# Terminal Evaluation of

## *Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, Sustainable Use, and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems*

## *(SECURE Himalaya)*

## India

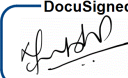**UNDP PIMS ID #:** 3298

**GEF ID#:** 9148

**TE timeframe:** June-November 2024
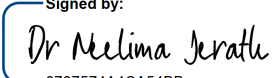
**GEF Focal Area:** Multi-focal

**Commissioned by:**
United Nations Development Programme, India

**Implementing Partner:**
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India

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*Dr Neelima Jerath*
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## November 2024

**Acknowledgement**

The Terminal Evaluation team extends its heartfelt thanks to UNDP India and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, for their support throughout this evaluation.

The team is especially grateful to the Head of Climate Adaptation, NRM, and Biodiversity (Country Office for SECURE Himalaya, New Delhi), the Head of the Programme Management and Support Unit, and their teams at UNDP India. The consultants also appreciate the cooperation of all current and former officers associated with the project in the Central and State Governments, private institutions, District Administration, and the Project team in the field, for their assistance in guiding the review and organizing the mission.

Sincere thanks are also extended to all the project partners and stakeholders, including the dedicated and visionary women involved. Their willingness to share their time, insights, and opinions during the evaluation was invaluable to the process.

Lastly, the team expresses deep gratitude to the local community representatives, local NGO/CBO representatives, and researchers from the four States. Their support for the project and willingness to share their experiences greatly contributed to the success and understanding of the evaluation.

## Table of Contents

## List of Abbreviations

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

| Acronym | Meaning | Acronym | Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| MoEF&CC | Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change | UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| MTR | Midterm Review | UNDP-CO | UNDP-Country Office |
| NGOs | Non-Governmental Organizations | UNDP-IEO | UNDP-Independent Evaluation Office |
| NIM | National Implementation Modality | UT | Union Territory |
| NMHS | National Mission on Himalayan Studies | WLS | Wildlife Sanctuary |

## 1. Executive Summary

### Project Information Table

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Project Title:** | **Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, Sustainable Use, and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems (SECURE-Himalayas)** | | |
| **UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):** | 3298 | **PIF Approval Date:** | 04 June 2015 |
| **GEF Project ID (PMIS #):** | 9148 | **CEO Endorsement Date:** | 21 June 2017 |
| **UNDP Award ID/Atlas Project ID:** | 00091297 | **Project Document (ProDoc) Signature Date (date project began):** | 5 December 2017 |
| **UNDP Output ID:** | 00096606 | **Duration** | 7 years (84 months) |
| **Country:** | India | **Date National Project Manager hired:** | Q2 2018 |
| **Region:** | Asia and Pacific | **Inception Workshop date(s):** | **Uttarakhand:** 27 July 2019 **Himachal Pradesh:** 19 Sept2019 **Sikkim:** 25 July 2019 **Union Territory of Ladakh:** 19 Oct 2019 |
| **Focal Area GWP Child Project:** | Yes | **Midterm Review date:** | 15 March - 30 Nov 2022 |
| **GEF-6 Strategic Programs:** | **Multi-focal:** BD-2 Program 3 BD-4 Program 9 LD-2 Program 3 LD-3 Program 4 SFM-1 Program 1 SFM-1 Program 2 SFM-3 Program 7 | **Planned closing date:** | 5 Dec 2024 |
| | | | |
| **Trust Fund:** | GEF Trust Fund | **If revised, proposed closing date:** | N/A |
| **Executing Agency:** | Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change supported by UNDP | | |
| **Other executing partners:** | • 4 State/UT Forest Departments & relevant line departments<br>    o Union Territory of Ladakh (Trans Himalaya)<br>    o Himachal Pradesh (Western Himalaya)<br>    o Uttarakhand (Western Himalaya)<br>    o Sikkim (Eastern Himalaya)<br> • Civil Society Organizations: 4 national level NGOs; State level NGOs & Local communities<br> • Key research institutions for wildlife studies<br> • Private sector<br> • International and regional consortia<br> • Media and communication agencies. | | |

| PPG | At approval (USD) | At PPG completion (USD) |
|---|---|---|
| **Source of Financing** | **Amount at CEO Endorsement (US$)** | **At TE (US$)** |
| GEF Trust Fund | 11,544,192.00 | 11,531,391.63 |

| GEF Sub-Total | 11,544,192.00 | 11,531,391.63 |
|---|---|---|
| UNDP | 1,000,000.00 | 1,000,000 |
| Government (in-kind) | 59,820,000.00 | 55,571,058.12 |
| *Co-Financing Sub-Total* | *60,820,000.00* | 56,571,058.12 |
| **Project Total Project Value** | **72,364,192.00** | 68,102,449.75 |

## Project Description

The high-altitude Himalayan ecosystem in India is vital for its globally significant biodiversity and as a life-support system for remote agro-pastoral communities. It provides critical ecosystem services, including freshwater, hydrological regulation, erosion control, food security, and preservation of landraces of crops. Millions rely on these ecosystems for water, hydropower, agriculture, livestock forage, medicinal plants, cultural values, and tourism. The economic value of key services provided by this region, also a prominent snow leopard habitat in India, is estimated at nearly USD 4 billion annually, with hydropower contributing USD 3 billion, followed by agriculture and livestock (USD 0.5 billion) and tourism (USD 0.4 billion). [1]

To promote sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests, conserve globally significant wildlife like the vulnerable snow leopard and their habitat, and enhance community livelihoods ensuring socio-economic benefits, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India and UNDP designed the project titled "Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE) Himalaya". The said Project was approved by GEF in 6th Project cycle and launched in 2017.

The project adopts a landscape-based approach, implemented by the Wildlife Division, MoEFCC, in partnership with state forest departments in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and the UT of Ladakh. Spanning 34,456 sq. km across Changthang (Ladakh), Lahaul and Pangi (Himachal Pradesh), Gangotri-Govind and Darma-Byans Valley (Uttarakhand), and Khangchendzonga–Upper Teesta Valley (Sikkim), it targets the conservation of ecosystems and livelihoods via four inter-linked outcomes that are aimed at achieving the objective as mentioned below:

**Outcome 1**: Improved management of high range Himalayan landscapes for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services
**Outcome 2**: Improved and diversified livelihood strategies and improved capacities of community and government institutions for sustainable based natural resources management and conservation to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems
**Outcome 3**: Enhanced enforcement, monitoring, prosecution and effective trans-boundary cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and related threats
**Outcome 4:** Lessons learned by the project through participatory M&E, including gender mainstreaming practices, are used to fight poaching and IWT and promote community-based conservation at the national and international levels

**Evaluation purpose, objective and audience of the evaluation**

In line with UNDP and GEF M&E policies, all full-sized, GEF-funded projects must undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE). Towards this, the TE of the *"Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, Sustainable Use, and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems (SECURE Himalaya)"* project provided an independent, impartial, and transparent assessment of the project's outcomes and achievements

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[1] http://www.globalsnowleopard.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/India_NSLIP.pdf

against its stated objectives, following the 2019/2020 GEF Terminal Evaluation Guidelines. The evaluation comprehensively analysed the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact. It assessed the success of interventions, their contribution to conservation and sustainable development, and their coherence with both global and national priorities.

A significant focus of the TE was gender equality, evaluating the integration of gender-sensitive approaches and the promotion of women's empowerment in conservation and livelihood activities. This included examining women's engagement in project activities, their participation in decision-making processes, and the barriers hindering equitable involvement. The evaluation documented key achievements, identified shortfalls, and assessed the effectiveness of the project's exit strategies and sustainability plans.

By identifying best practices, lessons learned, and effective strategies, the TE provided actionable insights and recommendations for UNDP, national and state governments, and community-based organizations. These findings aim to inform future programming and strengthen the sustainability of efforts in high-altitude ecosystem conservation and livelihood enhancement.

The primary audience for the Terminal Evaluation includes UNDP Country Office officials, GEF, the implementing partner, implementing agencies, and local stakeholders involved in or impacted by the project. The findings provide decision-makers with clear insights and practical recommendations to improve the design, execution, and sustainability of future initiatives. Additionally, the evaluation serves as a learning resource for similar projects worldwide, offering adaptable best practices and lessons learned for diverse contexts.

**Evaluation approach and methods**

The Terminal Evaluation (TE) employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques in alignment with the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects. A thorough desk review of project documents, progress reports, and evaluations, including the Mid-Term Review and Exit Strategy, formed the foundation for the assessment. Stakeholder consultations were conducted with 63 individuals (33% women) from diverse groups, including national and state governments, local communities, NGOs, and women's Self-Help Groups, through 29 meetings (13 virtual and 16 in-person). Field visits in Ladakh's Changthang area provided direct insights into project activities, while adverse weather conditions restricted access to other project sites. The evaluation used an adapted evaluation matrix to guide data collection and triangulation, ensuring evidence-based findings. A gender-sensitive approach analysed women's participation and barriers, while discussions on sustainability and scalability focused on funding mechanisms, project ownership, and integration with government schemes. This robust methodology facilitated a comprehensive evaluation of the project's outcomes, impacts, and alignment with broader development goals.

Evaluations Ratings Table

| Project Design Formulation | Rating* |
|---|---|
| Gender Equality and Women Empowerment | 5 |
| Theory of Change and Results Framework | 4 |
| **Monitoring and Evaluation** | |
| Design at entry | 5 |
| Implementation | 5 |
| Overall assessment of M&E | 5 |

| Project Implementation | |
|---|---|
| UNDP implementation/oversight | 6 |
| Implementing Partner execution | 6 |
| Overall project implementation/execution | 6 |
| Gender Equality | 6 |
| **Project Results and Impacts** | |
| Relevance | 6 (Highly Satisfactory) |
| Effectiveness | 6 (Highly Satisfactory) |
| Efficiency | 6 (Highly Satisfactory) |
| Overall Outcome | 6(Highly Satisfactory) |
| **Sustainability** | |
| Financial resources | 4 (Likely) |
| Socio-political | 3 (moderately likely) |
| Institutional framework and governance | 3 (moderately likely) |
| Environmental | 3 (moderately likely) |
| Overall likelihood of Sustainability | 3 (moderately likely) |
| Gender & Empowerment | |
| Gender equality and women's empowerment | 6 (Highly Satisfactory) |
| Overall Rating | NA |
| Cross cutting issues as relevant | |
| Poverty alleviation | NA |
| Improved governance | NA |
| Climate change mitigation and adaptation | NA |
| Disaster prevention and recovery | NA |

## Summary of Findings and Conclusions

**Findings**

The SECURE Himalaya project has achieved remarkable success in advancing biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihoods, and community empowerment across the high-altitude landscapes of India, exceeding its goals in many areas.

Key findings include:

1. Biodiversity conservation: The project led to improved management of biodiversity in over 3.4 million hectares (including High Conservation Value Areas- HCVAs) using a participatory approach, designation of HCVAs as Biodiversity Heritage Sites, and conservation of keystone species the snow leopard (reflected in the Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India). Through forest management and ecological restoration, the project sequestered 3.76 million tons of $CO_2$ equivalent, significantly contributing to climate change mitigation.

2. Securing sustainable livelihoods and community empowerment: Enhanced local income of over 2,500 households and promoted women empowerment through green value chain initiatives such as eco-tourism and handicrafts. Strengthened community-led governance and biodiversity management through the establishment of local conservation and livelihood bodies, such as Eco-development Committees and Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs).

3. Reducing Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC), Mitigating Wildlife Crime, and Advancing Transboundary Collaboration: HWC was mitigated through tools like ANIDERS (which also enhanced community engagement) and faster compensation payments. Policy changes included improved compensation rates, creation of a Local Trust Fund, and transboundary

agreements to combat wildlife crime. Its efforts have fostered socio-economic development while preserving critical ecosystems.

4. Knowledge Management: The project produced resources like a high-altitude wetland management guidebook, scientific papers, and knowledge-sharing events to support conservation. Institutional frameworks and a government-led exit strategy ensure long-term sustainability.

While the project faced challenges such as incomplete baseline data, initial financial disbursement issues, and limited marketing support for artisans, these were addressed over time. By integrating conservation with socio-economic initiatives and establishing strong institutional frameworks (local conservation bodies, such as Eco-development Committees and BMCs), the project has laid a solid foundation for long-term environmental and community resilience.

**Conclusion**

The SECURE Himalaya project has successfully combined biodiversity conservation with sustainable livelihood development, creating lasting benefits for both people and nature. The comprehensive landscape-based approach taken by the project has been instrumental in fostering collaboration between government entities, conservation organizations, and local communities, which collectively improved ecosystem management and biodiversity protection. The project's success in identifying and managing high-conservation-value areas, as well as increasing the population of keystone species like the snow leopard, showcases its impactful conservation efforts, even beyond protected areas.

The project managed over 3.4 million hectares through a participatory approach, designated 73 High Conservation Value Areas as Biodiversity Heritage Sites, and contributed to snow leopard recovery. Livelihood initiatives like eco-tourism and handicrafts improved incomes for over 2,500 households, while promoting traditional livelihoods and women's empowerment. The project sequestered 3.76 million tons of $CO_2$, revitalized alpine forests, and preserved cultural heritage by recognizing traditional knowledge. It addressed biodiversity threats through innovative measures like feral dog management and wildlife corridors, while improving human-wildlife conflict compensation and strengthening policies on wildlife crime. Collaboration with communities, government agencies, and international partners ensured sustainability, leaving a legacy of resilience and community-driven conservation.

Gender equality was a cross-cutting in nature and integrated across all components, from conservation and governance to livelihood development. The project enhanced women's access to digital tools, financial resources, and decision-making platforms, challenging traditional gender roles and fostering a shift in community norms. Notably, initiatives like the KangLa Basket project in Himachal Pradesh exemplified how women-led enterprises can link eco-friendly handicrafts to biodiversity conservation. These initiatives benefitted over 2,500 households, with nearly half the participants being women. By supporting women-led enterprises in areas such as eco-tourism and handicrafts, the project demonstrated that targeted support could drive significant socio-economic and environmental change, providing a replicable model for future UNDP and GEF projects. These strengths highlight the project's effective integration of ecological conservation with socio-economic development, setting a replicable model for similar high-altitude ecosystems globally.

The SECURE Himalaya project faced several challenges that provided valuable lessons for future initiatives. Incomplete baseline data highlighted the need for better data collection and GIS tools, while initial financial delays underscored the importance of flexible funding systems. A clearer Theory of

Change could have further strengthened activity alignment with desired outcomes. Limited market linkages for eco-friendly products emphasized the need for early marketing support, especially for women-led enterprises. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted activities but was managed through adaptive measures like virtual training and leveraging local networks. Sustaining women's leadership roles and improving human-wildlife conflict mitigation remain ongoing challenges. Additionally, translating research into practical strategies and tracking community behavioural changes highlighted the need for robust, adaptive frameworks to ensure long-term success.

The SECURE Himalaya project has created a model that integrates conservation with socio-economic development, ensuring long-term sustainability through partnerships with local governance bodies and community ownership. Early planning, such as Local Trust Funds and exit strategies, has secured lasting benefits, while adaptive management frameworks have helped address challenges effectively. By aligning biodiversity conservation with carbon sequestration and livelihood development, the project has connected local efforts to national and global priorities. For policymakers, it highlights the need for scalable frameworks that balance ecological preservation with socio-economic goals, strengthened market linkages, and gender-focused initiatives. Continued investment in capacity building and collaboration among stakeholders is essential to sustaining these achievements and guiding future projects.


**Lessons Learnt**

The project offered key lessons for future initiatives:
1. **Integrated Approach:** Combining biodiversity conservation with sustainable livelihoods, especially for women, creates mutually reinforcing outcomes. Future projects should maintain this integrated focus to achieve environmental and socio-economic goals.
2. **Gender Mainstreaming:** Empowering women through access to resources and decision-making platforms drives community-wide benefits. Intentional gender inclusion should be a priority across all project components.
3. **Community Ownership:** Establishing local governance bodies like Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) and providing capacity-building training empower communities to sustain conservation efforts. Strengthening local institutions ensures long-term impact.
4. **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Inclusive engagement with communities, governments, NGOs, and international partners improves implementation and outcomes. Continuous, participatory stakeholder involvement is essential for success.
5. **Policy Influence:** Aligning conservation efforts with national and regional policies, as seen in revisions to compensation rates for human-wildlife conflict and frameworks for wildlife crime prevention, enhances institutionalization and broader impact.
6. **Sustainability Planning:** Early sustainability measures, such as institutional frameworks and Local Trust Funds, ensure lasting benefits post-project. Exit strategies should be clear and include mechanisms for continued impact.
7. **Robust M&E:** Addressing challenges in tracking intangible outcomes, like behavioural changes, requires adaptable, SMART indicators and regular impact assessments to measure both tangible and intangible results effectively.
8. **Market Linkages:** Women-led enterprises, like KangLa Basket, highlight the potential of eco-tourism and handicrafts. Initial marketing support and buy-back arrangements are crucial for helping artisans scale and sustain their businesses.

Recommendations Summary Table

| Rec # | TE Recommendation | Entity Responsible | Time Frame/Priority |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Launch Phase Two of the SECURE Himalaya Project (SH 2.0) | UNDP, with relevant government and community stakeholders | 1 year/High |
| 2. | Implement Robust Knowledge Transfer Mechanisms | Project management team in collaboration with local governments. | 3 months/High |
| 3. | Maximising the Impact of Scientific Studies: Leveraging Research for Post-Project Sustainability | UNDP, in collaboration with research institutions. | 3 months/High |
| 4. | Establish a Dedicated Snow Leopard Cell | Government of India, supported by UNDP. | 3 months/High |
| 5. | Ensure a Comprehensive Exit Strategy | UNDP, in collaboration with local governments | 1 year/Medium |
| 6. | Promote Gender Equality and Women's Leadership in Conservation | UNDP, in partnership with local women's groups and NGOs | 1 year/High |
| 7. | Linking with National and International Conservation Initiatives | MoEF&CC; State Forest Department | 1-2 years/Medium |
| 8. | Promote Sustainable Livelihoods and Value Chains through linkages with ongoing government schemes | MoEF&CC; and State Forest Department, CBOs | With immediate effect and continued/High |
| 9. | Targeted Focus on Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation | MoEF&CC; and State Forest Department, Research Institutions | Immediate and continued/High |
| 10. | Institutionalise Capacity Building Initiatives for Sustainability | MoEF&CC; Min. Of Culture and respective State governments | With immediate effect and continued/Medium |
| 11. | National Level Knowledge Dissemination Workshop of the SECURE Himalaya Project | MoEF&CC; and State Forest Department, Training and Research Institutions | With immediate effect |

2. Introduction

   A. Evaluation Purpose

In line with UNDP and GEF M&E policies, all full-sized, GEF-funded projects must undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE). Towards this, the purpose of the TE for the GOI-GEF-SECURE Himalaya project was to provide an independent, impartial, and transparent assessment of the project's outcomes and achievements against its objectives, based on the 2019/2020 GEF Terminal Evaluation Guidelines.

The primary objective of the TE was to evaluate the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and contributions to gender equality. It also considered adaptive actions taken in response to recommendations from the Mid-Term Review (MTR), Annual Progress Reports (APRs), and the Sustainability Plan & Exit Strategy (SSEP). The evaluation reviewed the extent to which the project

met its planned objectives and the sustainability of its results, particularly given the shortened implementation period due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other uncontrollable factors.

By identifying best practices, lessons learned, and effective strategies, the TE sought to provide actionable insights to national and state governments, as well as community-based organizations, to enhance future programming and ensure the sustainability of high-altitude ecosystem conservation and livelihood enhancement efforts.

The primary audience for the Terminal Evaluation includes UNDP Country Office officials, GEF, the implementing partner, implementing agencies, and local stakeholders involved in or impacted by the project. The findings provide decision-makers with clear insights and practical recommendations to improve the design, execution, and sustainability of future initiatives. Additionally, the evaluation serves as a learning resource for similar projects worldwide, offering adaptable best practices and lessons learned for diverse contexts.

### B.  Scope of Evaluation

The Terminal Evaluation of the GOI-GEF-SECURE Himalaya Project meticulously assessed its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and gender responsiveness within the parameters of financial resources, socio-political, environmental, institutional, governance, and gender equality frameworks, in alignment with GEF guidelines. This included an evaluation of project design aspects, such as baseline data generation, the specificity and achievability of indicators, clarity of goals and targets, Theory of Change, adequacy of financial and human resources, and the adaptability of gender-sensitive strategies.

