient issues regarding project duration, for instance to note project delays? And, how have they affected project outcomes and sustainability?		
Candor and realism in annual reporting		
<b>Executing Agency/ Implementing Partner Execution</b>		
Were the capacities of the executing institution(s) and its counterparts properly considered when the Project was designed?		
Were partnership arrangements properly identified and roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to Project approval?		
Were counterpart resources, enabling legislation, and adequate project management arrangements in place at Project entry?		
Have management inputs and processes, including budgeting and procurement been adequate?		

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Has there been adequate mitigation and management of environmental and social risks as identified through the UNDP Environmental and Social screening procedure?		
Whether there was an appropriate focus on results and timeliness? Quality of risk management? Candor and realism in reporting?		
Government ownership (when NEX) or level of support if 'in cooperation with' the IP.		
<b>Work Planning / PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION</b>		
Effective partnerships arrangements established for implementation of the project with relevant stakeholders involved in the country/region, including the formation of a Project Board. Lessons from other relevant projects incorporated into project implementation.		
Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management.		
Has the project experienced delays in start-up and/or implementation? What were the causes of the delays? And, have the issues been resolved?		
Were work-planning processes results-based?		
Did the project team use the results framework/ logframe as an M&E and a management tool?		
Were there any changes to the logframe since project start, and have these changes been documented and approved by the project board?		
<b>FINANCE &amp; CO-FINANCE</b>		
<u>Prodoc</u> Did the prodoc identify potential sources of co-financing as well as leveraged and associated financing? Prodoc include strong financial controls that allowed the project management to make informed decisions regarding the budget, allow for the timely flow of funds and for the payment of project deliverables Did the prodoc demonstrate due diligence in the management of funds, including periodic audits.		
Sufficient clarity in the reported co-financing to substantiate in-kind and cash co-financing from all listed sources. The reasons for differences in the level of expected and actual co-financing. The extent to which project components supported by external funders were integrated into the overall project. Effect on project outcomes and/or sustainability from the extent of materialization of co-financing. Evidence of additional, leveraged resources that have been committed as a result of the project. (Leveraged resources can be financial or in-kind and may be from other donors, NGOs, foundations, governments, communities or the private sector)		
<u>Cost-effective factors</u> Compliance with the incremental cost criteria and securing co-funding and associated funding. Project completed the planned activities and met or exceeded the expected outcomes in terms of achievement of Global Environmental and Development Objectives according to schedule, and as cost-effective as initially planned. The project used either a benchmark approach or a comparison approach (did not exceed the costs levels of similar projects in similar contexts)?		
<u>Standard Finance questions</u> (see MTR) Have strong financial controls been established 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?		
Are there variances between planned and actual expenditures? If yes, what are the reasons behind these variances?		
Has the project demonstrated due diligence in the management of funds, including annual audits?		
Have there been any changes made to the fund allocations as a result of budget revisions? Assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.		
Has pledged cofinancing materialized? If not, what are the reasons behind the cofinancing not materializing or falling short of targets?		
<b>Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems</b>		
The quality of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan's design and implementation: An M&E plan should include a baseline (including data, methodology, etc.), SMART indicators and data analysis systems, MTR, TE, and adequate funding for M&E activities.		
M&E plan at project start up, considering whether baseline conditions, methodology and roles and responsibilities are well articulated. Is the M&E plan appreciated? Is it articulated sufficiently to monitor results and track progress toward achieving objectives?		
Were sufficient resources allocated effectively to M&E?		
Were there changes to project implementation / M&E as a result of the MTR recommendations?		
Are the M&E systems appropriate to the project's specific context? - effectiveness of monitoring indicators from the project document for measuring progress and performance		
Do the monitoring tools 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?		
To what extent has the Project Team been using inclusive, innovative, and participatory monitoring systems?		
To what extent have follow-up actions, and/or adaptive management measures, been taken in response to the PIRs? Check to see whether APR/PIR self-evaluation ratings were consistent with the MTR and TE findings. If not, were these discrepancies identified by the project steering committee and addressed?		
Compliance with the progress and financial reporting requirements/ schedule, including quality and timeliness of reports		
The value and effectiveness of the monitoring reports and evidence that these were discussed with stakeholders and project staff		
The extent to which development objectives are built into monitoring systems: How are perspectives of women and men involved and affected by the project monitored and assessed?		