The assessment covered physical achievements, including the accomplishment of project targets, strengths and limitations, long-term sustainability, mechanisms for addressing challenges, and additional achievements or best practices. The evaluation also reviewed knowledge contributions made to enhance project relevance and impact, including supplementary studies conducted. Furthermore, the development of scalable and replicable models was assessed for their potential applicability in diverse environmental and socio-political contexts. Capacity-building efforts were evaluated with a focus on outreach, training, and the strengthening of implementing partners, such as Local Governments and the Forest and Wildlife Department, to support governance resilience. Sustainable action points were identified, encompassing gender equality, financial feasibility, and long-term socio-political and environmental considerations, while strategies for sustainable governance and management were outlined. Finally, the financial performance was evaluated in terms of budget management, resource allocation, and cost-effectiveness.

This evaluation benefited a wide range of stakeholders, including UNDP, GEF, MoEF&CC, State Government agencies, local governance bodies, community conservation groups, women's self-help groups, vulnerable groups, and youth, empowering them to effectively engage in sustainable conservation and livelihood enhancement initiatives.

### C.  Evaluation Approach and Methodology

The evaluation approach and methodology adhered to the guidelines in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects.

The Terminal Evaluation (TE) team included a TE National Consultant for Conservation (TE-NC-Conv), serving as Team Leader, and a TE National Consultant for Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv). The TE-NC-Conv evaluated Component I, which focused on managing high Himalayan landscapes for Snow Leopard and

endangered species conservation and ecosystem services, as well as Component III, which aimed to strengthen enforcement, monitoring, and cooperation to address wildlife-related threats. This consultant assessed the project's performance based on the Logical Framework/Results Framework. Meanwhile, the TE-NC-Liv reviewed Component II, which centred on sustainable livelihood strategies and capacity building for natural resource management, and Component IV, which focused on enhancing knowledge and information systems to support landscape conservation approaches.



Broad Methodology
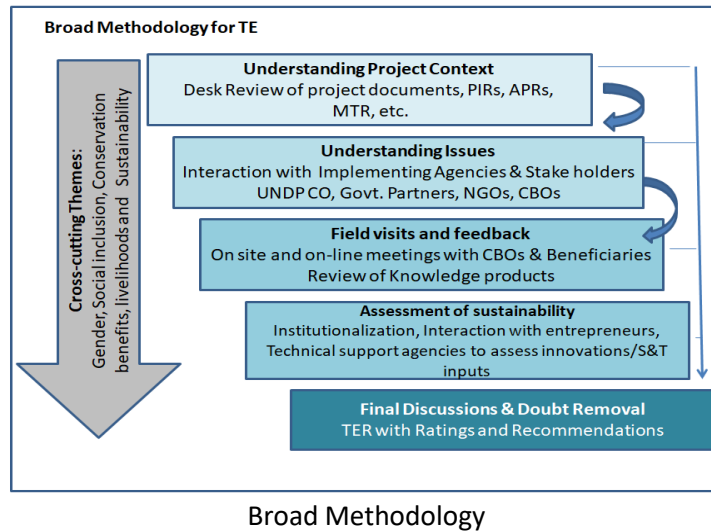
The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods:

**Phase 1:**
**Desk Review**: The evaluation began with a comprehensive desk review of key project documents, including the Project Document, Annual Progress Reports (APRs), Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs), the Mid-Term Review (MTR), the Exit Strategy document, along relevant UNDP policies and guidelines, ensuring a clear understanding of the project's framework. This phase aimed to establish the project's context, objectives, progress, and challenges. Additionally, financial records and other project reports were reviewed to assess the efficiency of resource allocation and expenditure. A list of reviewed documents is provided in Annexure 1.

**Meetings and consultations**: In-depth discussions were held with project staff, including UNDP CO, State Project Coordinators, and other key personnel, to gain insights into project challenges, implemented actions, successes, and failures. Semi-structured questionnaires (Annexure 19) guided these discussions to ensure a focused and efficient evaluation. Additionally, the TE team analyzed data collected on financial evidence and the institutionalization of activities to evaluate the project's effectiveness.

The evaluation team engaged with a broad range of stakeholders, including national and state government representatives as well as local community representatives, NGOs, CBOs, women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and BMC members. The rationale for selection of such a diverse spectrum of stake holders was primarily to ensure that views and concerns of all (men, women, youth, farmers, weavers, tribal community representatives rearing animals, home makers, care givers from NGO/CBO and GO representatives, SNOs, Foresters, wildlife conservationists, state and central government representatives, consultants, researchers, both, from urban and rural areas, etc.) could be obtained and used for analysis so that a balanced evaluation is conducted and concerns of all sections of society can be incorporated in project recommendations. A total of 29 meetings (13 online, 16 in-person) were conducted with 63 stakeholders, ensuring diverse perspectives were captured throughout the

process. These consultations included **focus group discussions** and **semi-structured interviews** with gender responsive questions with local communities, NGOs/CBOs/SHGs, particularly women especially those in remote locations), to gather insights on intervention effectiveness, capacity-building outcomes, and social and financial benefits, which ensured a gender-sensitive and inclusive approach to data collection (Annexure 19). Some FGDs were held exclusively with women/ groups to encourage them to express their views without inhibitions, like with the woman leader operating a home stay at Rong Valley , Ladakh, members of the Kangla Basket Initiative Women SHG in Myer Valley Himachal Pradesh, etc.(Annexure 2 ). In addition, this data was verified through discussions/feedback from SPMUs/SNOs and used to assess the effectiveness of livelihood activities, pasture management, biodiversity conservation, and the social empowerment of marginalised groups, particularly women and tribal communities. List of participants met, along with brief summary is provided in Annexure 2.

**Field visits** were conducted to the Changthang area of Ladakh, where direct observations and consultations with local communities, provided insights into project activities, particularly those focused on biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods. Limitations due to flash floods and road closures prevented visits to other project sites, but the evaluation team relied on secondary data and stakeholder feedback to fill gaps. The TE mission took place from 27 June 2024 to 16 September 2024, with an itinerary provided in Annexure 3.

This approach allowed the team to gather project-related information not only from available records but also through face-to-face, physical, and online interactions with stakeholders. The information was further verified with state and central government agencies and experts who were involved during the project's initial phase, mid-term review, and exit strategy development. This resulted in a comprehensive 360° review.

To ensure credibility, the TE team engaged stakeholders as partners in the evaluation process, encouraging open dialogue and group discussions to assess the completion and benefits of actions, challenges, and post-project sustainability. Stakeholders were asked about the sustainability of initiatives, funding sources, and whether activities would continue after the project's closure. This was critical for evaluating the long-term viability of the project's outcomes. The evaluation also included verification of assets and field-level activities, consultations with technical support agencies, and desk reviews of relevant policies and knowledge products. Additional clarifications were sought through follow-up discussions with UNDP CO and National Project Units, ensuring a thorough understanding of the project's achievements and challenges.

**Phase 3: Data Collection and Analysis**
The following approach was followed for data collection and analysis during TE:
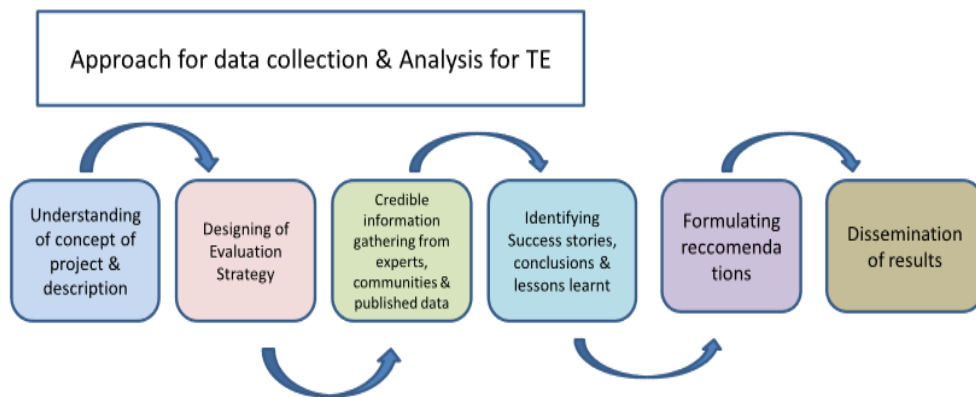
Adapted from : Guidance For Conducting Terminal Evaluations Of Undp-supported, Gef-financed Projects , 2020

Approach for Data Collection

**Phase 3: Drafting Evaluation Report:** The TE followed a comprehensive, results-oriented approach to assess outcomes, sustainability, and alignment with project objectives.

- The evaluation employed an adapted evaluation matrix based on preliminary questions from the ToR. This tool guided data collection and analysis, while evidence gathered during the TE's fact-finding phase was cross-checked across multiple sources to validate findings.
- To evaluate the sustainability of project initiatives, the TE team engaged stakeholders in open dialogue and group discussions, discussing factors such as continued funding, project ownership, and post-project viability.
- The evaluation also included verification of assets and field-level activities, consultations with technical support agencies, and desk reviews of relevant policies and knowledge products. Additional clarifications were sought through follow-up discussions with UNDP CO and National Project Unit, ensuring a thorough understanding of the project's achievements and challenges.
- Special consultations with senior government policymakers assessed opportunities for scaling and replicating the project, covering topics like financial mechanisms, integration with government schemes, and international knowledge sharing.
- **Cross Cutting Aspects**: Cross-cutting themes, including gender equality, social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and the long-term conservation impact, were closely examined, with gender-disaggregated data providing insights into education, income, and employment outcomes for marginalized groups.
- **Data Synthesis and Triangulation/Verification Methods**: TE applied a triangulated approach through a blend of stakeholder consultation by getting rounded responses from the implementers, beneficiaries, and the records of the Project and data verification, ensuring credibility of findings. Consulting several sections of stakeholders has helped triangulation of findings.

The Evaluation Question Matrix and targeted questionnaires (Annexures 4 and 5) further enhanced the evaluation's rigor, resulting in actionable insights for improving future conservation projects.

## D. Ethics

The UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators specify that the TE Team shall be sensitive to the beliefs, manners and customs of stakeholders and respect their confidentiality, time, and the right of 'Not to

Engage'. The Team has also signed the Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct Agreement form as per Annexure 8. Accordingly, fairness in reporting (based on facts presented in the field and evidenced in the documents) and the highest principles of ethics expected of the evaluation team were adhered to. The team held 29 meetings (out of which 13 were on-line) and met 63 persons for feedback for evaluation (including 31 persons in the field and 32 persons on-line) representing relevant stakeholders. Out of these 33% were women. Care has been taken to include the perspectives of local communities, including marginalized groups, especially the tribals. In all cases, full confidentiality has been ensured.

The two-member Terminal Evaluation team for the SECURE Himalaya Project, led by Dr. Atul Kumar Gupta (Retd. IFS) with Dr. Neelima Jerath as the gender and livelihoods expert, brings a robust mix of strategic leadership and hands-on expertise in biodiversity conservation, sustainable resource management, and environmental policy. With over four decades of experience, Dr. Gupta has spearheaded major biodiversity initiatives in the Indian Himalayan Region, aligning with GEF's goals for ecosystem protection, while Dr. Jerath's extensive background in environmental leadership, policy development, and community empowerment, particularly for women, enhances the project's focus on inclusive, community-centred conservation. Their combined strengths in policy-making, wildlife management, and multi-stakeholder engagement make them highly suited to evaluate the project's impact, sustainability, and alignment with GEF objectives. and making them well-suited for the GEF Terminal Evaluation of the GOI-GEF-SECURE Himalaya Project.

## E. Limitations

The evaluation encountered several key limitations:

- **Time Constraints**: With the project nearing completion and spanning a large geographic area, it was not feasible to conduct travel to all six sites, particularly given the limited accessibility of some locations.
- **Limited Personnel Availability**: Although consultations were held with relevant government officials, local communities, and CBOs, field personnel with direct project experience were not consistently available. This was due in part to a lack of communication infrastructure (internet or phone) in remote areas and personnel transitions as some staff had completed their project tenure, leaving no available contact information.
- **Seasonal Challenges**: The evaluation period coincided with the monsoon season, bringing frequent heavy rainfall alerts and landslides across the project states. These conditions restricted planned field visits.

Due to these limitations, the Terminal Evaluation relied largely on stakeholder feedback and desk reviews. However, efforts were made to mitigate these challenges by:

- **Engaging Diverse Stakeholders**: Conducting 29 meetings with 63 individuals (33% women) across Central and State government agencies, line departments, State Nodal Officers, CBO/NGO representatives, community members, and researchers.
- **Comprehensive Document Analysis**: Reviewing project-generated case studies, progress reports, and additional secondary data provided in the project information package.

Additionally, an evaluation matrix adapted from the TOR questions (see Annexure 4) helped guide data collection and ensure findings were triangulated where possible.

## F. Structure of the TE report

The report structure aligns with the recommendations in the Terms of Reference. The report begins with a comprehensive **Executive Summary**, which highlights the key outcomes from the TE process. Following this **i**ntroduction**, Chapter 3** provides a detailed project description. **Chapter 4** presents the findings from the Terminal Evaluation, organized into three sub-sections: project design/formulation, project implementation, and project results and impact. This chapter includes ratings for various project aspects using standard rating systems. **Chapter 5** then summarizes key findings, conclusions, and recommendations from the evaluation. Relevant annexes, referenced throughout the main text, supply additional evidence, including tracking tools, field summaries, and evaluation criteria, providing a robust reference for sustaining project gains and informing future GEF initiatives. The TE Audit Trail and the GEF/LDCF/SCCF Core Indicators or Tracking Tools are annexed in a separate file.

## 3. Project Description

### a. Project Milestone

**Planned start date: April 1, 2017**
**Planned end date: December 5, 2024**

| S. No. | Project Milestones | Date |
|--------|-------------------|------|
| 1 | Preparation Grant Approved (PIF approved) | 04 June 2015 |
| 2 | Project Approved for Implementation | 21 June 2017 |
| 3 | Start Date (project document signed by government of India) | 5 December 2017 |
| 4 | Project Inception Workshop | Uttarakhand (27th July 2019) |
| | | Himachal Pradesh (19th September 2019 |
| | | Sikkim (25th July 2019) |
| | | **Union Territory of Ladakh:** 19 Oct 2019 |
| 5 | Midterm Review | 15 March - 30 Nov 2022 |
| 6 | Terminal Evaluation | July-September 2024 |
| 7 | Closing Date (Planned): | 5 December 2024 |

### b. Development context

The high Himalayan ecosystem in India holds critical global biodiversity significance and supports numerous remote, agro-pastoral communities. It provides essential ecosystem services, including freshwater, hydrological stability, erosion control, food security, and crop diversity preservation. This region is a vital water source for agriculture and hydropower, and offers forage, minerals, medicinal plants, and cultural value, drawing visitors worldwide. As the core habitat of the endangered snow leopard (*Uncia uncia*), this ecosystem spans twelve countries in Central and South Asia and is protected under several international conventions, including CITES and CMS.

However, high-altitude Himalayan regions have received limited conservation attention, and the snow leopard's ecosystem faces escalating threats. Habitat degradation and fragmentation are driven by unsustainable livestock grazing, high community dependency on natural resources, unplanned infrastructure development, selective plant extraction, and illegal wildlife trade. These factors highlight the urgent need for effective natural resource management and conservation strategies to protect this unique ecosystem and its inhabitants.

### c. Problems that the project sought to address

The **SECURE Himalaya project** tackled significant environmental and socio-economic challenges in high-altitude ecosystems in the Union Territory of Ladakh, and states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim, with a focus on snow leopard conservation. For geo-referenced maps, refer to Annexure 14.  Key threats included habitat degradation from unsustainable grazing, over-reliance on natural resources, wildlife crime, illegal trade, and unmanaged infrastructure development. These issues were exacerbated by unregulated tourism, unsustainable harvesting of medicinal plants, and limited planning for tourism and road construction, all threatening snow leopard habitats. Climate change added complexity, impacting water availability from glacier melt and reducing pasture productivity, essential for both wildlife and local communities. The project faced three main barriers: lack of alternative livelihoods, limited conservation models beyond protected areas, and inadequate systems to monitor and deter wildlife crimes.

To address these challenges, the project objectives align with the government's strategies and priorities, GEF and UNDP programming goals, as well as relevant Sustainable Development Goals, forming a critical foundation for its design**:**
- **GEF Priorities**: The project is multi-focal, aligning with three of the six GEF-6 focal areas and strategic programs, namely 1. Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy; 2. Land Degradation Strategy; and 3. Sustainable Forest Management Strategy.
- **UNDP Priorities:** Globally, the project has been aligned with the relevant UNDP Strategic Plan outputs (2018-21- Outputs 1.3 and 2.5; 2022-25- Outputs 4.1 and 4.2).  At the national level, the project has been aligned with UNSDCF/Country Programme outcomes on environmental sustainability.
- The project supports India's **Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP)** and **National Snow Leopard Ecosystem Protection Program (NSLEP)** by addressing biodiversity threats due to unsustainable resource use and development impacts outside protected areas.
- It aligns with the **National Mission on Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE)** and the **National Mission on Himalayan Studies**, which focus on ecosystem sustainability and environmental preservation.
- In line with **India's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)**, the project promotes sustainable resource use, forest conservation, and community-led biodiversity management, integrating protected areas such as the Cold Desert Biosphere Reserve.
- By building capacity in wildlife enforcement to address poaching and illegal trade, the project aligns with **CITES** objectives and enhances collaboration with Nepal and China to tackle cross-border wildlife crime.
- The project supports SDG 15 (Life on Land), and several targets under SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 12, and 13, by promoting biodiversity conservation, ecosystem sustainability, and climate resilience.

This alignment enables SECURE Himalaya to effectively support both conservation and sustainable development goals, benefiting biodiversity and local communities in the region.

### d. Immediate and development objectives of the project

The project aims to promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high-range Himalayan ecosystems, securing the conservation of globally significant wildlife, including the endangered snow leopard, and ensuring sustainable livelihoods and socio-economic benefits for local communities. Designed in alignment with the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP, 2013)—a collaborative effort among 12 snow leopard range countries—and the

National Snow Leopard Ecosystem Protection (NSLEP) program for India, the project follows a comprehensive framework for improving the conservation status of snow leopards, wild prey, and their ecosystems.

Building on these frameworks, the project focuses on: (i) preventing further fragmentation of snow leopard and prey habitats in India, (ii) maintaining or restoring the quality of these habitats, (iii) enhancing conservation and sustainability of pasture and forest use, (iv) reducing direct threats to snow leopard and prey populations, and (v) fostering local community involvement in snow leopard protection.

The project is designed to achieve long-term global environmental benefits (GEBs) by stabilizing or increasing snow leopard populations, maintaining alpine meadow productivity, and preserving sub-alpine forests. This will be achieved through reducing threats like illegal wildlife trade (IWT) and human-wildlife conflict (HWC), while promoting sustainable practices in grazing, logging, and the harvesting of medicinal plants and non-timber forest products (NTFPs).

In particular, the project aims at implementation of four inter-related and mutually complementary components (project strategies) that are focussed at addressing the barriers relating to unsustainable use of land and forests and limited options for alternative livelihoods, inadequate protection and management of areas outside protected area networks and limited wildlife monitoring and wildlife crime related deterrent systems. The project aims to:

- Strengthen management practices for high-range Himalayan landscapes, conserving snow leopards and other endangered species while sustaining ecosystem services.
- Develop diversified livelihood strategies and build capacity in community and government institutions for sustainable natural resource management, reducing pressure on fragile ecosystems.
- Improve enforcement, monitoring, and prosecution efforts, alongside effective transboundary cooperation to combat wildlife crime and related threats.
- Utilize lessons learned from participatory monitoring and evaluation (M&E), including gender mainstreaming, to combat poaching and IWT, while promoting community-based conservation at both national and international levels.

## e. Description of the project's Theory of Change

The Theory of Change (ToC) plays a critical role in identifying solutions to address problems that could impede project progress. For the terminal evaluation of the SECURE Himalaya project, the ToC was examined using a Problem and Solutions Tree approach. Although a ToC was included in the Project Document (Figure 3 of the PRODOC), the evaluation team found it lacking in causal factors, barriers and mechanisms to address them, livelihood issues, capacity building, and solutions that foster community participation in conservation, though it did consider mid-term and long-term Global Environment benefits. It primarily presented indicators by component, which were linked to the project's four outcomes and impacts but did not sufficiently address the project's challenges and solutions.

## f. Expected results

- The project aims to achieve the following long-term impacts or Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs): a stable or increasing snow leopard population, stable area and productivity of alpine meadows, and stable sub-alpine forest areas. These outcomes are driven by reducing direct threats and achieving several mid-term impacts, including reduced illegal wildlife trade (IWT),

decreased human-wildlife conflict (HWC), sustainable grazing and logging practices, and responsible harvesting of medicinal plants and non-timber forest products (NTFPs).

- To accomplish this, the project focuses on key outcomes: expanding areas under participatory natural resource management, increasing benefits to local communities from sustainable land and livelihood practices, and reducing human-wildlife conflicts and retaliatory killings of wildlife.
- The project's incremental value lies in its approach to developing participatory natural resource management and sustainable livelihood enterprises in four high-elevation landscapes (alpine pastures, forests, and critical watersheds). This strategy conserves snow leopard habitats, maintains ecosystem integrity, and mitigates climate change impacts.
- A GIS database and detailed maps for each landscape will be created to document high-conservation areas for snow leopards, wild prey, biodiversity, socio-cultural significance, climate mitigation, grazing management, and community resource use. These layers will help define sustainable use zones versus conservation areas, supporting long-term rangeland productivity and habitat preservation.
- The project will build local capacities and establish enabling frameworks through "learning-by-doing" in targeted landscapes. Sustainable pasture and forest management practices will draw from key habitat assessments, ecosystem service evaluations, and lessons from previous conservation efforts in India and globally.
- The project will serve as a model for best practices in Himalayan ecosystem and snow leopard conservation, supporting scale-up and replication in other landscapes nationally and internationally, facilitated through publications and workshops.

## g. Summary of main stakeholders

| Stakeholder group | Role in project implementation |
|---|---|
| Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MOEFCC) | The project is anchored in the Wildlife division of MoEF&CC. The Ministry, through its Conservation, Forest & Wildlife and Mountain Divisions and through National Biodiversity Authority and various R&D Institutions like FRI, WII, ICFRE, FSI, BSI, ZSI, Bureau, etc. supports biodiversity and wetland conservation, climate change resilience, adaptation risk management and education and information dissemination. It also works in collaboration with other Ministries and Central Government Departments (like Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare, Rural development, MNRE, DST (which is the focal point for India's National Mission on Sustaining the Himalayan), Jal Shakti, and their subordinate bodies/Boards, State departments of Environment and Forests & Wildlife. The project is anchored in the Wildlife Division of the Ministry. |
| Wildlife Crime Control Bureau | The WCCB functions as an independent body under MoEF&CC |
| Forest and Wildlife Departments of project states | The project is anchored in the Forest and Wildlife Departments of project states which are responsible for implementing all national programs at the field level and undertake all forest and wildlife conservation and management activities. |
| District Administration (DA) including various line departments, KVKs, etc. | District administration is a critical link between the local level institutions and State and National level bodies/ Departments/Ministries for implementation of Projects. It also has the best understanding of local landscapes, socio-economic environment and issues. |

| Stakeholder group | Role in project implementation |
|---|---|
|  | One of the most important key partners to facilitate coordination at district and landscape levels for ensuring convergence of programs and resources, DA is also represented in all project management related committees. |
| NBA, SBBs & BMCs | As per BDA 2002, the NBA represents as a National Level statutory Institution to facilitate regulatory and advisory functions for the Government of India on issues of conservation, sustainable use of biological resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of biological resources. Similar role is played by SBBs and BMCs at the state and Panchayat levels |
| National/State Medicinal Plant Boards | Deal with MAPs which are an important natural resource in all the Project Landscapes for addressing livelihood concerns through value addition-based enterprises |
| Major NGOs across Ladakh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, like, Save Changthang, Lena Ladakh, Mantara Himalaya, All Ladakh Tour Operator Association; Kanchendongza; Conservation Committee, Sikkim; Gangotri Secure Bahuudeshiya Swayatt Sahkartita Cooperative Society (promoting Budera Himalayan Crafts, Uttarakhand); SELF-HELP Society for Eradication of Living Fragmentation, Holistic Healing and Enhancement of Livelihoods, etc. WWF | NGOs/CBOs are one of the most important knowledge and capacity building partners. Their experience in planning, policy matters, execution, monitoring and evaluation has been used to initiate and implement activities and training in the field and facilitate cross-pollination of experiences from other areas. These have been engaged for both short and long term for specialized services for the project, especially related with communication and advocacy programs and participatory workshops. |
| National & State level R&D Institutions, like, WII, FRLHT (now TDU) | WII had been involved in designing and implementing participatory models for effective biodiversity conservation policy review, research, mapping, consultations and has been a key knowledge partner for communication for the project. FRLHT has participated in research and other organizations have contributed as key members in expert committees. |
| Local communities (including women and youth in Ladakh Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh include Agro- pastoralists, horticulturists, medicinal plant collectors, Village communities within/around National Parks, practicing animal husbandry, tourism | These communities and community-based organizations have been primary users of the landscape and key target group for all components of the project. Their intense involvement in activities, workshops, consultations, as recipients of capacity building in different aspects (data collection, mapping, pastureland management, vegetable improvements, eco-tourism, etc.), information collection and monitoring, strengthening of village level institutions, etc. have been central in meeting the objectives of the project. They play a vital role in planning and implementation of pastureland management and traditional knowledge, adoption |

| Stakeholder group | Role in project implementation |
|---|---|
| and handicraft activities, SHGs (involved in awareness, tourism, Value addition of local resources, etc.), members of SBBs, JFMCs, Van Panchayats, etc. | of new techniques and practices for improved livelihood, prevention of illegal wildlife trade, conservation, value addition on agro-produce and tourism. |
| IUCN | IUCN is one of the biggest NGO working in the field of conservation of wild flora and fauna. It has come up with the categories of protected area systems and has developed mechanisms in ranking species in difference categories as per their conservation status globally. |

## 4. Findings

### A. Project Design/Formulation

- **Analysis of Results Framework***

As already mentioned in para e above, the terminal evaluation of the SECURE Himalaya project found critical gaps in the ToC included in the project document (table 4), which lacked essential details on causal factors, barriers and mechanisms to address them, community involvement, and solutions for conservation challenges. The original ToC primarily listed indicators linked to project outcomes but failed to address specific challenges and solutions. A revised ToC (Annexure 9) was developed using a Problem and Solutions Tree approach, which better articulated the project's complexities by identifying root causes, such as environmental fragility, and proposing interventions like livelihood security, skill development, and wildlife crime reduction. This approach outlined immediate, mid-term and long-term expectations and outcomes with respect to mainstreaming conservation of keystone species through landscape approach and promotion of sustainable livelihood practices in predominantly natural resource dependent communities, including women, besides highlighting the importance of capacity building for tackling HWC and IWT cases, and information dissemination and replication of success stories. Further, the assumptions and risks identification to long-term outcomes, assumptions, and risks, providing a clearer roadmap for achieving project sustainability and enhancing evaluation insights.

The project results framework has been assessed against "SMART" (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) criteria during Terminal Evaluation. It has been found that, by and large, all the slated targets have been met at the end-of-project. At the Terminal Evaluation, the 'SMART' criteria have been revised beyond the assessment made during the midterm review of the project's results framework. All three indicators at the 'Objective level' are now 'SMART', as is the 'biological indicator'. Outcome wise analysis is mentioned in Part C of findings.

- **Assumptions and Risks**

The project effectively identified and addressed six key risks that could impact end-of-project targets, aligning them with objectives and activities across its four outcomes (Annexures 10). These risks were well-articulated, reflecting the unique challenges of the high-altitude Himalayan region's terrain, vulnerabilities, and socio-economic dynamics. Key risks included potential impacts from natural disasters on restoration, limited government and community capacity, and insufficient livelihood benefits that might hinder community adoption of sustainable practices. These assumptions informed

logical and robust mitigation activities, resulting in successful outcomes in protecting globally significant wildlife, including the endangered snow leopard, and enhancing local sustainable livelihoods and socio-economic benefits.

For Outcome 1, the project anticipated risks related to conflicts over grazing land access, administrative changes affecting management continuity, limited alternative livelihoods, and slow grazing recovery, which could affect pastoralist participation. Given the challenging terrain and community dynamics, these risks were well-integrated into project design, with strategies to strengthen conservation efforts, ecosystem management, and community engagement. The end-of-project results reflect successful mitigation and strengthened local conservation efforts.

In Outcome 2, the project identified risks for sustainable livelihood strategies, including inter-departmental conflicts, policy shifts, and natural disasters affecting resource use, market linkages, and alpine resource management. Challenges such as low production volumes, high infrastructure costs, and funding constraints were anticipated, demonstrating a strong understanding of the region's limitations. Effective mitigation strategies strengthened sustainable livelihoods, market linkages, and community capacities, alleviating ecosystem pressure and enhancing community resilience.

For Outcome 3, the project addressed wildlife crime reduction risks, including maintaining surveillance interest in remote areas, resource allocation for the Ministry of Defence, and secure access for wildlife research. Mitigation measures, including capacity-building, secure data protocols, and inter-agency cooperation, effectively managed these risks, achieving wildlife crime reduction goals.

In Outcome 4, political risks from resource users potentially affecting conservation priorities and M&E findings were identified. The project mitigated these by fostering inter-agency collaboration, involving local communities, and aligning conservation with national and international priorities, successfully incorporating M&E insights into broader conservation frameworks.

- Lessons from other relevant project incorporated into project design

The project design incorporates valuable lessons from several relevant initiatives to enhance its effectiveness. Key projects that informed its design include the **UNDP-GEF India High Range Landscape Project** in the Western Ghats, which emphasizes a multiple-use management framework. This framework's collaborative governance approach to land use planning was integrated into the current project to address conflicting land-use demands within snow leopard habitats, alongside tools for biodiversity integration into production sector practices.

The project also benefited from the **World Bank-GEF Integrated Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Services Improvement Project**, which built capacity in government agencies to integrate biodiversity conservation into development policies. Proven models for sustainable forest management and biodiversity-linked livelihoods were adapted for the high-altitude landscapes of the snow leopard habitats.

Insights were drawn from the **GEF, Government of India, and UNDP project, "Mainstreaming Conservation and Sustainable Use of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants in Three Indian States"** (Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh), emphasizing community involvement in medicinal plant inventory and monitoring. This project laid the groundwork for incorporating in-situ conservation techniques and traditional knowledge into sustainable management practices for medicinal plants in the Himalayas.

In addition, the **Biodiversity Conservation through Community-Based Natural Resource Management** project contributed strategies for strengthening community capacities in resource management, including ecotourism, community-conserved areas, and enrichment plantations on degraded forest lands with high-value medicinal plants, supporting both conservation and sustainable economic benefits.

- Planned stakeholder participation

During the project design phase, an inclusive and participatory approach was adopted to integrate the perspectives of all relevant stakeholders—those directly impacted by project decisions, those able to influence outcomes, and those contributing resources and expertise. This approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder needs and expectations. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan, detailed in the Project Document as the Stakeholder Involvement Plan, established a structured framework for engagement, including the Project Inception Workshop, a stakeholder participation and communication strategy, quarterly meetings with key stakeholders (including local communities via CBOs, interest groups, village organizations, pastoralists, landscape-level organizations), progress report sharing, and participatory processes that engaged local communities, particularly vulnerable and marginalized members.

The project also included contractual agreements with private organizations, stakeholder consultations, and a grievance redress mechanism to facilitate open dialogue, gather insights, and foster active collaboration. Before project approval, partnership agreements were carefully negotiated to clarify roles and responsibilities, aligning objectives and establishing a foundation for effective collaboration.

To further engage local communities, the project collaborated with village-level institutions, including Biodiversity Management Committees, Van Panchayats, and Wildlife Thopas, ensuring inclusive and gender-balanced participation across all project landscapes.

- Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector

The project design is rooted in the Bishkek Declaration, 2013 and builds on key conservation initiatives like GSLEP and the GEF Global Project, adopting a holistic, cross-sectoral, and community-led approach to snow leopard conservation.
It has aligned with major government programs such as Project Snow Leopard, NSLEP, and the National Mission for a Green India, while fostering collaboration with ministries like Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Tourism, and Textiles, as well as research institutions and Non-profits. The project has strengthened interagency coordination and supported the establishment of a cyber unit for combatting internet-linked wildlife crime and illegal trade. It also promoted community empowerment, and contributed valuable data to government programs, ensuring long-term sustainability and replicability.

- Gender responsiveness of project design*

The present project has effectively addressed gender equality and women's empowerment. An analysis of gender issues on various parameters, like biodiversity conservation, fodder and fuel management, water, food preparation, work on farm land and post harvesting activities, non- farm handloom weaving activities, child care and animal care was undertaken. A gender analysis was developed for the project during the Project Preparation Phase (PPP) . The TE assessed key considerations related to the integration of gender issues into the project design and development as below:

| Key considerations | TE assessment |
|---|---|
| **Integration of gender considerations in the project design for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, and development of Gender Action Plan with a specific implementation plan, for the delivery of gender activities.** | Recognizing the significant role of women in rural mountain communities and their dependence on natural resources, the project prioritized gender from inception. A Gender Action Plan in the Project Document outlined men's and women's roles and identified six gender-responsive interventions (e.g., fodder banks, LPG stoves, specialized equipment for harvesting, handloom technology, ecotourism, and grassland rejuvenation with solar water lifting). The 'Strategy and Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming' proposed activities like strengthening SHGs, technical training, capacity-building, and M&E with gender-sensitive indicators. Although budget, timeframe, and responsible agency details were initially missing in the Project Document, these were later specified, and actions were appropriately undertaken. |
| **Project alignment with national policies and strategies on gender equality** | Gender equality is a core principle enshrined in the Indian Constitution, which ensures equal rights for women in education and employment and mandates affirmative action to support women's empowerment. This project aligns with the Government of India's "Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK)" initiative, which focuses on empowering rural women through skill development and employment opportunities. |
| **Integration of gender issues in project strategy, rationale and theory of change, including how advancing gender equality and women's empowerment will advance the project's environmental outcomes. Identification of gaps, if any, in integrating or addressing gender issues in these areas.** | The project's strategy follows a landscape approach to resource governance, emphasizing community-driven, bottom-up planning to reflect local priorities. Gender mainstreaming is integral, particularly under Component 4, which promotes gender-responsive conservation practices. Specific gender-oriented indicators (1.3.2, 2.2, 3.1) and gender-responsive indicators (2.3, 4.3) support monitoring and evaluation efforts. Recognizing women as primary resource users and holders of traditional knowledge, the project aims to involve them in decision-making, aligning with national laws to enhance conservation success and ecosystem protection. Gender considerations are also embedded within the Theory of Change, with challenges detailed in the Problem Tree and outcomes projected in the Solutions Tree, addressing both immediate and longer-term impacts. No significant gaps were found in integrating gender issues. |
| **Gender expertise (external consultant and/or internal UNDP capacity) used in the design and development of the project, if any, and its adequacy. Identification of any gaps in gender expertise.** | TE team was informed during meeting with UNDP CO that UNDP India Country Office had engaged external independent consultants and subject matter specialists to integrate gender considerations into the project's design during the Project Preparation Grant (PPG) phase. Accordingly, to ensure that the project activities would inclusively benefit both men and women, particularly among local and indigenous communities in the high Himalayan mountain landscapes, a gender-sensitive approach was applied by the Consultant. |

The TE team observed that the well-defined Gender Action Plan has effectively fostered attitudinal shifts, such as increased acceptance of men's participation in unpaid household tasks while women engage in income-generating activities. It has also helped dismantle structural barriers to gender participation in project activities and strengthened acceptance of women's leadership roles in decision-making bodies like BMCs and SHGs. Details have been discussed later in this Report.
**The initiative is rated as 'S' (5).**

### B. Project Implementation

- #### Adaptive management

Adaptive planning and implementation strategies have been successfully adopted in several instances since the mid-term evaluation. These measures helped streamline the implementation process and improve the indicators, making them SMART by adjusting baseline values or even exceeding end-term targets. This reflects a positive response through adaptive planning to some of the key recommendations from the MTR. TE comments on the MTR recommendations is provided in Annexure 11.

- **Financial Disbursement Delays**
  - o Financial disbursement delays initially hindered the project due to changes in the fund transfer process between the State Forest Department and the Government treasury during its launch in 2017-2018. These delays were further compounded by the establishment of the Union Territory of Ladakh in 2019.
  - o To address these issues, the MoEF&CC and the respective States/UTs adapted to new financial modalities, resulting in more consistent fund utilization. In 2021, the Ministry of Finance and MoEF&CC introduced the Single Nodal Agency system at the State level, streamlining the process by eliminating the need for States to seek re-validation of unspent funds at the end of each fiscal year.
- **UNDP Country Office Support**
  - o UNDP Country Office support was critical to the project's success, particularly in ensuring the delivery of goods and services to remote and hard-to-reach areas. This support included deploying human resources to project management units, which significantly aided States and Union Territories in carrying out project activities efficiently.
- **Rationalization and Utilization of Funds**
  - o The MoEF&CC directed States/UTs and UNDP to streamline their funding requirements in annual work plans and assess the need for additional resources. This approach aimed to consolidate activities and accelerate fund utilization, ensuring timely completion of ongoing projects, particularly as the project entered its final implementation year (2023-24).
  - o The Ministry also facilitated discussions on a sustainability strategy and exit plan for project interventions, securing agreements at both National and State/UT levels. This strategy document is intended to assist state governments in continuing successful practices post-project completion.

By implementing these adaptive measures, the MoEF&CC and UNDP ensured the successful execution of the SECURE Himalaya project. This approach effectively overcame financial, logistical, and operational challenges while steadily advancing both conservation and development goals.

- #### Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangement

The project successfully established strategic partnerships with government agencies, local communities, private sector entities, and international organisations, enabling a multi-faceted approach to conservation and socio-economic development. Collaborations with entities like Sutlej Jal Vidyut Pariyojna and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) supported solid waste management and promoted Himalayan crafts while leveraging CSR funds and an Innovation Fund strengthened conservation efforts. Engagement with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEF&CC) facilitated coordination across central and state departments, NGOs, and local organizations, ensuring effective implementation and policy alignment. Community engagement, including environmental awareness initiatives, participatory discussions, and media campaigns, fostered strong local ownership and commitment, particularly among women, many of whom gained financial independence for the first time. Stakeholder interactions evolved positively through adaptive strategies, overcoming initial challenges and enhancing collaboration. The gender action plan was integral to the project's success, ensuring inclusivity and gender-responsive actions that empowered women and integrated their perspectives in decision-making. Gender-focused strategies, such as inclusive workshops and participatory discussions, promoted meaningful engagement from both men and women, particularly in resource management and community development. By systematically incorporating diverse stakeholder groups, including women's groups, the project ensured broad-based involvement, contributing to its sustainability and long-term success.

- • Project finance and co-finance

Co-financing

| Co-financing (type/source) | UNDP (US$m) | | Government (US $ m) | | Partner Agency (State / UT Forest Department) (US $ m) | | Total (US $ m) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Planned | Actual | Planned | Actual | Planned | Actual | Planned | Actual |
| Grants | | | 21.81 | 21.82 | 38,000,000 | 33,751,058 | | |
| In-kind Support | | | | | | | | |
| Others | | | | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | | | | |

Confirmed Sources of Co-Financing at TE Stage

| Source of Co-Financing | Name of Co-Financing | Type of Co-Financing | Investment Mobilized | Amount (US$) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Select one<br>• Recipient Country Govt. | | Select one<br>• Grant<br>• In kind<br>• Other | • Investment mobilized | |
| MoEF&CC | Co-financing through Centrally Sponsored Scheme - Development of Wildlife Habitat | Grant | | 21,820,000 |

| | Scheme of the Government of India | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| State Forest Department of Uttarakhand | Centrally Sponsored Schemes | Grant | | 11,694,908.23 |
| State Forest Department of Himachal Pradesh | Centrally Sponsored Schemes | Grant | | 13,611,520.51 |
| State Forest Department of Sikkim | Centrally Sponsored Schemes | Grant | | 6,975,506.02 |
| Wildlife Department, UT of Ladakh | Centrally Sponsored Schemes | Grant | | 1,469,123.36 |
| Total Co-Financing | | | | 55,571,058.12 |

- **M&E: design at entry\*, implementation\* and overall assessment of M&E\***

### Design at Entry

The M&E design at entry was well-conceived, practical, and sufficiently articulated to monitor results and track progress toward achieving objectives. M&E was undertaken in compliance with UNDP requirements as outlined in the UNDP POPP and UNDP Evaluation Policy. The UNDP Country Office worked with the relevant project stakeholders to ensure UNDP M&E requirements were met in a timely fashion and to high-quality standards. Additional mandatory GEF-specific M&E requirements were undertaken in accordance with the GEF M&E policy and other relevant GEF policies. The project results, as outlined in the project results framework, were designed to be monitored annually and evaluated periodically during project implementation to ensure the project effectively achieved these results. The M&E plan facilitated learning and ensured that knowledge was shared and widely disseminated to support the scaling up and replication of project results using Outcome Four: Knowledge Management.

Based on the Project Inception Report, the exact roles of project target groups and other stakeholders in project M&E activities, including the GEF Operational Focal Point and national/regional institutes, were assigned to undertake project monitoring. The GEF Operational Focal Point was mandated to ensure consistency in the approach taken to the GEF-specific M&E requirements (notably the GEF Tracking Tools) across all GEF-financed projects in the country.