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How are relevant groups' (including women, indigenous peoples, children, elderly, disabled, and poor) involvement with the project and the impact on them monitored?		
Has there been adequate mitigation and management of environmental and social risks as identified through the UNDP Environmental and Social screening procedure?		
<b>STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</b>		
Are the interactions as per the prodoc? Stakeholder interactions include information dissemination, consultation, and active participation in the project.		
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: How has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?		
Are there any limitations to stakeholder awareness of project outcomes or to stakeholder participation in project activities? Is there invested interest of stakeholders in the project's long-term success and sustainability?		
<b>Reporting:</b>		
How have adaptive management changes been reported by the Project Team and shared with the Project Board?		
How well have the Project Team and partners undertaken and fulfilled GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PIRs?), and suggest trainings etc. if needed?		
How have PIRs been shared with the Project Board and other key stakeholders?		
How have lessons derived from the adaptive management process been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners, and incorporated into project implementation?		
<b>Communication:</b>		
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 long-term investment in the sustainability of project results?		
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?)		
Are there possibilities for expansion of educational or awareness aspects of the project to solidify a communications program, with mention of proper funding for education and awareness activities? What aspects of the project might yield excellent communications material, if applicable?		
<b>ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT</b>		
Changes in the environmental and development objectives of the project during implementation, why these changes were made and what was the approval process. Causes for adaptive management: a) original objectives were not sufficiently articulated; b) exogenous conditions changed, due to which a change in objectives was needed; c) project was restructured because original objectives were overambitious; d) project was restructured because of a lack of progress;		
How these changes were instigated and how these changes affected project results: - Did the project undergo significant changes as a result of recommendations from the MTR? Or as a result of other review procedures? Explain the process and implications. - If the changes were extensive, did they materially change the expected project outcomes? - Were the project changes articulated in writing and then considered and approved by the project steering committee?		
<b>PROJECT RESULTS</b>		
A 'result' is defined as a describable or measurable development change resulting from a cause-and-effect relationship. In GEF terms, results include direct project outputs, short- to medium-term outcomes, and longer-term impact including global environmental benefits, replication effects, and other local effects. Assess the results based management (RBM) chain, from inputs to activities, to outputs, outcomes and impacts.		
Assess the project results using indicators and relevant tracking tools		
<b>BROADER ASPECTS OF PROJECT OUTCOMES</b>		
<b>Country Ownership</b>		
Project concept had its origin within the national sectoral and development plans?		
Have Outcomes (or potential outcomes) from the project have been incorporated into the national sectoral and development plans? Has the government enacted legislation and/or developed policies and regulations in line with the project's objectives?		
Relevant country representatives (e.g., governmental official, civil society, etc.) were actively involved in project identification, planning and/or implementation, part of steering committee?		
Was an intergovernmental committee given responsibility to liaise with the project team, recognizing that more than one ministry should be involved?		
The recipient government has maintained financial commitment to the project?		
<b>Mainstreaming (Broader Development and Gender)</b>		
Whether broader development and gender issues had been taken into account in project design and implementation?		
In what way has the project contributed to greater consideration of gender aspects, (i.e. project team composition, gender-related aspects of environmental impacts, stakeholder outreach to women's groups, etc). If so, indicate how.		
Did the MTR recommend improvements to the logframe with SMART 'development' indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits? - Were these taken up?		
1. Whether it is possible to identify and define positive or negative effects of the project on local populations (e.g. income generation/ job creation, improved natural resource management arrangements with local groups, improvement in policy frameworks for resource allocation and distribution, regeneration of natural resources for long term sustainability).		