The M&E plan included well-articulated baseline conditions, SMART indicators, methodology, data analysis systems, logistics, time frames, and roles and responsibilities, as well as evaluation studies at specific times to assess results. The project results framework has been assessed against SMART criteria. It has been noted that by and large, all the slated targets have been met at the end-of-project. At the Terminal Evaluation, the 'SMART' criteria have been revised beyond the assessment made during the midterm review of the project's results framework. All three indicators at the 'Objective level' are now 'SMART', as is the 'biological indicator'.

### Implementation

The project's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan is inclusive, innovative, and participatory, executed through a multi-sectoral framework involving stakeholders at all levels, from the National Project Board to Landscape Level Planning and Management Committees (LLPMCs).

The M&E design provided a clear roadmap for implementation, aligning with the project's overarching goals and emphasizing transparency, accountability, and adaptability.

**Observations of the M&E Framework and Responsibilities:**

- **National-Level Coordination**
  - **National Project Steering Committee (NPSC):** Provided strategic direction and oversight for M&E activities, ensuring alignment with project objectives.
  - **National Technical Committee (NTC):** Offered technical support to ensure the timely achievement of project outcomes.
  - **UNDP Country Office:** Played a vital role in stakeholder coordination, conducted monthly reviews, risk screenings, and quality assurance, and facilitated knowledge exchange with the MoEF&CC and State Governments.
- **State-Level Coordination**
  - **State Project Steering Committees (SPSC):** Provided policy guidance, approved annual work plans, monitored progress, promoted co-financing, and collaborated with state-level departments.
  - **State Technical Committees:** Comprised of technical institutions and experts, they guided sustainable livelihoods and conservation efforts.
- **Local-Level Implementation**
  - **Landscape Level Planning and Management Committees (LLPMCs):** Ensured participatory planning and decision-making, involving district administrations, forest departments, community representatives, and NGOs.
- **M&E Budget and Alignment**: During the inception workshop, stakeholders reviewed the results framework, finalized the M&E budget, clarified roles, and responsibilities, and set the first-year work plan. The allocated budget was adequate to meet the project's monitoring needs, with adjustments made to address challenges.
- **M&E competencies and capabilities of the project team**: The project team strong competencies, evident in the high-quality reports and documents produced, including the Project Implementation Reports (PIRs). The Project Manager was responsible for overseeing daily operations, monitoring progress, managing risks, and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting, including timely communication of any delays to relevant stakeholders.
- **Audit and Compliance**: Audits followed UNDP's Financial Regulations and Rules, ensuring compliance with applicable policies.

The table in Annexure 21 provides a comprehensive status of M&E activities, showcasing progress and identifying areas for improvement.

*Shortcomings:*

Despite the robust framework, the following challenges were noted:

- Delays in convening meetings for the Project Steering Committee and Technical Committee.
- Administrative delays following the bifurcation of Ladakh, requiring a new Project Steering Committee.
- Delays in finalizing a consolidated project-level Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) by integrating landscape-level inputs.
- Recruitment delays for the National Project Manager to lead and coordinate efforts.
- Non-availability of baseline demographic data.

*Overall Assessment*

Despite the noted challenges, the M&E framework was effective in tracking progress and facilitating adaptive management. Rated as ***satisfactory* (5)**, it demonstrated strong relevance, timeliness, and

impact during both design and implementation. This is based on the project's overachievement of outcomes, effective gender empowerment, and timely delivery of objectives. The overall M&E quality rating considers both the design at entry and the implementation phase, with the project's robust results outweighing the operational shortcomings.

| Monitoring & Evaluation | Rating |
|---|---|
| **M&E design at entry** | **5** |
| **M&E Plan Implementation** | **5** |
| **Overall Quality of M&E** | **5** |

- UNDP implementation/oversight*, IP execution*, and overall assessment of implementation/oversight and execution*

**UNDP implementation/oversight**

The UNDP Country Office provided extensive support throughout the project lifecycle, ensuring timely and effective coordination with the Implementing Partner and stakeholders to facilitate smooth project identification, concept preparation, and approval. The CO organized regular National Project Steering Committee meetings, co-chaired by the CO, and conducted monthly delivery reviews and oversight meetings. They also coordinated and participated in annual supervision missions, technical advisory services, and PIR reporting, covering progress from 2019 to 2024.

UNDP supported the Implementing Partner and Project Team with essential goods and services, particularly in remote areas, while strengthening capacities through training and knowledge exchange programs with the Bangkok Regional Hub's assistance. The CO's coordination with the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and State Governments further accelerated project progress. Additionally, they collaborated with the MoEFCC and state governments to develop a sustainability strategy for long-term project success, establishing a joint National Project Management Unit (NPMU) with MoEFCC and partnering with State Project Management Units (SPMUs) and related state forest departments.

The CO demonstrated realism and transparency in annual reporting, reflected in the six Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports (2019–2024) that documented the project's progress. Input from key project partners, including the UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor, provided feedback and strategic support, ensuring an accurate reflection of project performance.

UNDP conducted monthly delivery reviews and risk screenings to effectively manage project risks, track progress toward quarterly and annual milestones, identify potential risks, and establish mitigation strategies. The Programme Support Unit supported risk management by monitoring and reporting on project results.

The CO's proactive approach included establishing regular consultations with stakeholders to address issues promptly. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the CO maintained close coordination with the Implementing Partner and stakeholders, enabling effective project management continuity. They facilitated periodic reporting and quality assurance to monitor project performance and implemented mitigation plans as needed.

Overall, UNDP has played a proactive role in project oversight, risk management, and in providing effective and timely support to the Implementing Partner and project team, ensuring the project's success.

**Implementing Partner execution**

The project's governance operated at two levels: the National Project Management (via the Project Board and National Steering Committee) and the State and Landscape Project Management. The Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) served as the primary executing agency, adhering to the National Implementation Modality (NIM) and working closely with UNDP, which provided resources and oversight for staffing, procurement, and financial services.

At the national level, a Project Management Unit (PMU) within MoEF&CC oversaw coordination and ensured stakeholder involvement and state-level ownership. The National Steering Committee, co-chaired by MoEF&CC and UNDP, provided high-level oversight and conducted regular reviews of progress, while the National Project Director (NPD) facilitated smooth operations with support from UNDP. The National Project Manager handled day-to-day execution, including progress monitoring and reporting.

At the state level, State Steering Committees, led by senior officials, guided policy decisions and supported local participation. State-level Planning and Implementation Teams, managed by senior wildlife officers, coordinated activities aligned with microplanning and Annual Plans of Operations (APOs). Local institutions such as Gram Sabhas, Van Panchayats, Joint Forest Management Committees, and Women's Self-Help Groups ensured grassroots participation. Village Conservation and Development Committees (VCDCs) managed APOs, focusing on sustainable development through initiatives like fodder banks and water harvesting, supported by transparent fund management.

The project emphasized risk management through regular reviews and screenings, with UNDP ensuring adherence to its Social and Environmental Standards (SES). Participatory Livelihood Management Plans (PLMPs) were developed with communities to promote sustainable resource use and eco-restoration.

Key stakeholders—including Forest Departments from Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, and Ladakh; NGOs; research institutions; and state development departments—played critical roles in wildlife conservation, policy development, and livelihood generation. This collaborative approach ensured effective implementation and alignment with environmental, social, and financial objectives, leaving a strong foundation for future initiatives.

| UNDP implementation/oversight & Implementation Partner Execution | Rating |
|---|---|
| Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight | 6 |
| Quality of Implementing Partner Execution | 6 |
| Overall quality of implementation/Oversight and Execution | 6 |

- Risk management

Risk monitoring for the project was conducted primarily through the Atlas Risk Register, following UNDP's "Guiding Note on Managing Risks Across UNDP Programming and Operations" (2019). The UNDP Nature, Climate, and Energy (NCE) team supplemented this by utilizing the newly implemented NCE Risk Dashboard, allowing for enhanced risk tracking. Notably, there were no escalations of risks reported throughout the project's implementation period.

The project's risk management approach was proactive and adaptive, with regular updates to the Atlas risk register to address new and emerging challenges. Key risks included those arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, extreme weather events, the bifurcation of Jammu & Kashmir resulting in the formation of the Union Territory of Ladakh, and delays in financial disbursements due to changes in fund transfer modalities. Newly identified risks were effectively managed as they emerged. For instance, the economic impacts of COVID-19 led to a reduction in budget allocations across various

ministries, including the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), causing temporary delays in project activities due to resource constraints. Additionally, the creation of the Union Territory of Ladakh in 2019 introduced complexities in fund distribution, impacting project timelines, and further delays were caused by shifts in government fund flow protocols affecting transfers to state forest departments.

In response to these challenges, project teams at both national and state levels engaged closely with the Ministry and State finance departments to expedite fund transfers and minimize disruptions. Through these collaborative efforts, the teams were able to maintain project momentum and ensure continuity of critical conservation and livelihood activities. Regular updates on new risks, adjustments, and any necessary escalations were communicated to the Project Board by the UNDP Country Office, facilitating transparency and enabling timely, responsive adaptations to the evolving project environment.

- **Social and Environmental Safeguards SES**

The SECURE Himalaya project has effectively incorporated social and environmental safeguards by embedding environmental protection and community well-being into its mission. By balancing biodiversity conservation with socio-economic development, the project has enhanced local livelihoods and community resilience, making local communities both active partners and beneficiaries. Key safeguard implementation measures adopted in the project include:

- **Community Engagement and Participation**: The project provided training to community members, including women and marginalized groups (such as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who face social, cultural, economic, and sometimes political exclusion), equipping them with skills in sustainable resource management, biodiversity conservation, and alternative livelihoods. Through the creation of Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) and participatory landscape management plans, local communities were actively involved in planning and decision-making, ensuring their knowledge and needs are central to conservation strategies.
- **Livelihood Support and Socio-Economic Benefits**: The project established fair benefit-sharing mechanisms aligned with the Nagoya Protocol, promoting sustainable livelihoods through initiatives like ecotourism, organic farming, and value-added biodiversity products. This approach reduced dependence on forest resources while expanding income opportunities for local communities.
- **Cultural Heritage and Indigenous Knowledge**: Awareness campaigns highlighted biodiversity and the value of traditional knowledge, with conservation activities integrating indigenous practices, thus preserving cultural heritage alongside environmental stewardship.
- **Environmental Impact Management**: The project conducted ongoing monitoring of environmental and social parameters to ensure effective safeguards and address emerging issues swiftly. An independent METT assessment showed significant improvements in protected area management, stakeholder engagement, resource allocation, and community participation.
- **Conflict Resolution and Grievance Mechanisms**: The project promoted dialogue among stakeholders to address conflicts around resource use and conservation, also establishing accessible grievance redress mechanisms to handle concerns related to project activities.
- **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion**: Strategies to promote gender equality involved supporting women's participation in decision-making bodies and livelihood initiatives. Marginalized groups, including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and the landless, were intentionally included in project activities to ensure they benefit from conservation and development interventions.

The TE team assessed environmental and social risks, as identified in the project's Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP), which outlined seven SES risks rated from low to moderate, with management measures in place. The Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) revealed that no additional social or environmental risks were identified or escalated beyond those initially noted in the project document. Further details of this assessment are provided in the Annexure 12.

- Gender equality and women's empowerment*

According to discussions with SPMUs and APR data, gender considerations were meaningfully integrated into Annual Work Plans, with dedicated resources supporting awareness, capacity building, leadership, and income-generating activities for women. To facilitate effective communication and promote women's involvement, landscape-level fairs and festivals, celebration of specific days, street theatre, and workshops were organized across landscapes, with active participation encouraged from school and college students. Records show that 3,176 individuals, 49% of whom (1,556 individuals) were women, participated actively in these activities. Additionally, men and women from 638 households (gender-wise breakdown not specified), as well as visitors to interpretation centres and other bystanders, attended outreach programs, although these numbers are not included in the reporting.

Gender inclusivity was promoted through the following implementation strategies:

- **Women's Participation in Decision-Making**: The project encouraged and enabled women to actively participate in rural appraisals to develop village-level micro-plans, joining key decision-making bodies such as EDCs, JFMCs, SHGs, and BMCs. Notably, an all-women BMC was established in Ladakh, reinforcing women's leadership in conservation.
- **Valuing Ecosystem Services and Traditional Knowledge**: Awareness initiatives highlighted the importance of ecosystems and traditional bio-resources (for food, medicine, etc.) in women's lives, instilling pride in cultural heritage and fostering ownership. This was exemplified by the Kangla basket initiative, which allowed women to lead sustainable processing of sea-buckthorn, recognized nationally by the PMO under the 'One District One Product (ODOP)' program.
- **Science and Technology (S&T) Innovations for Reducing Drudgery**: The project introduced S&T-based interventions, including mechanized tools for sea-buckthorn and nettle fibre processing, hazelnut shell cracking, and fuel-efficient cookstoves. These innovations reduced physical labour, freeing women's time for income-generating activities like managing homestays, establishing wool value chains, and promoting handloom handicrafts.
- **Gender-Sensitive Awareness and Skill Development**: Targeted strategies were implemented to raise awareness of gender equality, promoting the acceptance of women's roles in traditionally male-dominated areas like mountaineering, para-taxonomy, and wildlife conservation among others. This shift also led men to participate in tasks traditionally handled by women, such as wool carding and unpaid home care, fostering shared responsibilities.

These combined efforts not only empowered women economically but also broadened their roles in sustainable development. Recognition of their work at events like the 'National Geographical Indication Fair - 2022' boosted morale and underscored the project's success in mainstreaming gender sensitivity into conservation and livelihood activities. Further details of this analysis done by the TE team are provided in Annexure 13.

Based on the number and diversity of initiatives undertaken to promote gender equality and mainstreaming in a remote and challenging landscape, the successful implementation of actions

proposed in the Gender Action Plan (GAP) has resulted in significant attitudinal changes. While all interventions were implemented, solar water lifting was not substantiated. However, additional initiatives were introduced, such as Sea-buckthorn processing by a 51-member women SHG in HP, a cookie-making enterprise with 35 women, apple processing in UK with 25 women, and training 20 women as para-taxonomists in HP and 15 women as mountaineering guides in UK. Men have increasingly accepted gender equality, while women have gained a stronger sense of self-worth and confidence,  the TE Team rates the effort undertaken for **Gender Equality at HS (6).**

C.   Project Results and Impacts
   - Progress towards objective and expected outcomes

The project's end results have not only been fully achieved but, in many cases, even exceeded expectations. Each outcome is ranked as **Highly Satisfactory** for several compelling reasons discussed in the following paragraphs. The achievements relative to the end targets underscore not only the successful attainment of quantified goals but also the empowerment of local communities. Through effective natural resource management—including wildlife conservation—these communities have taken charge of their own development, navigating their unique geographical challenges. This remarkable progress highlights the sustainability of efforts and the lasting impact of the project on the communities and ecosystems it serves. Additionally, the project has been executed with remarkable efficiency, characterized by effective monitoring and evaluation processes that ensured the timely completion of tasks and enduring benefits for the communities and ecosystems involved over the long term. A detailed version of this is provided in Annexure 6.

| Project Objective: To promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secure the conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats, ensure sustainable livelihoods and community socio-economic benefits. | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Indicator** | **End Target** | **Achievement** |
| Mandatory Indicator 1.3.1 Area of sustainable management solutions at sub-national for conservation of snow leopard, wild prey and associated species and habitats, sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem services | At least 1,600,000 hectares effectively managed through participatory approaches | During the TE assessment, a mandatory indicator initially deemed "questionable of achievability" under the SMART criteria at the MTR was not only achieved but overachieved. The project exceeded its target by managing 3,425,451 hectares through participatory approaches—114.1% above the goal of 1,600,000 hectares. This success involved coordinated efforts among government agencies, research institutions, and civil society, supported by national and state-level steering and inter-departmental committees across three states and one Union Territory. The collaboration enabled joint resource allocation and conservation efforts for snow leopards, habitat protection, and sustainable livelihoods in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and Ladakh. Key achievements included generating crucial biodiversity data and introducing sustainable practices like rotational grazing, native species planting, and community fodder banks, significantly contributing to habitat restoration and local livelihoods. |

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|---|---|---|
| Mandatory Indicator 1.3.2 Number of additional people benefiting from strengthened livelihoods through solutions for management of natural resources and ecosystem services | At least 2,500 households directly benefit through improved livelihoods and incomes (50% of the beneficiaries would be women) | The MTR had initially flagged the target of benefiting 2,502 households across Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Sikkim as overly ambitious. However, the project met and directly impacted these households by enhancing livelihoods, with 50.5% of beneficiaries being female. Breakdown: <br>• Uttarakhand: 1,000 households (Male: 65%, Female: 35%) <br>• Himachal Pradesh: 769 households (Male: 32%, Female: 68%) <br>• Ladakh: 206 households (Male: 34%, Female: 66%) <br>• Sikkim: 527 households (Male: 67%, Female: 33%) <br>The project promoted sustainable livelihoods through local institutions like SHGs and cooperatives, underpinned by a sustainability strategy and exit plan. State Project Steering Committees ensured effective policy decisions, co-financing, and integration with other entities. <br>This comprehensive approach has bolstered economic resilience, environmental stewardship, and the preservation of traditional knowledge, establishing a robust foundation for sustained benefits across project landscapes. |
| Mandatory indicator 2.5.1 Extent to which Institutional frameworks are in place for conservation, sustainable use, access and benefit sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems and improved livelihoods | All four multiple use landscapes have official multi-stakeholder, multi-sector coordination and governance mechanisms that facilitate convergence of planning, manpower and financial resources for conservation, sustainable use and improved livelihood benefits. | The project successfully established institutions to promote conservation, sustainable resource use, and improved livelihoods. By the last cycle, all targets were achieved. Inter-departmental coordination committees were formed at both state and landscape levels, facilitating policy decisions, progress reviews, and co-financing. <br><br>At the national level, the reconstituted National Project Snow Leopard (PSL) Steering Committee institutionalized project practices, identifying landscapes, preparing management plans, and securing funding under CSS-IDWH. The committee also supported community-based conservation and scientific monitoring. Additionally, 65 Biodiversity Management Committees were set up to conserve local biodiversity and encourage sustainable resource use. |
| Biological Indicator: Status of snow leopard populations in four project states | Stable or increase snow leopard populations in the four project states | The project enabled India's first comprehensive snow leopard population survey (2021-2023) using the SPAI methodology, launched in 2019 by the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change. The survey estimated 718 snow leopards across 120,000 sq. km, confirming India as home to 10-15% of the global |

| | | population. Ladakh recorded the highest count (477), followed by Uttarakhand (124), Himachal Pradesh (51), and Sikkim (21). Rural youth trained under the project assisted scientists from WII and WWF-India in conducting assessments across five Himalayan landscapes, contributing to the species' status assessment. |
|---|---|---|
| **Outcome 1: Improved management of high Himalayan landscapes for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services** **OUTCOME 1 is ranked as Highly Satisfactory** | | |

| Indicator 1.1 Improved management effectiveness of protected areas and biological-rich areas in alpine and sub-alpine landscape | Average increase by at least 30 points in METT from current PAs baselines. | **S. No.** | **Protected Area** | **Base line** | **Mid-term** | **End-term** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | Khangchendzonga National Park | 29 | 69 | 73 |
| | | 2 | Shingba Rhododendron Wildlife Sanctuary | 16 | 60 | 74 |
| | | 3 | Seichu Tuan Wildlife Sanctuary | 13 | 60 | 70 |
| | | 4 | Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary | 22 | 61 | 67 |
| | | 5 | Govind National Park & Wildlife Sanctuary | 25 | 55 | 73 |
| | | 6 | Gangotri National Park | 35 | 64 | 79 |

The improvements are attributed to enhanced institutional and staff capacities through targeted training in ecosystem restoration, species monitoring, human-wildlife conflict mitigation, and wildlife crime prevention. Updated management plans and improved resource allocations also contributed. Community participation played a vital role, with local institutions supporting waste management, trail maintenance, and visitor fee generation. Higher METT scores reflect increased conservation awareness, capacity building for frontline staff, improved budgets, and effective conflict mitigation. Additionally, a 20-day butterfly survey in Ladakh's Changthang (August–September 2023) recorded 39 species, including one newly reported, marking progress in biodiversity management.

| Indicator 1.2: Improved institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring of multiuse landscape level plans as measured by UNDP Capacity | Increase of institutional capacity as measured by a 50% increase in UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline value | The project focused on building the capacity of stakeholders, especially local communities, to ensure full realization of benefits. The capacity development target was met, achieving a 100% increase (45/45) by the Term-end evaluation. A total of 2,069 individuals (1,764 men, 302 women) benefited from training and exposure visits, including front-line, mid-level, and senior officials, as well as members of Biodiversity Management Committees. Uttarakhand led with 944 beneficiaries (915 men, 59 women), followed by Himachal Pradesh (550 total: 497 |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Development Scorecard. | | men, 53 women), Ladakh (310 total: 226 men, 84 women), and Sikkim (228 total: 130 men, 98 women). |
| Indicator 1.3 (a): Reduced pressure and prevented degradation of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forests. | Reduced grazing pressure on 700,000 ha of alpine meadows by at least 20% (from 75 to 60 livestock units/km2) and prevented degradation in around 10,000 ha of sub-alpine forest under community-based management resulting in projected 0.46-0.50 and 0.31-0.36 m tCO2 /30 year period sequestrated and avoided respectively. | In response to the Mid-Term Review (MTR) recommendation, the end-term project target was revised to 8,000 hectares, emphasizing ecosystem quality improvement through community-managed practices. The project exceeded this target, bringing 8,013.76 hectares of alpine and sub-alpine forests under management. Key activities contributing to this achievement included Grazing and Fodder Management (HP), Value Chain Development and Waste Management (Ladakh), Biomass Stoves and Solid Waste Management (Sikkim), and Sustainable Forest Management and Alpine Restoration (Uttarakhand). |
| Indicator 1.4: Extent of degraded alpine pastures/rangelands and sub-alpine forests under sustainable management regimes | 40,000 hectares alpine pastures and 2,000 hectares sub-alpine forests under sustainable regeneration regimes resulting in projected 0.16 - 0.18 and 0.42 – 0.05 m tCO2 /30 year period sequestrated and avoided respectively | The project exceeded its target of regenerating 40,000 hectares of alpine pastures and 2,000 hectares of sub-alpine forests, reaching 75,813.74 hectares (Himachal Pradesh: 1,836.28 ha; Ladakh: 60,011 ha; Sikkim: 2,602 ha; and Uttarakhand: 11,364 ha) across four states. <br><br> • **Himachal Pradesh**: The project improved natural resource regeneration by reducing firewood use through innovative heating solutions like Himalayan Rocket Stoves in the Lahaul-Pangi landscape. It also planted Sea-buckthorn and Hazelnut over 20 hectares and implemented rotational grazing on another 20 hectares. Solar heating panels, water heaters, and cookers were installed in 35 community centers, schools, and government buildings, allowing them to function without firewood during harsh winters, further promoting sustainability. <br> • **Ladakh**: The Chumathang hot spring area (11 ha) was successfully declared a litter-free zone through collaboration with the Rural Development Department, Ladakh Pollution Control Committee, Tourism Department, and local communities. A waste management strategy was implemented, requiring tourists to carry their waste back, and waste collection services were established. The project also organized a waste segregation workshop and participated in the Himalayan Clean-Up Drive in |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | May 2023 to clean the Sindhu Ghat and Shey Fishpond areas.<br>• **Sikkim:** The ecological security of the Gurudongmar wetland has been strengthened by managing 2,567 hectares of alpine areas, promoting tourist awareness, collaborating with yak herders, and establishing community fodder banks. Native species like rhododendron and silver fir were planted over 35 hectares, enhancing soil moisture and ecosystem resilience. A sustainable management plan was implemented in Khangchendzonga National Park, focusing on soil conservation and plantations across 35.19 hectares. Additionally, a solid waste management initiative for trekking trails was expanded under the Swachh Bharat Mission to the entire Yuksam Gram Panchayat, with local panchayats managing waste through a Resource Recovery Centre.<br>• **Uttarakhand:** Through rotational grazing, 1,466.8 hectares of pasturelands in Dayara and Gidara are now sustainably managed with community support. Additionally, 11,299.46 hectares have been restored using native species nurseries and plantations, involving local women, and 8,528.94 hectares have been regenerated following Uttarakhand's Organic Farming policy. A 200-hectare Medicinal Plant Conservation Area was co-financed by the National Medicinal Plant Board. In Gangotri National Park, 140 hectares were restored by removing invasive species with community help, and 5 hectares of degraded land in Dharwas were reclaimed with native grasses and a community fodder bank. Management of 2,000 walnut saplings has restored 200 hectares, while 460 hectares of protected forest areas have been revived through assisted natural regeneration (ANR). |
| Indicator 1.5: Area of High Conservation Value Forests under improved management. | a) Reduced direct pressure on at least 60,000 ha covering at least 18 newly designated and managed key biodiversity areas, including 30,000 ha of HCVFs to ensure connectivity and species conservation | The project has surpassed its target, achieving 112.06% more than planned by improving management across 73 High Conservation Value Forests (HCVFs) totalling 127,238.32 hectares. These HCVs are managed through innovative designations such as Biodiversity Heritage Sites, Ramsar sites, and Dark Sky Reserves.<br>• **Himachal Pradesh:** Three of 17 High Conservation Value Areas (HCVAs) in Lahaul and Pangi have been designated as Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS) to reduce human impact: Sural Bhatori, Hudan Bhatori, and Naingar. Additionally, a Model Management Plan for |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | resulting in projected avoided 1.38-1.47 m tCO2 over 30-year period (b) Reduced direct pressure on at least 20,000 ha of moist and dry alpine areas and sub-alpine forests managed as Biodiversity Heritage Sites resulting in projected avoided 0.46 – 0.49 m tCO2 over 30-year period | Chandrataal Wetland (760 hectares) has been developed to sustain the wetland's ecological role, submitted to the State Wetland Authority for approval.<br>• **Ladakh:** Approximately 340 hectares near Taglang La and Wari La have been managed with community support as Medicinal Plants Conservation and Development Areas (MPCDAs) and BHSs. A seed bank for medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) supports conservation and livelihoods. Yaya Tso lake (6,692.64 hectares) was designated as a Biodiversity Heritage Site with local collaboration. The project also helped establish India's first Dark Sky Reserve in Hanle (107,300 hectares), boosting livelihoods and conserving wildlife.<br>• **Sikkim:** The project established Tunkyong Dho Lake (0.065 hectares) as Sikkim's first Biodiversity Heritage Site, proposed by the Hee-Gyathang BMC. This eco-tourism site is expected to bolster community livelihoods and fund conservation.<br>• **Uttarakhand:** A 200-hectare Medicinal Plant Conservation Area in Gangotri conserves eight medicinal species. Seven High Conservation Value Areas (2,750 hectares) have been enhanced, with 90 hectares designated as BHSs (Kandara, Kheda, and Panchachuli). These areas, managed by BMCs, host rich medicinal and flowering species such as Brahmakamal, Rhododendron, and Himalayan soorajmukhi. |

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

**OUTCOME 2 is ranked as Highly Satisfactory**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Indicator 2.1:** Extent under sustainable natural resources management practices | At least 10,000 ha under sustainable natural resources management practices | The project has achieved 13,939 hectares under sustainable management, exceeding the target by 39%, with areas managed by state as follows: Himachal Pradesh (1,627 ha), Ladakh (2,571 ha), Sikkim (80 ha), and Uttarakhand (9,481 ha).<br>This includes sustainable alpine grazing in Uttarakhand and Himachal, limiting Pashmina goats in Ladakh, and conserving local species (e.g., sea-buckthorn in HP, nettle in Sikkim, and medicinal plants in Ladakh). Key habitats, including Ramsar Sites like Tsokar and Tso Moriri (Ladakh) and Chandratal (HP), are protected, and waste management practices have been established in Puga (Ladakh), Yuksam (Sikkim), and Lahaul (HP).<br>Documents guiding this work include: |

|  |  | • Landscape Management Strategies and Plans,<br>• Sectoral Strategies,<br>• 82 village livelihood/micro plans.<br>The continued community involvement post-project highlights its sustainable impact, with potential for replication in similar high-value landscapes. |
|---|---|---|
| **Indicator 2.2 (a):** Average percentage increase in community incomes from sustainable livelihood, natural resource management and business activities (calculated for each community) | 30% increase in average incomes from sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management and business activities (At least 40% of beneficiaries are women) | The TE review of fact sheets, field visits, and discussions revealed two standout income-generating initiatives with significant financial returns across project states. The eco-tourism value chain saw a 100% income increase where supported, generating USD 60,500 in Uttarakhand, USD 6,880 in Himachal Pradesh, and USD 500 in Ladakh's first tourist season, plus additional income through related activities. The sheep and yak wool-based handloom and handicraft value chain boosted average annual income by 25%, with Ladakh showing a remarkable 3000% increase through wool processing and a 60-fold rise in Pashmina wool value. From just six sheep, sales of natural and dyed wool generated USD 2,800 after training in wool segregation and processing. The sea-buckthorn value chain in HP was also highly impactful, along with other smaller, site-specific initiatives with strong potential for replication. |
| **Indicator 2.3:** Number of community members trained, adopting community-based agricultural, agro-pastoral, natural resource management and livelihood activities. | At least 2,500 community members trained and adopting community-based sustainable resource use, agro-pastoral, agricultural and other sustainable livelihood activities and receiving detectable conservation and livelihood benefits | The target has been exceeded by 39%.<br>Overall, 3,471 community members were trained against an end-term target of 2,500, of which 49% (1,707) were women. The training focused on:<br>• Diversified, resilient, and sustainable livelihood solutions, including eco-tourism and homestay management, handicrafts and handloom, and on/off farm-based initiatives.<br>• Sustainable resource management.<br>• Improved agricultural practices.<br>A noteworthy achievement highlighted in this TER is the recognition of the Kangla Basket Initiative by the Khandoma SHG, part of the SECURE Himalaya project. The district administration of Lahaul, HP, nominated this initiative for the PM Award for Excellence in Public Administration, 2021, under the One District One Product (ODOP) category. It achieved 5th position, earning an appreciation letter from the PMO and generating an additional income of USD 3,000.<br>This indicator's outcome reflects the project's strong emphasis on gender sensitivity. The activity's success is rated as "high." |
| **Outcome 3: Enhanced enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and human-wildlife conflict**<br>**OUTCOME 3 is ranked as Highly Satisfactory** | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Indicator 3.1:** Number of community members actively volunteering in security monitoring and surveillance | 200 community members actively engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions (At least 20% women) to serve as deterrent to wildlife crime. | The project exceeded its target of engaging 200 community members in wildlife crime monitoring by 135%, training 470 community members across the four landscapes. This includes 21 Van Mitras (Friends of the Forest) in Himachal Pradesh, 20 Wildlife Thopas in Ladakh, and 30 Himal Rakshaks in Sikkim. Additionally, 331 community members in HP, 194 Sarpanches and 41 youth in Ladakh, 28 forest officials and 40 community members in Sikkim, and 76 volunteers in Uttarakhand participated. Only 3% of participants were women, falling short of the 20% target, likely due to challenging terrain and safety concerns. However, feedback from WCCB highlighted that women, where involved, excelled as crime informers.<br>The project has made strong progress in anti-poaching, wildlife surveillance, crime control, and fostering effective community partnerships for monitoring illegal wildlife trade and managing human-wildlife conflicts in remote Himalayan landscapes. |
| **Indicator 3.2:** Number of international agreements for enhancing transboundary cooperation between China, Nepal, Bhutan and India. | At least 3 transboundary agreements effective and collaborative implementation | The project successfully facilitated inter-agency coordination and transboundary cooperation to combat wildlife crime, meeting its target of three regional or bilateral agreements and addressing mid-term recommendations. Key achievements include:<br>• an MoU between UNDP-India and International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Nepal, for conservation across eight Hindu Kush Himalayan countries (and pending MoEF&CC approval for a MoU with Nepal's government);<br>• a 2024 bilateral consultation between India & Nepal chaired by SAWEN, with key enforcement agencies and IBCA representatives for real-time information exchange;<br>• IBCA establishment<br>• support for WCCB's Cyber Unit for digital forensics and social media monitoring; and<br>• support for MoEF&CC's hosting of GSLEP's 4th Steering Committee, and Council of Heads of States of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)'s 2023 Delhi Declaration naming 2024 as 'SCO Year of Environment.<br>The TE Team considers these outcomes as propelling India into a leadership role in regional wildlife crime control, rating the project as highly successful. |
| **Indicator 3.3:** Annual Number of human-wildlife conflicts leading to livestock and crop losses and | At least 50% decrease in HWCs | The project achieved its target of a 50% reduction in Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) cases. The TE Team commends the proactive and innovative measures used, including predator-proof corrals, Animal Intrusion Detection and Repellent Systems (ANIDERS), improved livestock practices, conservation education, and rotational grazing. Alternative livelihood support and |

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| retaliatory killings of wildlife | | strengthened value chains also played a significant role, along with community-based livestock insurance in high-conflict zones. While HWC is minimal in Ladakh due to military presence, METT assessments in Uttarakhand show a notable reduction in HWC cases over the project's last five years. |

**Outcome 4: Lessons learned by the project through participatory M&E, including gender mainstreaming practices, are used to fight poaching and IWT and promote community-based conservation at the national and international levels**

**OUTCOME 4 is ranked as Highly Satisfactory**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Indicator 4.1:** Number of policy and regulatory mechanisms for improved management of high Himalayan areas provisioned. | 3 policy recommendations officially approved and implemented. | The project successfully achieved its target, with four policies and strategies approved by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) and one by a state government. These include the **Protocol for Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI)**, the establishment of the **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)** Secretariat in New Delhi (offering valuable insights for similar projects across 16 IBCA member countries), a **Guidebook for Management of High-Altitude Wetlands** (endorsed by MoEF&CC's Wetland Division), and Sikkim's **Big Cats Master Plan** for long-term conservation. Additionally, a **Resource Mobilization Strategy** was developed by Himachal Pradesh, and two pilot financial solutions for snow leopard conservation were created in partnership with the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP). |
| **Indicator 4.2:** Number of project best practices used in the development and implementation of other conservation initiatives. | 10 best practices documented, disseminated and up scaled in non-project areas. | The project successfully documented and shared best practices, including four showcased at international forums (South Africa Global Wildlife Program Annual Conference, Global Wildlife Knowledge Exchange in Mombasa, International Big Cat Alliance, and two UNCCD COP 14 side events in 2019), 11 practices replicable nationwide in similar landscapes, and 16 state-specific practices. This objective has been fully achieved. |
| Indicator 4.3: Percentage of participating households aware of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits**.** | 50% of participating households have good awareness of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits. | The project successfully increased household-level awareness on conservation, sustainable resource management, and wildlife crime prevention across all states and UTs through targeted programs. Although no formal impact studies were conducted, and the indicator was flagged as questionable for specificity and measurability in the MTR, the extensive stakeholder engagement, published materials, and overachieved targets suggest the target has been met and is SMART. **National Level:** |

| | | 1. Formal awareness and training programs were conducted for 3,176 individuals across four partner states, with 1,556 women (49%) participating. This excludes public awareness from fairs and events, which were not recorded. |
|---|---|---|
| | | 2. In collaboration with the WCCB, species-specific awareness videos on Tibetan Antelope, Asiatic Black Bear, Pangolin, and Musk Deer were launched, inaugurated by the Additional Director General (Wildlife) at a regional meeting in Guwahati. |
| | | 3. BMC trainings were held on local biodiversity, conservation, sustainable use, equitable benefit sharing of bio-resources, and PBR preparation. |

- Relevance*

The project results and impacts have been deemed "Highly Satisfactory" in terms of their relevance to the main objectives of the GEF-6 Focal Area and to environmental and development priorities at local, regional, and national levels.

GEF Priorities: The project is multi-focal, aligning with three of the six GEF-6 focal areas and strategic programs, namely 1. Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy; 2. Land Degradation Strategy; and 3. Sustainable Forest Management Strategy.

UNDP Priorities: Globally, the project has been aligned with the relevant UNDP Strategic Plan outputs (2018-21- Outputs 1.3 and 2.5; 2022-25- Outputs 4.1 and 4.2).  At the national level, the project has been aligned with UNSDCF (2022-2025, Outcome 4, Outcome 5) and CPD (output 3.2) on environmental sustainability. The project supports SDG 15 (Life on Land), and several targets under SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 12, and 13, by promoting biodiversity conservation, ecosystem sustainability, and climate resilience. The SECURE Himalaya Project has achieved significant outcomes in promoting sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems at both national and sub-national levels. Through demonstrative actions, the project has influenced policy decisions on sustainable livelihoods and gender-responsive strategies, increasing the number of such policies from a baseline of four to six by project completion. It has supported key national initiatives, such as the National Mission on Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystems and the National Action Plan for Climate Change, while complementing wildlife conservation, human-wildlife conflict mitigation, and livelihood enhancement schemes.

By engaging tribal communities across four Himalayan states, the project has revitalized indigenous practices, including rotational grazing, sustainable agriculture, handloom production, and ecotourism, contributing to improved livelihood sustainability and resilience. The project mobilized communities— including the Lachenpa, Lachungpa, Lahules, Pangwals, and Changpas—in conservation roles through Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), Eco-Development Groups, and Self-Help Groups, ensuring the involvement of women and youth in resource conservation and sustainable development activities.

Aligned with India's commitments under the Bishkek Declaration, the project has supported snow leopard conservation efforts through participatory actions across six Himalayan landscapes, contributing to the National Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Priorities (NSLEP) and the Global

Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation Program (GSLEP). Collaborative efforts with UNDP/GEF's Transboundary Cooperation for Snow Leopard Conservation Project have led to shared monitoring frameworks and strengthened law enforcement against wildlife crime in partnership with Nepal and China.

In line with GEF-6's Biodiversity, Land Degradation, and Sustainable Forest Management Strategies, the project has improved management effectiveness scores across six protected areas. It has implemented rotational grazing, established fodder banks, and restored native species to sustain forest ecosystem services. These efforts have contributed to land restoration, alleviated pressures from unsustainable practices, and aided in reversing ecosystem degradation. The project's technical support for the Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI), launched in 2019, resulted in the first enumeration exercise, revealing an estimated 718 snow leopards outside protected areas across 120,000 sq. km.

The project also contributed to wildlife crime prevention by supporting the establishment of a Cyber Crime Cell at the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau and aiding the launch of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA). These efforts have strengthened India's capacity to address wildlife crime and bolster conservation efforts both domestically and in transboundary regions. Additionally, the project's involvement with the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and initiatives to protect the Central Asian Flyway, as well as the implementation of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECM), has contributed to regional cooperation through the South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN).

These collective achievements highlight the project's critical role in advancing sustainable resource management, biodiversity conservation, and community resilience across the high-altitude ecosystems of the Himalayas, in alignment with CPD Output 3.2.

The Terminal Evaluation (TE) scores the project's relevance as **6 (Highly Satisfactory).**

- Effectiveness*

The SECURE Himalaya project has demonstrated exceptional effectiveness in achieving its conservation and livelihood objectives across the Indian Himalayan landscape, meeting or exceeding its targeted outcomes in biodiversity conservation, sustainable natural resource management, and community livelihoods. The end-term evaluation (TE) rated the project as 'Highly Satisfactory' for effectiveness, highlighting the successful achievement of planned outcomes and outputs.

Key highlights of the project's effectiveness include the successful transition of indicators to SMART status from baseline and mid-term assessments, enabling improved tracking and achievement of objectives. Notably, the sustainable management of 13,939 hectares of alpine rangelands and sub-alpine forests—well above the 10,000-hectare target—demonstrates the project's significant impact on promoting sustainable land use. Additionally, community income from sustainable livelihoods has increased, benefiting 2,502 households, particularly in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and Ladakh. Women's engagement was a key focus, with over 40% participation in some regions, particularly in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Ladakh, reflecting the project's emphasis on gender inclusivity.

It has been noted that adaptive planning and implementation strategies have been successfully adopted in several instances since the mid-term review. These measures helped streamline the implementation process and improve the indicators, making them SMART by adjusting baseline values or even exceeding end-term targets. This reflects a positive response through adaptive planning to

some of the key recommendations from the MTR. This has been elaborated in **Annexure 11.** The baseline and end-term targets for the project objectives and each outcome have been assessed for the period between the MTR and the terminal evaluation (TE). These assessments have been included in the newly added **Annexure 20.** Further details on each outcome have also been provided in **Annexure 6: Project Results and Impacts**

The project has effectively addressed critical barriers in the landscape, such as the over-dependence on natural resources, by providing alternative income sources like eco-tourism, para-veterinary services, and waste management. Capacity building has been a significant area of impact, with more than 2,000 individuals receiving training, surpassing the original target. These initiatives have supported the scaling and continuity of sustainable practices through local and state-level institutional partnerships.