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2. If the project objectives conform to agreed priorities in the UNDP country programme document (CPD) and country programme action plan (CPAP).		
3. Whether there is evidence that the project outcomes have contributed to better preparations to cope with natural disasters.		
The mainstreaming assessment should take note of the points of convergence between UNDP environment-related and other development programming.		
<b>Sustainability</b>		
<b>Risk Management</b>		
Are the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module the most important? And, are the risk ratings applied appropriate and up to date? If not, explain why.		
<b>Financial Risks to Sustainability (of the project outcomes)</b>		
What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends? (This might include funding through government - in the form of direct subsidies, or tax incentives, it may involve support from other donors, and also the private sector. The analysis could also point to macroeconomic factors.)		
What opportunities for financial sustainability exist?		
What additional factors are needed to create an enabling environment for continued financing?		
Has there been the establishment of financial and economic instruments and mechanisms to ensure the ongoing flow of benefits once the GEF assistance ends (i.e. from the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and market transformations to promote the project's objectives)?		
<b>Socio-Economic Risks to Sustainability:</b>		
Are there social or political risks that may threaten the 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 project's long-term objectives?		
Have lessons learned been documented by the Project Team on a continual basis?		
Are the project's successful aspects being transferred to appropriate parties, potential future beneficiaries, and others who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?		
<b>Institutional Framework and Governance Risks to Sustainability:</b>		
Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize project benefits?		
Has the project put in place frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes that will create mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer after the project's closure?		
How has the project developed appropriate institutional capacity (systems, structures, staff, expertise, etc.) that will be self-sufficient after the project closure date?		
How has the project identified and involved champions (i.e. individuals in government and civil society) who can promote sustainability of project outcomes?		
Has the project achieved stakeholders' (including government stakeholders') consensus regarding courses of action on project activities after the project's closure date?		
Does the project leadership have the ability to respond to future institutional and governance changes (i.e. foreseeable changes to local or national political leadership)? Can the project strategies effectively be incorporated/mainstreamed into future planning?		
<b>Environmental Risks to Sustainability:</b>		
Are there environmental factors that could undermine and reverse the project's outcomes and results, including factors that have been identified by project stakeholders? E.g. climate change risk to biodiversity		
<b>Impact - Progress towards the achievement of impacts</b>		
Verifiable improvements in ecological status (or via process indicators to show it is likely in the future)?		
Verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems (via process indicators)?		
E.g. as a result of the project, there have been regulatory and policy changes at regional, national and/or local levels? (Use tracking tools and indications from baseline to target)		
Identify the mechanisms at work (i.e. the causal links to project outputs and outcomes);		
Assess the extent to which changes are taking place at scales commensurate to natural system boundaries; and		
Assess the likely permanence (long lasting nature) of the impacts.		
On the basis of the outcome and sustainability analyses, identify key missing elements as that are likely to obstruct further progress.		
<b>Theory of Change – Identify project intended impacts – verify logic – analyse project outcome to impact pathway</b>		
Based on the theory of change (building blocks, catalysts etc), has the progress towards impact has been significant, minimal or negligible.		
<b>Catalytic role</b>		
Scaling up - Approaches developed through the project are taken up on a regional / national scale, becoming widely accepted, and perhaps legally required		
Replication - Activities, demonstrations, and/or techniques are repeated within or outside the project, nationally or internationally		
Demonstration - Steps have been taken to catalyze the public good, for instance through the development of demonstration sites, successful information dissemination and training		
Producing a public good –		
(a) The lowest level of catalytic result, including for instance development of new technologies and approaches.		
(b) No significant actions were taken to build on this achievement, so the catalytic effect is left to 'market forces'		

### Annex 13: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct Agreement Form

Independence entails the ability to evaluate without undue influence or pressure by any party (including the hiring unit) and providing evaluators with free access to information on the evaluation subject. Independence provides legitimacy to and ensures an objective perspective on evaluations. An independent evaluation reduces the potential for conflicts of interest which might arise with self-reported ratings by those involved in the management of the project being evaluated. Independence is one of ten general principles for evaluations (together with internationally agreed principles, goals and targets: utility, credibility, impartiality, ethics, transparency, human rights and gender equality, national evaluation capacities, and professionalism).

#### 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 imitations, 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 and did not carry out the project's Mid-Term Review.

#### Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Evaluator: Mr R T Sobey

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

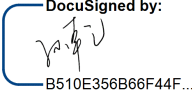
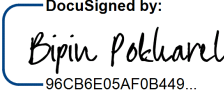
Signed at Worcester, UK on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_





**Annex 14: Signed TE Final Report Clearance Form**

<b>Terminal Evaluation Report Reviewed and Cleared By:</b>	
<b>Evaluation Manager</b>	
Name: Qian Sun	
Signature:  B510E356B66F44F...	Date: 19-Dec-2023
<b>UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor</b>	
Name: Bipin Pokharel	
Signature:  96CB6E05AF0B449...	Date: 19-Dec-2023

## **Annex 15: Terms of Reference**

As presented on the UNDP ERC webpage - [erc.undp.org/](http://erc.undp.org/)