In terms of biodiversity conservation, the establishment of Medicinal Plant Conservation Areas and Biodiversity Management Committees has fostered sustainable natural resource use while linking local economic benefits to conservation outcomes. Knowledge and innovation have been advanced with the development of tools and frameworks, including a snow leopard enumeration tool, guidelines for high-altitude wetlands, and human-wildlife conflict management systems. Additionally, targeted interventions, such as predator-proof corrals, have substantially reduced livestock losses in regions prone to human-wildlife conflict.

The project's comprehensive approach to gender empowerment and human rights has facilitated the active participation of marginalized groups in community-driven conservation and livelihood development. Women's roles have been strengthened through business training, leadership positions in biodiversity committees, and involvement in FPOs and cooperatives, enabling them to take on decision-making responsibilities and drive local biodiversity management efforts.

The project has also supported environmental sustainability by promoting zero-waste solutions in high-altitude tourism areas, with bio-digesters implemented to manage organic waste. Although minor negative impacts were noted, such as the potential displacement of native sea-buckthorn by Russian varieties, these issues were proactively addressed through consultations and recommendations for further research.

In conclusion, the SECURE Himalaya project stands as a highly effective, multi-stakeholder initiative that successfully integrates conservation, sustainable livelihoods, and community empowerment within the fragile Himalayan ecosystem. Its achievements in biodiversity preservation, gender equity, and livelihood diversification provide a scalable model for future conservation and sustainable development projects in similar regions.

The TE scores the project's effectiveness as **6 (Highly Satisfactory).**

- Efficiency*

The SECURE Himalaya Project demonstrated exceptional efficiency in achieving and even surpassing its goals within the allocated budget and time frame, despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through effective post-pandemic resource allocation and rapid resumption of activities, the project not only maintained but also accelerated implementation, compensating for delays without incurring additional costs. Stakeholder commitment from MoEF&CC, state forest departments, and local partners further supported resource-efficient implementation, maximizing outcomes. The project adapted to maintain efficiency during COVID-19 by using virtual platforms and alternative methods to maintain progress. During the pandemic, the team facilitated COVID relief,

mobilized women's self-help groups for mask-making, market linkages for their handloom products, awareness campaigns promoted COVID -19 appropriate behaviour, and made efforts to combat vaccine hesitancy made in collaboration with the Health Department and the eVIN system. Youth para-taxonomists were involved in mitigating human-wildlife conflict. The project team conducted a rapid situational analysis and adjusted livelihood plans to address the emerging needs of community stakeholders. Work plans and financial documents were submitted electronically to the Ministry.

The project management structure has demonstrated significant efficiency in generating the expected results within the project's time frame. The Implementing Partner, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), has effectively managed project interventions, monitoring, and evaluation, ensuring the project's objectives were met and UNDP resources were used efficiently.

The project's cost-effectiveness is evident in its reliance on local institutions and resources for natural resource management, grazing, and livelihood diversification. By collaborating with local governance and community-based organizations, the project reduced overhead costs and ensured community ownership. The use of existing systems and alignment with government policies minimized new resource needs, while multi-sectoral convergence with state budgets reinforced efficient, replicable models for sustainable land management. To mitigate the disruptions caused by the pandemic, adaptive management strategies were implemented, including engaging trained local youth and volunteers for field activities, leveraging virtual platforms for stakeholder engagement, and reprioritizing project activities to address immediate community needs. Support was extended to women and other vulnerable groups through skill-building initiatives in eco-tourism, handicrafts, and market linkages, thereby enhancing economic resilience and diversifying livelihoods.

Innovative technology adoption, such as infrared animal detection devices to mitigate human-wildlife conflict and cyber units to combat wildlife crime, reflects the project's commitment to cost-effective, advanced solutions. Solar installations and rotational grazing techniques contributed to sustainable resource use, particularly in sensitive high-altitude areas. The project also introduced effective capacity-building programs for community-led eco-tourism, promoting nature-friendly tourism activities that foster both conservation and economic growth.

Annexure 22 provides an analysis of the annual allocation and expenditure which indicates that after initial low expenditure, mainly due to teething issues followed by COVID -19, the expenditure has picked up to match the allocation by 2024. The Annual Work Plans from the 2019 till 2024 have been followed at all levels, which does indicate the efficient way of undertaking project related activities, which have been monitored through QPRs, APR, and PIRs, besides visits by authorities from CO, NPMU, and SPMU.

In summary, the SECURE Himalaya Project exemplifies efficient and adaptive management, achieving sustainable biodiversity conservation, livelihood enhancement, and local capacity building within its budget. By fostering strong institutional ownership, leveraging national resources, and addressing the unique socio-economic challenges of high-altitude landscapes, the project has set a benchmark in cost-effective environmental stewardship and local development.

The TE scores the project's efficiency as **6 (Highly Satisfactory).**

- Overall project outcome*

Based on the rating of 'Relevance', which is Highly Satisfactory, the overall rating will be between Moderately Satisfactory to Highly Satisfactory, provided that it cannot be higher than rating of 'Effectiveness' and also more than the average rating of 'Effectiveness' and 'Efficiency'. Since an

average of both Effectiveness' and 'Efficiency' falls in Highly Satisfactory and the Effectiveness rating is also same, the Overall Project Outcome is rated as **6 (Highly Satisfactory).**

| Assessment of Outcomes | Rating |
|---|---|
| Relevance | 6 |
| Effectiveness | 6 |
| Efficiency | 6 |
| Overall Project Outcome | 6 |

- Sustainability: financial*, socio-political*, institutional framework and governance*, environmental*, overall likelihood of sustainability*

The Terminal Evaluation (TE) team has assessed the sustainability of the project as "Moderately Likely," consistent with the findings of the Mid-Term Review (MTR). This ranking is supported by evidence demonstrating that project targets have been met in full and, in some instances, exceeded.

The project has successfully enhanced capacities across frontline staff and conservation institutions, as reflected in the increased METT score, signifying improved management of protected areas. Key project interventions have effectively engaged stakeholders to alleviate pressure on rangelands by implementing rotational grazing, establishing community fodder banks, and addressing waste management challenges through initiatives like the Chumathang Hotspring Waste Management Strategy. Additionally, biodiversity heritage sites and MPCDAs have been designated, contributing to long-term conservation. Diverse livelihood options, such as homestays, medicinal plant cultivation, fiber-based crafts, and wool value chains, have generated increased income for communities, with several initiatives establishing market linkages and advancing toward value-added products. Community engagement in wildlife surveillance and conflict mitigation has been supported by state government actions, including IT-based early warning systems and a dedicated compensation fund. These efforts have gained further support from local NGOs and other departments, strengthening the sustainability of project outcomes. Opportunities for mainstreaming these initiatives into central and state schemes are promising, guided by the sustainability strategy and exit plan developed through the project. The project has also developed a sustainability strategy and exit plan to ensure enduring benefits, focusing on strengthening value chains for income generation and ongoing livelihood support.

Although climate change poses a potential risk, the project has introduced adaptive measures, including habitat protection, rotational grazing, and renewable energy solutions, to mitigate impacts. Continued support and targeted funding for scalable livelihood initiatives are essential for sustaining these achievements. The TE team's findings affirm the MTR's "**Moderately Likely**" rating, recognising the project's potential for sustained benefits post-completion.

*Financial Resources (*)*

Financial sustainability for future investments beyond GEF support is not guaranteed. However, the existing annual budgetary provisions available with the state forest departments, which will act as custodians of the project post-implementation, will be the main source of funding to continue the initiatives started during the project. Potential funding sources include the convergence of schemes with other line departments, such as agriculture, horticulture, skill development, handloom and

handicrafts, animal husbandry, rural development, and CAMPA. Leveraging the Panchayati Raj system, various programs initiated in the project merit inclusion and mainstreaming in the Gram Panchayat Development Plan, ensuring assured convergence funding. The possibility of exploring CSR funds should also be considered. The Sustainable Strategy and Exit Plan developed in the project can serve as a roadmap for ensuring financial sustainability.

**TE rates Financial Resources as 4, "Likely".**

### *Socio-political sustainability (\*)*

The SECURE Himalaya project has laid a strong foundation for socio-political sustainability, with no immediate concerns impeding its achievements in this area. Extensive discussions with key stakeholders—including local communities, officials from forest and wildlife departments, and representatives from various government departments across district, state, and central levels—have shown widespread awareness and commitment to preserving the project's ecological and economic advancements. Notably, the project has introduced conservation and development efforts in previously inaccessible and challenging landscapes, instilling a profound sense of ownership within the community, particularly among women's groups, who express pride in their involvement. The activation of village Panchayat-level institutions, such as Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs), Eco-Development Committees (EDCs), and Mahila Mandals, has bolstered socio-political stability through a focus on conservation and participatory livelihood measures.

In Himachal Pradesh, 550 frontline and institutional staff (497M, 53F) have been trained through targeted capacity-building initiatives, including wildlife crime law, scientific data documentation, and Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) management. This includes specialized drone pilot training and exposure visits to the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP) in Kyrgyzstan. In Ladakh, 310 frontline and institutional staff (222M, 88F) received training, with BMC members benefiting from administrative and financial skill-building to enhance management practices. In Sikkim, the project augmented the skills of 228 frontline and institutional staff (130M, 98F), while in Uttarakhand, 944 individuals (885M, 59F) were trained, covering biodiversity assessment, wildlife crime management, and NRM under the Biological Diversity Act. These initiatives collectively strengthen institutional frameworks and community engagement across landscapes.

Moreover, the project has been instrumental in producing success stories, highlighting women's empowerment as a key outcome. These stories are being documented and shared to encourage replication and scaling, providing long-term socio-political stability across project landscapes. The project's results demonstrate meaningful progress in socio-political sustainability, with the continued scaling of these initiatives, accompanied by technical and financial support, poised to further reinforce this stability and broaden the project's impact. **In this regard, socio-political sustainability has been assessed as 3, 'Moderately likely'.**

### *Institutional framework and governance sustainability (\*)*

The project has successfully established a viable institutional and governance system for executing project-related activities at various levels: national (Project Board, NPMU), state (SPMU), district, and landscape (landscape-level committees). This framework is bolstered by the involvement of various government line departments, NGOs, scientific organizations, and individual subject matter experts, all of whom have provided timely input as per the project design. Additionally, the project fostered a self-directed and regulated system that encouraged local communities and institutions to take the lead in planning and development activities within their villages, cultivating a sense of ownership. This approach included the establishment of various biodiversity conservation and forestry institutions,

such as Eco-development Committees, Joint Forest Management Committees, Van Panchayats (Uttarakhand), and Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs). Traditional governance systems, such as the Dzumsa in Sikkim (Dzum—meeting, Sa—place), as well as Women's Saving and Credit Groups (WSCGs), were also integral to this framework.

Moreover, livelihood-related institutions were formed, including Self-Help Groups (SHGs), SHG Federations, Cooperatives, and Eco-Tourism Societies that engage in trekking, homestays, and bird-watching activities. Social and cultural initiatives, such as Mahila Mangal Dals (women's groups) and Yuvak Mangal Dals (youth societies), along with local NGOs, contribute significantly to community engagement and conservation efforts.

Capacity building has been essential for ensuring the long-term sustainability of the project. A thorough assessment was conducted to identify the needs of key stakeholders, including government personnel, local communities, and other landscape actors. The project document outlined specific areas for enhancing the skills of local communities to promote sustainable livelihoods and effective landscape planning. Additionally, capacity development for various line agencies was emphasized to align their efforts with conservation goals, fostering a coordinated and lasting impact.

The project also included targeted training to combat wildlife trafficking and illegal trade, focusing on identification, detection, surveillance, and intelligence sharing. This empowerment allowed stakeholders to take ownership of conservation initiatives, contributing to the project's enduring impact. Various training sessions improved community members' skills in essential areas such as financial management, participatory monitoring, nursery development, and agricultural product processing. Participants also engaged in compost making, ecotourism, handloom product branding, and sustainable practices for medicinal and aromatic plant (MAP) cultivation and yak product production. The development of self-help groups (SHGs) in enterprise management, along with training in natural dye production and floriculture, has further ensured that the project's benefits will be sustained well beyond its completion.

The initiatives promoted through the project—including population assessment (via SPAI), international collaboration (potential linkages with WCCB and IBCA), and the promotion and implementation of effective conservation and landscape restoration practices—have successfully established a sustainable framework for snow leopard conservation in India. Additionally, the integration of policies, such as the "Big Cats Master Plan" in Sikkim and a Resource Mobilization Strategy in Himachal Pradesh, demonstrates how project outcomes are embedded in state policies for coordinated management. Furthermore, the formulation of Wetland Guidelines, a guidebook for high-altitude wetlands, provides practical resources for effective ecosystem management. These efforts emphasize the importance of institutional, legal frameworks, policies, and governance structures that promote accountability, transparency, and knowledge transfer beyond the project's completion, which the project has successfully maintained.

**TE rate Institutional framework and governance sustainability as 3, "Moderately Likely".**

*Environmental Sustainability (*)*

The landscape approach to conservation adopted by the project is a significant step towards achieving sustainability at the environmental level. It ensures that project-related activities do not lead to adverse impacts on identified high-conservation areas and other critical habitats that support flagship species and many other endangered wildlife and prey species. This approach emphasizes maintaining the ecological integrity of diverse areas by managing the biological, social, and economic factors that influence these landscapes. By integrating various land uses—such as protected areas, agricultural

zones, and indigenous management areas—this strategy has helped conserve the overall ecology and environment of the project landscapes while supporting the livelihoods of local communities. It also addresses risks identified during project design, including human-wildlife conflict, the exclusion of vulnerable communities from participation, and the detection and mitigation of wildlife-related crimes.

Given the spatial heterogeneity of Himalayan landscapes, the project focused on the specific ecological and geographic distinctions that influence vulnerable areas. It prioritized the conservation of species-rich habitats and ecosystems, thereby enhancing both biodiversity and ecosystem services. The landscape approach, exemplified by the snow leopard as flagship species, reinforced the idea that meeting the needs of key species contributes to the conservation of broader ecosystems. Additionally, the project targeted high-altitude rangelands and landscapes rich in unique flora and fauna, emphasizing community involvement, government support, and market potential for sustainable livelihoods. This has fostered a sense of ownership among local communities, ensuring sustainability. The Project also effectively addressed trans-boundary issues, contributing to overall environmental sustainability. The rise in METT scores across all six protected areas within the project landscapes demonstrates achievements in reducing direct pressure on newly designated and managed key biodiversity areas. It has also successfully reduced pressure on moist and dry alpine areas and sub-alpine forests managed as Biodiversity Heritage sites, bringing alpine pastures and sub-alpine forests under sustainable regeneration regimes. Furthermore, the project has promoted sustainable grazing practices and reduced environmental pressure on rangelands. The introduction of non-natural-resource-based livelihood alternatives (such as homestays, promoting handloom/handicrafts, promoting ecotourism, nature guides, etc.) has further supported environmental sustainability by reducing pressure on natural resources. However, it is important to ensure that ecotourism remains within the carrying capacity of the given area.

Overall, the project's landscape approach has facilitated a sense of cooperation, collaboration, and ownership among protected area managers, territorial forest managers, local communities, and various line departments. This is likely to ensure (moderately) environmental sustainability in the long term.

TE rates **Environmental sustainability** as 3, "**Moderately Likely**".

**Overall Likelihood of Sustainability (*)**

Overall, the TE team endorses the ranking assigned during the mid-term evaluation as "**Moderately Likely**," and as a finding of the terminal evaluation as well.

| Sustainability | Rating |
|---|---|
| Financial Resources | 4 |
| Socio-political | 3 |
| Institutional Framework and Governance | 3 |
| Environmental | 3 |
| Overall Likelihood of Sustainability | 3 |

- Country ownership

A key element of the project's success has been the ownership demonstrated by the government at national, state, and landscape levels, where most innovative actions have taken place. Continuous engagement between UNDP and government entities has fostered the exchange of creative ideas,

enhancing project implementation. As the National Partner, the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change has been crucial in guiding the project since its inception. Working alongside UNDP, the Ministry helped define the project's primary areas of focus. They led efforts to involve State Governments, coordinating their participation and organizing field visits for consultants during the initial studies. The Ministry also played an active role in landscape-level consultations, gathering feedback from various stakeholders. Their ongoing involvement has provided significant contributions during the preparation, execution, and monitoring and evaluation of project-related activities, ensuring thorough stakeholder engagement.

The governance structure of the project has facilitated participation from government entities (at national, state, and district levels), civil society, and local communities throughout the project formulation, execution, and monitoring and evaluation stages. This inclusive approach has undoubtedly increased ownership among different stakeholders associated with the project. Additionally, the existing policies, legal provisions, and regulatory frameworks of the government align with the project objectives, further strengthening the ownership and thus leading to sustainability of all project-related efforts even beyond the project period. The project's objectives were significantly enhanced by the strong ownership demonstrated by landscape-level planning and management committees, alongside the active participation of local communities and other stakeholders. This collaborative and inclusive approach ensured that sustainable development and biodiversity conservation efforts were not only equitable but also highly effective.

- Gender equality and women's empowerment*

The project's focus on gender equality and women's empowerment has significantly enhanced environmental and resilience outcomes. Women's active participation in planning, decision-making, and implementation led to an average 25% income increase across all states, with notable success in the sheep and yak wool value chain, seeing a 3000% increase in sheep wool and a 6000% increase in Pashmina wool after processing. Women involved in the sea-buckthorn value chain through the Khondoma Women SHG also experienced income growth, and 50 more women expressed interest in joining the SHG, highlighting its economic success.

Out of 3,471 beneficiaries trained (against a target of 2,500), 49% (1,707) were women, many of whom received specialized training in various project interventions. Detailed information on income benefits and activities is available in Annexure 13.

The project has also established grassroots networks to spread awareness and share knowledge, ensuring sustainability. Women have become "Agents of Change" due to their increased involvement in economic decision-making at both household and community levels. Through project interventions, women have participated in income-generating activities, such as the sheep and yak wool value chain, where they gained skills in wool shearing, processing, colouring, branding, and marketing. Other successful initiatives include sea-buckthorn enterprises, hazelnut promotion, cookie making, organic mushroom cultivation, and apiculture. Additionally, young women have pursued roles as para-taxonomists, mountaineering assistants, nature guides, finance and marketing managers, and social media handlers, following skill development under the project. This shift in traditional gender roles has improved their confidence, social status, and community respect.

The introduction of fuel-efficient cook stoves, solar water heaters, and other household equipment has reduced women's reliance on environmentally harmful practices, such as collecting firewood and fodder, contributing to biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation. Women's involvement in natural resource conservation has also sensitized the larger community to the

importance of bioresources and their potential for benefit-sharing as MAPs (Medicinal and Aromatic Plants).

The project has led to a positive attitudinal change, with men accepting women in traditionally male-dominated roles, such as wool shearing, and women taking on tasks like scouring and carding. This mutual acceptance and shared responsibility reflect a shift towards gender equality.

While finance, digitalization, strategic innovation, and male mobilization are critical for sustaining these achievements, the project's contribution to gender empowerment is significant.

**A major compliment which defines the success of the project and its impact on the lives of women came from a rural woman from Rong Valley in Ladakh (during the field visit) who stated (as translated from the local language) that:**

> *"This project has helped women re-discover themselves along with the bounties of nature around them, and for her, at a personal level, it has re-kindled her pride in the local culture, traditional knowledge, plants and animals, while realising why and how to respect and protect it "*

The TE team, thus rates 'Gender equality and women's empowerment 'as **highly satisfactory (HS 6).**

- Cross cutting issues

The objectives and outcomes of this project— to promote biodiversity conservation and support the welfare of indigenous people in the Himalayan high altitudes; focusing on fostering partnerships with local communities for conservation initiatives; enhancing capacity among stakeholders; and collaborating with government and NGOs for informed implementation; generating scientific knowledge of high-altitude ecology and raising awareness through conservation education; leveraging the full potential of state offices, promoting financing, scaling up innovative and investing in gender equality outcomes—align with the UNDP country programs. This alignment aims to further strengthen partnerships in support of the Government of India's net-zero commitment, integrate Sustainable Development Goals into the governance structure from local bodies, and scale up circular economy models.

The project incorporates human rights principles from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by ensuring equal opportunities for vulnerable groups, including minorities, disabled persons, and the elderly. Improved employment opportunities and grievance redressal mechanisms ensure that rights to work, habitat, and environmental protection are upheld, with a structured process for addressing conflicts over resource use. This approach not only sustains livelihoods and alleviates poverty but also enhances economic and social rights while respecting local cultural values. Local community members are able to participate in Village Conservation and Development Committees (VCDCs), where they are involved in planning and implementing project interventions.

The project also emphasizes and addresses women's empowerment through activities such as handloom production, ecotourism, organic farming, and capacity building in natural resource management. To promote women's participation, Village Conservation and Development Committees (VCDCs) include at least 30% female members, and local women community mobilizers are engaged to enhance women's involvement. Gender-specific indicators are included to ensure equitable access to resources and benefits for both women and men. Additionally, a gender assessment and action plan have been developed to guide these efforts, aiming to sustainably manage alpine ecosystems and reduce the time and energy women spend collecting non-timber forest products. The project has

implemented a community orientation and mobilization process that actively involves both genders to disseminate information and gather perceptions on resource management practices.

The assessment of SES, CPD, and other documents, along with the outcome-based results framework, indicates that cross-cutting issues—such as environmental considerations, a rights-based approach, volunteerism, improved governance, and the participation of vulnerable groups—are integrated into the project's design, planning, governance, and execution structures, which is in line with other UNDP priorities.

- Catalytic/Replication effect

The list of achievements from this project may serve as catalysts for replication and scaling up, both within and beyond the project area. These achievements could also prove valuable as baseline information when formulating new conservation projects, including for Phase 2 of SH.

The details of these highlights are already described in the TE Report under the relevant sections, so they are not repeated here.

| S. No | Project Achievements with Catalytic and Replication Potential |
|---|---|
| 1 | Landscape-level strategies and management plans, developed by technical agencies and implemented by State Governments, have guided interventions across various sectors. Renowned research organizations and technical expert agencies played a key role in gathering landscape-specific data, formulating strategies, and carrying out conservation actions. |
| 2 | 65 Biodiversity Management Committees have been established across project implementation states, emphasizing the project's commitment to local biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. |
| 3 | Sea-buckthorn Initiatives |
| 4 | Feral Dog Management |
| 5 | Rotational Grazing |
| 6 | Community Fodder Banks |
| 7 | Innovative activities such as the promotion of homestay-based ecotourism, nature guide training, and mushroom cultivation have helped reduce the demand for non-timber forest products (NTFPs), such as medicinal plants. |
| 8 | The use of ANIDERS, a sensor-based early warning system piloted in the Gya, Meru, and Hanle areas, has helped mitigate human-wildlife conflicts, achieving significant reductions in crop depredation by blue sheep (bharal). |
| 9 | Promotion of yak wool addresses market demands while mitigating potential ecological imbalances caused by the surge in local Changpa goats due to high Pashmina demand. |
| 10 | Documentation of management plans for Medicinal Plants Conservation and Development Areas (MPCDAs) and establishment of Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHSs). |
| 11 | Soil moisture conservation enhanced soil health, leading to environmental sustainability and ecosystem resilience through extensive planting of native species. |
| 12 | The project supported the management of 2,567 hectares of alpine areas. |
| 13 | Empowering local communities by promoting sustainable green livelihood initiatives integrated into village-level institutions such as Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), Cooperative Societies, and Primary Producer Groups (PPGs). |
| 14 | Community-led Ecotourism Value Chain |
| 15 | Empowering local communities by promoting sustainable green livelihood initiatives integrated into village-level institutions such as Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Farmer |

| S. No | Project Achievements with Catalytic and Replication Potential |
|---|---|
| | Producer Organizations (FPOs), Cooperative Societies, and Primary Producer Groups (PPGs). |
| 16 | Community-led Ecotourism Value Chain |
| 17 | Agriculture & Horticulture: 272 households were supported through initiatives such as bakery, dairy, and mushroom cultivation, resulting in a 5-10% increase in income post-implementation. |
| 18 | The Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI) methodology was developed and launched and can be used for future conservation efforts. |
| 19 | The successful management of protected areas and biologically rich alpine and sub-alpine landscapes can be replicated in other Protected Areas (PAs). |
| 20 | Fuelwood and Waste Management |
| 21 | Grazing and Fodder Management, Nature Guide Training |
| 22 | A Fulfilment Centre, established through an MoU with the State Rural Livelihood Mission, run by SHG members, will assist beneficiary communities in value addition through improved packaging, processing, and marketing of products on e-platforms. |
| 23 | Training focused on sustainable resource management, improved agricultural practices, and diversified, resilient, and sustainable livelihood solutions. These efforts significantly advanced livelihood value chains for both off-farm and on-farm activities. |
| 24 | On/Off-Farm Based Initiatives: Mushroom Cultivation in Ladakh, Food Production and Branding in Himachal Pradesh, Beekeeping in Uttarakhand, Design Diversification, Paper Making in Sikkim, and Birding Workshop in Sikkim. |
| 25 | Active engagement of community members as volunteers in monitoring and surveillance of wildlife crime, illegal trade, and human-wildlife conflict across landscapes. |
| 26 | Patrolling with trained para-taxonomists and frontline forest officials in Gangotri National Park resulted in the collection of 579 records of snow leopards, bears, and red foxes. Officials were trained in incident reporting and equipped with multipurpose trekking poles, advancing their capacity for wildlife crime prevention and human-wildlife conflict management. |
| 27 | Six Long-Range Patrols (LRPs) and Six Short-Range Patrols (SRPs) were conducted in Gangotri National Park and the Gangotri Range, reinforcing wildlife and natural resource protection. |
| 28 | Real-Time Information Exchange mechanisms will be established between countries, involving India's Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), Nepal's WCCB, and SAWEN. |
| 29 | Regular Transboundary Meetings for PA managers to discuss human-wildlife conflict, habitat management, wildlife movement, and best practices. |
| 30 | Collaborative Environmental Efforts on climate change, environmental governance, and landscape conservation. |
| 31 | Wildlife Information Management System (WMIS) and a mobile app for reporting human-wildlife conflict cases, submitting compensation claims, and real-time incident reporting were developed in Himachal Pradesh, which can be replicated elsewhere to improve wildlife management. |
| 32 | Documentation and dissemination of best practices through knowledge products at national and international forums, including the Global Wildlife Programme. |
| 33 | Awareness videos on species such as Tibetan Antelope, Asiatic Black Bear, Pangolin, and Musk Deer, in collaboration with WCCB. |
| 34 | A Bioresource Exhibition-Cum-Competition was organized in collaboration with the Hemya Panchayat Biodiversity Management Committee, involving three villages in the Changthang landscape (Tarchit, Khatpu, Himya). This can be replicated in other landscape areas. |
| 35 | High Altitude Wetland Restoration Programs |

| S. No | Project Achievements with Catalytic and Replication Potential |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 36 | Nettle Fibre Value Chain |
| 37 | Preparation/updating of People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs) by BMCs with the help of trained para-taxonomists. |
| 38 | Waste Disposal Facilities were set up in Keylong (Himachal Pradesh), Puga (Ladakh), and KNP (Sikkim). |
| 39 | Institutionalization of regular training for forest officials, local youth, and women to curb wildlife crime. |
| 40 | Capacity building for value chain implementation and interventions to reduce drudgery through S&T application. |
| 41 | Awareness through knowledge products, including films, videos, and social media. |
| 42 | Recognition (non-monetary) and moral boosting of contributors. |
| 43 | METT Assessment across the landscape |
| 44 | CD Score card assessment across the landscape. |

- Progress to impact

The SECURE Himalaya project has successfully achieved its long-term objectives, aligning closely with its Theory of Change, and has delivered substantial, lasting impacts across habitat conservation, wildlife protection, sustainable livelihoods, women's empowerment, and capacity building. Key accomplishments include the successful Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI), which revealed increased snow leopard populations across all project states, and the establishment of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), headquartered in India. By project completion, over 3.4 million hectares of land—more than double the original target—were being managed through participatory methods involving all stakeholders, underscoring the effectiveness of community engagement and generating landscape-specific scientific studies that will serve as baselines for future initiatives.

Grazing pressure on more than 8,000 hectares of alpine meadows has been reduced, and 10,000 hectares of sub-alpine forests were protected from degradation, demonstrating the growing trust between communities and the government, paving the way for additional conservation actions. The development and implementation of various strategies, including Landscape Management Plans, Livelihood Strategies, and Sectoral Plans for each landscape, as well as 82 village-level livelihood plans, have ensured a structured approach for sustaining the project's achievements and guiding future initiatives.

The promotion of alternative livelihoods has led to significant income increases for community members, ranging from 5% to 600%, with the all-women-led KangLa Basket initiative in Himachal Pradesh serving as a particularly successful model. This initiative has not only boosted community income but also fostered a sense of pride in local biodiversity conservation. Women's empowerment has been advanced through training programs, including courses for women as mountaineering guides and para-taxonomists, while youth empowerment was promoted through eco-guiding and wildlife-related training, helping reduce migration and offering new economic opportunities.

The project made notable strides in combating wildlife crime, engaging over 200 local men and women in monitoring and surveillance through community battalions, while fostering enhanced collaboration between national and international agencies. Its knowledge-sharing efforts received global recognition, with project outcomes presented at international platforms like the Global Wildlife Program conference in South Africa, the Global Wildlife Knowledge Exchange in Kenya, and the UNCCD COP 14 in 2019.

Furthermore, the project facilitated the acquisition of three new Geographical Indications (GIs) for traditional knowledge in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, recognizing the value of local crafts and products. Initiatives like the KangLa Basket value chain and the Handloom and Handicraft value chain received national and state-level recognition. The Sheep and Yak Wool-based value chain contributed to up to a 3,000% income increase, fostering high community ownership and participation in habitat protection in alpine meadows. Other livelihood initiatives, including agriculture, horticulture, and dairy, led to income increases of 5-10%.

The project's success stories have been documented and shared to inspire further community engagement and replicate successful models. The foundations for long-term sustainability are firmly in place, with participatory landscape management, women's and youth empowerment, and alternative livelihoods continuing to drive positive change. Institutional frameworks and local committees established under the project are expected to sustain conservation and development efforts beyond the project's lifespan.

Additionally, the project has supported the revival of alpine and sub-alpine forests, with over 8,000 hectares of forest area and more than 75,000 hectares of sustainable regeneration regimes. Its efficient financial management is reflected in the alignment of budget allocation with achieved outcomes. Key strategies, plans, and knowledge products developed through the project will serve as valuable tools for future programs, ensuring the legacy of SECURE Himalaya and its continued benefits for biodiversity and local communities.

The management of High-Altitude Wetlands and the publication of the 'Management of High-Altitude Wetlands: A Guidebook' for wetland managers and practitioners represent significant contributions to the field. The identification of 73 High Conservation Value Areas (HCVAs) across project landscapes, along with the management of select areas as Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS), including Ladakh's first BHS, further exemplifies the project's lasting impact on biodiversity conservation.

### D. Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations, Lesson Learnt
  - Findings

The SECURE Himalaya project has achieved remarkable success in advancing biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihoods, and community empowerment across the high-altitude landscapes of India, exceeding its goals in many areas. By integrating conservation with socio-economic development, the project has effectively improved both environmental and livelihood outcomes for local communities, especially vulnerable groups.

The findings can be grouped under the following categories:

**Conserving Biodiversity Areas**
  - **Landscape and Biodiversity Management**: The project managed over 3.4 million hectares using a participatory landscape approach, uniting wildlife managers, forest officers, and communities for sustainable ecosystem management. It designated 73 High Conservation Value Areas (HCVAs) as Biodiversity Heritage Sites, contributing significantly to long-term biodiversity preservation.
  - **Snow Leopard Conservation**: The Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI) showed a population increase across 12 million hectares, with growth in Ladakh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Sikkim, reflecting the project's success in conserving this keystone species.

**Securing Sustainable Livelihoods**

- **Livelihood Enhancement**: Green value chain initiatives like eco-tourism and handicrafts were implemented, with a focus on women's empowerment. Initiatives like the KangLa Basket in Himachal Pradesh enhanced local income for over 2,500 households, reducing poverty.
- **Institutional Strengthening**: The establishment of local conservation and livelihood bodies, such as Eco-development Committees and Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), strengthened community-led governance and sustainable development efforts.
- **Women's Empowerment**: Enhanced access to digital tools, financial services, and decision-making for women, particularly in remote areas like Rupshu, Ladakh, promoted social and economic empowerment and led to a shift in traditional gender roles.

**Reducing Human-Wildlife Conflict, Mitigating Wildlife Crime, and Advancing Transboundary Collaboration**
- **Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) Mitigation**: The project reduced HWC through faster and higher compensation payments, with tools like ANIDERS enhancing community engagement.
- **Policy and Institutional Impact**: Policy changes included revised HWC compensation rates, creation of a Local Trust Fund for rapid payments, and bilateral agreements with neighbouring countries, enhancing regional collaboration in wildlife crime prevention.

**Promoting Knowledge Management and Evaluation**
- **Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing**: The project created valuable knowledge resources, including a high-altitude wetland management guidebook and scientific papers, supporting long-term conservation. International knowledge-sharing events, such as the Global Wildlife Program conference, expanded its impact.
- **Sustainability and Exit Strategy**: Institutional frameworks and policies have been established to ensure project sustainability, supported by a government-led exit strategy for ongoing benefit to landscapes and communities.

**Carbon Sequestration and Climate Change Mitigation**
- The project sequestered an estimated 3.76 million tons of CO2 equivalent through forest management and ecological restoration, contributing to climate change mitigation and ecosystem health.

**Project Shortcomings**:
- **Baseline Data**: Demographic data was incomplete or poorly maintained.
- **Theory of Change**: A clearer Theory of Change would have strengthened guidance for project activities.
- **Financial Disbursements**: Initial challenges in financial disbursements were addressed over time.
- **Marketing and Buy-Back Arrangements**: Future projects could benefit from stronger marketing support and buy-back arrangements for artisans.
- **Capacity Building Methods**: There was no evidence of using non-traditional pedagogic methods for capacity building.

The SECURE Himalaya project effectively advanced biodiversity conservation, community empowerment, and sustainable livelihoods, creating a foundation for long-term benefits through strengthened institutional frameworks, community-led initiatives, and policy influence.

- Conclusions

The SECURE Himalaya Project has achieved significant milestones in environmental conservation and community development, surpassing its initial goals and setting a benchmark for future projects.

The **SECURE Himalayas** project has made significant strides in protecting biodiversity and improving the livelihoods of local communities across six landscapes. It has effectively addressed both localized and broader regional challenges, focusing on vulnerable populations and promoting gender equality, especially through the empowerment of women. The project has successfully integrated wildlife conservation with sustainable development, tackling critical issues such as human-wildlife conflict, ecosystem protection, and livelihood enhancement. Through a multifaceted approach that integrated wildlife conservation with sustainable development, the project successfully managed natural landscapes, promoting and strengthening local institutions, and enhanced the livelihoods of local communities., while also contributing to the **Global Environment Facility (GEF-6)** objectives related to **Biodiversity**, **Land Degradation**, and **Sustainable Forest Management**.

**Strengths and Key Achievements**

The SECURE Himalaya project has developed a successful model for combining biodiversity conservation with sustainable livelihood development. By protecting natural resources while creating economic opportunities, particularly for women, it has achieved long-lasting, mutually beneficial outcomes. The project has empowered women by providing leadership roles, access to digital tools, and financial services, leading to positive community shifts. It has strengthened local governance through Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) and participatory training, fostering community ownership and sustainable resource management. Collaboration with stakeholders at all levels—communities, government agencies, NGOs, and international partners—has been crucial for effective implementation. The project has also influenced key policies, including improved human-wildlife conflict compensation and wildlife crime prevention frameworks, aligning its conservation goals with broader national and regional priorities.

The project's achievements include managing over 3.4 million hectares using a participatory approach, designating High Conservation Value Areas as Biodiversity Heritage Sites, and contributing to the recovery of snow leopard populations. Livelihood initiatives, such as eco-tourism and handicrafts, have improved incomes for over 2,500 households while revitalizing traditional livelihoods like nettle farming. It has also sequestered 3.76 million tons of $CO_2$, revitalized alpine forests, and promoted cultural preservation through the recognition of traditional knowledge. Innovative measures like feral dog management and enhanced wildlife corridors have further addressed biodiversity threats. Regional cooperation through networks like SAWEN and knowledge-sharing initiatives, such as the high-altitude wetlands guidebook, has ensured the sustainability of these efforts, leaving a legacy of resilience and community-driven conservation.

**Challenges and Proposed Solutions**

Despite its successes, the project encountered several challenges that provide valuable lessons. The SECURE Himalaya project has developed resilience and adaptability while addressing several challenges. Incomplete baseline data has highlighted the need for better data collection and the use of GIS-based tools to support monitoring and decision-making. Initial delays in financial disbursements have shown the importance of flexible financial systems that align with project timelines. Limited market linkages and insufficient buy-back arrangements for eco-friendly products, especially those created by women-led enterprises, have emphasized the need for early marketing support to help artisans and entrepreneurs scale their businesses. The capacity-building programs have underlined the importance of hands-on, participatory learning for better knowledge sharing and community engagement.

The COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges, delaying field activities, disrupting timelines, and limiting on-ground interactions. These disruptions were resolved through adaptive measures such as shifting to virtual platforms for training and meetings, revising work plans to accommodate new

timelines, and leveraging local community networks to continue essential activities with minimal external support. Sustaining women's leadership roles in traditional settings remains an ongoing challenge. Human-wildlife conflict mitigation has improved through policy reforms, but further engagement and streamlined response mechanisms are needed to promote coexistence. Additionally, challenges in translating scientific research into practical conservation strategies and monitoring intangible outcomes, such as community behavioral changes, have underscored the importance of robust, adaptive frameworks to track progress and ensure long-term impact.

**Outcomes and Insights for Future Projects and Policymakers**
The SECURE Himalaya project has developed a model for integrating conservation with socio-economic development, offering valuable lessons for future initiatives and policymaking. It has institutionalized partnerships with local governance bodies, embedding conservation into broader development agendas and ensuring long-term sustainability. Building community capacity and fostering ownership among stakeholders have proven critical for success. Early sustainability planning, such as establishing Local Trust Funds and exit strategies, has ensured lasting benefits. The project has also demonstrated the importance of adaptive management frameworks informed by stakeholder feedback to address dynamic challenges effectively. By aligning biodiversity conservation with carbon sequestration and livelihood development, the project has connected local actions to national and global priorities, while intentional gender mainstreaming has promoted inclusivity and equity in decision-making processes.

For policymakers, the project highlights the need to align conservation strategies with socio-economic goals, creating scalable and replicable frameworks that balance ecological preservation with community development. Robust sustainability planning, involving collaboration among government and non-government actors, is essential for maintaining outcomes. Strengthened market linkages, effective application of research at the community level, and scaling successful policies, such as human-wildlife conflict protocols, can further enhance conservation efforts. Continued investment in gender-focused initiatives and capacity-building programs will empower local stakeholders and ensure that the project's achievements endure, providing a foundation for designing future initiatives.

In conclusion, the SECURE Himalaya Project has laid a robust foundation for conservation and community-led development, showcasing the power of collaboration, sustainability, and gender equality. The lessons learned and successes achieved provide a roadmap for future interventions aimed at balancing environmental protection with socio-economic progress.

- Recommendations

| Rec # | TE Recommendation | Entity Responsible | Time Frame/Priority |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2. | Launch Phase Two of the SECURE Himalaya Project (SH 2.0)<br><br>Action: Plan and implement SH 2.0 to expand upon the achievements of Phase 1, leveraging existing institutional knowledge and successes to scale up conservation and livelihood interventions. | UNDP, with relevant government and community stakeholders | 1 year/High |
| 3. | Implement Robust Knowledge Transfer Mechanisms<br><br>Action: Establish a formalized system for one-on-one knowledge transfers and structured | Project management team in collaboration | 3 months/High |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | documentation to retain and transfer knowledge between the government officials (departing & incoming) and maintain sustainability. | with local governments. | |
| 4. | Maximising the Impact of Scientific Studies: Leveraging Research for Post-Project Sustainability<br><br>Action: The project's investment in pioneering scientific studies has generated crucial baseline data for the project landscapes. An online repository of these scientific studies needed to be developed and shared with the MoEF&CC, State Forest /Wildlife Departments, Scientific institutions, and technical partners. This will provide an opportunity to apply this data effectively, ensuring its long-term impact on conservation efforts. | UNDP, in collaboration with research institutions. | 3 months/High |
| 5. | Establish a Dedicated Snow Leopard Cell<br><br>Action: Support the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change in creating a specialized Snow Leopard Cell, providing technical assistance and formulating action plans for snow leopard conservation and habitat management. | Government of India, supported by UNDP. | 3 months/High |
| 6. | Ensure a Comprehensive Exit Strategy<br><br>Action: Develop and implement a clear exit strategy that focuses on capacity-building for local institutions to independently sustain conservation initiatives beyond the project's duration. | UNDP, in collaboration with local governments | 1 year/Medium |
| 7. | Promote Gender Equality and Women's Leadership in Conservation<br><br>Action: Design and implement targeted initiatives to increase women's leadership in conservation decision-making roles, using successful project outcomes to create models for future UNDP programming. | UNDP, in partnership with local women's groups and NGOs | 1 year/High |
| 8. | Linking with National and International Conservation Initiatives<br>Action: Sharing best practices and lessons learned from the SECURE Himalaya project with GSLEP countries through the GSLEP Secretariat will strengthen cross-project learning, enhancing conservation outcomes across the member nations. This exchange will support the replication of successful strategies, streamline collaborative efforts, and accelerate progress in high-altitude biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihood initiatives throughout the GSLEP network. | MoEF&CC; State Forest Department | 1-2 years/Medium |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9. | Promote Sustainable Livelihoods and Value Chains through linkages with ongoing government schemes<br><br>Action: Conservation-linked sustainable livelihood best practices from the SECURE Himalaya project should be integrated into state and national training and capacity-building institutes. This will enable widespread adoption, strengthen local expertise, and enhance the impact of conservation efforts across regions through skilled, informed stakeholders. | MoEF&CC; and State Forest Department, CBOs | With immediate effect and continued/High |
| 10. | Targeted Focus on Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation<br><br>Action: Share the best practices in Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) mitigation with State/ UT Forest/ Wildlife departments and relevant line departments to drive adaptation and replication across regions. Leveraging SECURE Himalaya's successes, this approach will empower the government and technical agencies to sustain the community-led HWC management initiative initiated under the project by strengthening the role of Eco-Development Committees, Biodiversity Management Committees, and other village-level community institutions. Through structured guidance, communities will be better equipped to monitor and mitigate HWC, ensuring a resilient, community-centred conservation framework. | MoEF&CC; and State Forest Department, Research Institutions | Immediate and continued/High |
| 11. | Institutionalise Capacity Building Initiatives for Sustainability<br><br>Action: Formalise partnerships with local governments and institutions to ensure sustained ownership and involvement in conservation initiatives. The State Forest Department should institutionalise regular capacity-building programs for Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) to strengthen their resource stewardship capabilities. Leverage data from People's Biodiversity Registers (PBR) to empower BMCs in identifying and capitalising on resources, particularly Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, to drive local economic opportunities while aligning with biodiversity conservation objectives. This approach will enhance both community engagement and economic resilience, ensuring the long-term sustainability of conservation efforts. | MoEF&CC; Min. Of Culture and respective State governments | With immediate effect and continued/Medium |
| 12. | National Level Knowledge Dissemination Workshop of the SECURE Himalaya Project | MoEF&CC; and State Forest | With immediate effect |

| | | Department, Training and Research Institutions | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Action: A national knowledge-sharing and dissemination workshop needed to be organised. This workshop will strategically engage diverse stakeholders—including participating state governments, institutions, and scientific agencies—enabling them to directly access insights and best practices from the landscape-based approach. The workshop will aim to strengthen capacities, foster collaborative learning, and mobilise resources, promoting the way for nationwide adoption and scaling of successful conservation interventions. | | |

- Lessons Learnt

1. The success of the project highlights the importance of integrating biodiversity conservation with sustainable livelihood development. Combining efforts to protect natural resources with economic opportunities for local communities, particularly women, can yield long-term, mutually reinforcing outcomes. Future projects should continue to emphasize this integrated approach to achieve both environmental and socio-economic goals.

2. The project's focus on empowering women and addressing gender equality through increased access to resources and decision-making platforms has proven effective. A key lesson is the need for intentional gender mainstreaming in all project components, as this not only benefits women but also leads to broader positive community shifts. Future projects should continue to prioritize women's participation and leadership, particularly in areas where traditional gender roles limit women's involvement.

3. The establishment of local governance bodies, such as Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), and the training provided to community members, demonstrated the value of empowering communities to take ownership of conservation efforts. Building local capacity through training and the creation of community-based institutions ensures sustainability and fosters a sense of responsibility among stakeholders. Future projects should strengthen local institutions and continue capacity-building initiatives to enhance long-term impact.

4. Successful collaboration with a range of stakeholders, including local communities, government agencies, NGOs, and international partners, was a key factor in the project's success. Engaging stakeholders at all levels, and ensuring their active involvement in decision-making, led to better implementation and outcomes. Future projects should prioritize inclusive and continuous stakeholder engagement throughout their lifecycle to foster collaboration and shared ownership.

5. The project's influence on policy, including revisions to compensation rates for human-wildlife conflict (HWC) and the establishment of regional cooperation frameworks for wildlife crime prevention, underscores the importance of aligning conservation efforts with national and regional policy frameworks. Future projects should aim to influence policy changes that support sustainable conservation practices, ensuring that successes are institutionalized and have a broader impact.

6. The project's comprehensive sustainability planning, including institutional frameworks and the creation of a Local Trust Fund, provided a foundation for continued success after project completion. A clear exit strategy is crucial for ensuring that lessons learned, capacities built, and systems established continue to benefit local communities and ecosystems. Future projects should prioritize early sustainability planning and incorporate mechanisms for long-term impact.

7. While the project made significant strides in implementation, challenges in monitoring and evaluating some intangible outcomes, such as attitudinal changes in community behaviour, highlight the need for more robust and adaptable M&E frameworks. Future projects should ensure that indicators are SMART to evolving project contexts, and incorporate regular impact assessments to track both tangible and intangible outcomes.

8. The success of women-led enterprises like KangLa Basket demonstrates the potential of creating market linkages for local products, such as eco-tourism and handicrafts, that are both economically and environmentally sustainable. However, future projects should include more marketing support and buy-back arrangements in the initial years to help artisans and entrepreneurs gain confidence and scale their businesses.

By applying these lessons, future projects can build on the successes of this initiative and address any challenges more effectively, ensuring broader and more sustainable impacts in biodiversity conservation, community livelihoods, and gender equality.

## List of Annexures for the SECURE Himalaya Terminal Evaluation Report

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## Annexure 1: List of documents reviewed

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|---|
| o **UNDP Evaluation Guidelines** |
| o **UNDP Social and Env Screening Procedure** |
| o UNDP Gender Equality Strategy |
| o Guide to Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP Supported GEF Financed Projects |
| o Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation -- Towards UNEG Guidance |
| o Conservation Across Landscapes: India's Approach to Biodiversity Governance, UNDP 2012 |

**Final TE Info Package -UNDP**

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|---|
| o SECURE Himalaya –Project Information: 2017-2023, UNDP |
| o National and State level Technical Committee (SLTC) Meeting Reports |
| o National and SLSC and SLTC notifications |
| o Mandatory Indicators &(GEF 7 Core Indicator worksheets) & GEF 7 Bd Tracking Tool |
| o Annual Work Plans, 2019-2022 |
| o QPRs-SECURE Himalaya |
| o Inception Report, May 2021 |
| o APRs 2019, 2002, 2021,2022,2023 |
| o APR Atlas Award, 2021 & 2022 |
| o APR Evidence 2023 |
| o GEG PIR 2019, 2002, 2021,2022,2023, 2024 |
| o Evidence 2024 |
| o Summary on Feedback on Risk sections in 2024 PIR |
| o OPRs 2018 – 2023 |
| o Fact Sheets – 4 states |
| o SESPs–all sites with embedded doc on Social and Environmental Screening Procedures, 2021 |
| o FACE Form (Funding Authorization and Certification of Expenditure) |
| o LLPMC Landscape conservation Approach meeting Proceedings 2023 |
| o SOP for SECURE |
| o BTOR (Back to Office Reports) |
| o CDRs (Combined delivery Reports, Year wise Expenditure) |
| o Co-Finance Figures (incomplete) |
| o Income generation Evidence |
| o GEF Reports (MAP Ladakh and ToR) |
| o Village Microplans and Livelihood Strategy Changthang+ 3 |
| o SECURE REPORTS |
| o Secure Himalaya risk register- cannot be opened |
| o EvCS – cannot be opened |
| o Sustainability Strategy with Exit Plan for the Farm and Non-Farm based Livelihood Value Chains developed under the SECURE Himalaya Project (SSEP), India – malvika Chauhan |

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| ○ | Sustainability Strategy: UNDP-GEF Project: Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, SustainableUse, and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems (SECURE-Himalaya) Rakesh Shah |
| ○ | **Secure Best Practices- Final Tech Report S DasGupta  - D drive** |

**Research /Other Reports**

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| ○ | Changthang- Work so far, 2023 |
| ○ | Assessment of capacity and training needs of key government staff and community members/institutions for long-term effective biodiversity conservation, and development of a framework for implementation in SECURE Himalaya Project landscapes Strategy for Capacity Development & Framework, Final Report Capacity Dev F/Work, TERI |
| ○ | Assessment of MAP species on their collection, usage, demand, markets, price trends and life cycle in Lahaul and Pangi Landscape, HP. WII |
| ○ | A Karim Ladakh |
| ○ | Sustainable Harvesting and cultivation protocols of threatened MAPs of Western Himalayas, WII, 2021 |
| ○ | Carbon accounting study to assess the current and projected carbon sequestration and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions reduced/avoided/mitigated through the GoI-UNDP-GEF SECURE Himalaya project, UNDP |
| ○ | Enhancement of capacity of Key stake holders on Traditional Art/Craft and Local Architecture in Gangotri Landscape of Uttarakhand, Society for Eradication of Living Fragmentation, Holistic-Healing and Enhancement of Livelihoods for Poor (SELF-HELP) |
| ○ | Draft Green Home stay Guidelines, SELF-HELP |
| ○ | Nature Guide Training –WCBCL Wild life Conservation and Bird Conservation, Ladakh Report+ video |
| ○ | Training on Para-taxonomy (PBR Focused) |
| ○ | CAMP Report-Conservation Assessment and Mgmt. Prioritization W/shop |
| ○ | Anti-Poaching Manual, Traffic |

## Annexure 2: List of persons interviewed including summary

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 09 Jun 24<br><br>4.00 pm | Dr. Ruchi Pant, Head - Climate Adaptation, NRM and Biodiversity<br>Mr. Subrato Paul, Prog. Manager, NRM & Biodiversity, UNDP<br>Mr. Jishu Chakraborty, National Livelihoods Officer, SECURE Himalaya<br>Dr. Atul Kumar Gupta -TE-NC-Consv. & TL<br>Dr. Neelima Jerath -TE-NC-Liv, | On-line | Understanding UNDP Procedures, guidance on Contract Signing, prior clearance of mandatory Courses, etc. |
| 2 | 12 Jun 24<br>10.30 am | Dr. Eklabya Sharma, NC & Evaluator-MTR;<br>Mr. Subrato Paul, UNDP<br>Dr. Atul Kumar Gupta -TE-NC-Cons,<br>Dr. Neelima Jerath -TE-NC-Liv,<br>Mr. Jishu Chakraborty, UNDP (facilitator- logged out after preliminary introductions) | On-line | Discussion on MTR |
| 3 | 30 Jun 24<br>4-5 pm | Dr. Yashveer Bhatnagar, Country Representative, IUCN<br>Dr. Atul Kumar Gupta -TE-NC-Cons | In-person | Perspective of expert working on mountain ecosystem |
| 4 | 03 Jul 24<br>3.30 pm | Dr. Ruchi Pant,<br>Dr. Atul Kumar Gupta,<br>Dr. Neelima Jerath<br>Ms. Anusha Sharma, Head - Programme Management and Support Unit, UNDP<br>Dr. Ruchika Tripathi, MEL Associate, Programme Support Unit, UNDP<br>Ms. Pratha Garkoti, Technical Consultant-Gender & Prog Support, UNDP<br>Mr. Jishu Chakraborty, UNDP | On-line | Formal Meeting with CO<br>Further discussion on TE |
| 5 | 10 Jul 24<br>1.30 pm | Mr. Sajad Hussain Mufti, IFS, CCF, Ladakh<br>Dr. Neelima Jerath, TE-NC-Liv.<br>Mr. Anub Paljor, Consultant, Forest Dept., Ladakh (former Project Associate, Conservation) | Field Visit, Leh | Mr Mufti provided a brief background of the project and shared its implementation history in the UT of Ladakh. The Secure Himalaya project in Ladakh, primarily focused on the Changthang landscape and covering 32 villages and several small hamlets, faced delays due to administrative restructuring, staffing shortages, extreme weather, and COVID-19 restrictions. |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
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| | | | | Despite these challenges, the project achieved significant outcomes in a short operational timeframe. Conservation efforts include forest and alpine meadow management and plans for High Conservation Value species. Local communities, reliant on bio-resources, benefited from skill development in wool processing, ecotourism, and other livelihood options. Gender empowerment was notable, with women actively participating in decision-making and resource management. nitiatives like predator-proof coral pens successfully reduced HWC, though innovations like ANIDERS had limited success. Forest staff and communities were trained in species management and sustainable practices. Gender-responsive data informed training and livelihood activities. Market linkages remain underdeveloped, and extending the project or initiating a follow-up is recommended to consolidate benefits.<br><br>The project, credited to the dedication of the project team, was well-received and considered a success despite its limited timeframe. |
| 6 | 10 Jul 24 <u>4.30 pm</u> | Mr. Brij Mohan Sharma, IFS, APCCF<br>Dr. Anub Paljor<br>Dr. Neelima Jerath<br>Dr. A K Gupta - On-line | Field Visit , Leh | The following points were discussed and Information provided: The Changthang region, part of Ladakh's high-altitude plateau, is ecologically rich, hosting unique biodiversity such as snow leopards, Tibetan blue bears, and Ramsar sites like Tso Moriri and Tso Kar. The area supports drought-resistant flora and cold-tolerant fauna, with conservation and sustainable livelihoods forming the project's focus.<br>**Achievements:**<br>**Biodiversity Management:** Establishment of BMCs, initiation of PBRs, and predator-proof corals reduced Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC).<br>**Livelihood Enhancement:** Improved wool quality and diversified income opportunities (e.g., home stays, ecotourism, wildlife spotting, handicrafts) have increased incomes and promoted community participation.<br>**Gender Empowerment:** Women's active role in decision-making, skill training, and BMC leadership reflects progress in economic and social empowerment.<br>**Traditional Knowledge and MAPs:** Efforts to preserve medicinal plants like Blue Poppy and |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
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| | | | | Juniper align with local "Sowa-Rigpa" medicinal traditions.<br>**Challenges:**<br>• High grazing pressure on grasslands, limited staff, and climatic constraints hindered project activities.<br>• HWC persists, particularly with wolves and feral dogs.<br>**Recommendations:**<br>To sustain achievements, the project should be extended by two years for mainstreaming activities, strengthening market linkages, and promoting value addition in MAP-based products like Sea Buckthorn. |
| 7 | 10 Jul 24 7.00 pm | Mr. Sidharth Pradhan, Senior Partner, Mantara Himalaya<br>Mr. Anub Paljor<br>Dr. Neelima Jerath | Field Visit , Leh | The team interacted with Mr Pradhan, an expert in cross-border tourism, trade, and rural tourism, has successfully promoted home stays in Sikkim, Bhutan, Darjeeling, and Ladakh under the Secure Himalaya project. Key takeaways from his efforts include:<br>**Approach:**<br>**Community Engagement:** Conducts societal mapping and interest assessments to identify committed participants.<br>**Home Stay Criteria:** Families must have basic facilities like a spare room, functional toilets, and an operational kitchen.<br>He also highlighted the trainings in Rong based on 2 training modules:<br>o *Module 1:* General tourism theory for all, covering tourism basics and financial management.<br>o *Module 2:* Practical training for selected families, focusing on leveraging natural resources, tourist preferences, and cultural exchange.<br>**Achievements and Recommendations:**<br>• Successful establishment of home stays in Rong Valley.<br>• Market linkages for international tourists, emphasizing self-reliance for long-term sustainability.<br>• Regular monitoring and guidance for home stays.<br>• Proposed project continuation for five years to enhance local capacity and offer advanced training on medicinal plants, birdwatching, and cultural interpretation. |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
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| | | | | • Suggested establishment of museums and refining the Ecotourism Policy to a Wildlife Tourism Policy. |
| 8 | 11 Jul 24 11.00 am to 4.00 pm | Mrs. Thinles Angmo, (Local Women leader, BMC Chair & Home stay facility owner) Mr. Anub Paljor Dr. Neelima Jerath | Field visit to Rong Valley | The Rong Valley Ecotourism Initiative was implemented in Himya, Tarchit, and Khatpu, involving 12 out of 93 households that met basic home stay criteria. While some community members hesitated due to superstitions and financial risk, notable progress was observed, led by Mrs. Thinles Angmo, a dynamic woman who has established a successful home stay in Khatpu. **Key Highlights:** • **Community Hesitation:** Superstition about outsiders and the preference for stable incomes from labor jobs hinder wider participation. • **Women's Role:** Women in Ladakh actively participate in decision-making, enjoy financial autonomy, and are integral to the initiative. • **Cultural and Environmental Integration:** Mrs. Angmo incorporates local flora, fauna, and traditional practices into the home stay experience, with initiatives like: o Greenhouse and organic kitchen gardening. o Mushroom cultivation with expert support. o Ladakhi cooking classes for day visitors. o A museum showcasing Ladakhi culture and crafts. **Project Benefits:** • Rekindled pride in local culture, biodiversity, and traditional knowledge. • Training and equipment upgrades (e.g., solar water heaters) to attract tourists. • Promotion of organic farming and exposure visits to learn from other states. • Income generation of ₹40,000–₹45,000 in the first year, despite initial challenges. **Challenges:** • **Human-Wildlife Conflict:** Snow leopard attacks on cattle have increased, prompting communities to adopt stall feeding despite health concerns. A cumbersome compensation process adds to the issue. |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
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| | | | | • **Sustainability:** Initial lag in tourist influx necessitates patience, with requests to extend the project for at least five more years. |
| 9 | 12 Jul 24 12.00 noon to 4.30 pm | Mrs. Tseding Khando (President of Angkung Village Women Group) with members Ms. Tsering Diskit Miss. Tsering Lamo Mr. Spalzang Chosdup Mr. Tsering Gurmet Mr Sritar tsering Mr. Skarma Tsetan Dr. Nurzin Angmo, Forest dept. Dr. Neelima Jerath | Field visit to alpine meadows in Rupshu, Saline marshes and Puga Hot springs area | The visit to the Changthang plateau and Puga valley assessed the SECURE Himalaya Project's impact on the livelihoods of nomadic Changpa communities. These pastoralists rely on livestock for wool, meat, and trade, following traditional migration cycles. Key highlights include: 1. **Biodiversity & MAP Conservation**: The region supports rich biodiversity, with 60% of flora identified as medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs), some under IUCN threat categories. Conservation assessments have prioritized 40 taxa for detailed study. 2. **Tsokar Wetland Complex**: A Ramsar site with saline and freshwater lakes, home to black-necked cranes. 3. **Puga Valley Ecosystem**: Notable for geothermal springs with medicinal value and thick ground flora. 4. **Wool Craft Centre**: Established under the project, the center has enhanced livelihoods through wool processing, training, and marketing. Key interventions include: ○ Segregating wool by quality, introducing organic dyes, and branding. ○ Reducing women's labor via carding, spinning machines, and mechanical ply winding. ○ Promoting gender inclusivity by training women in livestock shearing and men in carding. To protect livestock from predators, the project has provided metal corrals to the communities, which safeguard against snow leopards and wolves. However, a new threat has emerged in the form of feral dogs and hybrid animals called "Khipshangs," which are a cross between feral dogs and wolves. The communities have raised concerns about the growing menace of these animals and have requested that the project address the control of the dog, wolf, and Khipshang populations through appropriate policies and laws. |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
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| 10. | 14 Jul 24 230 pm | Dr. A Karim, Associate Prof, TDU, Bangalore Dr. A K Gupta | In-person | MAPs status in Changthang |
| 11. | 20 Jul 24 3.00 pm - 3.30pm | Dr. Manoj Thakur, Asst Prof, Mandi (former SPO, SH) Dr. A K Gupta Dr. Neelima Jerath | On-line | Dr. Manoj Thakur highlighted the success of the project in Himachal Pradesh, driven by community participation in conservation and livelihood enhancement. Key activities included: <br>• **Need Assessment & Annual Work Plans**: These guided landscape-level activities. <br>• **Community Engagement**: Livelihood strategies were developed, such as promoting ecotourism, with 25 home stays in Pangi, and boosting women's entrepreneurship through the KangLa Basket initiative and sea-buckthorn value chain. <br>• **Fodder Banks**: Established in high-altitude areas to reduce pressure on forests and pastures. <br>• **Sustainable Agriculture**: Hazelnut plantations promoted for their environmental and economic benefits. <br>• **Biodiversity Conservation**: 35 Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) set up, PBRs prepared, and 3 Biodiversity Heritage Sites notified. <br>• **Sustainable Energy & Waste Management**: Solar power and a pilot solid waste management project in Keylong. <br>• **Training & Awareness**: Provided to communities and field staff, leading to increased participation in conservation efforts. <br>Dr. Thakur emphasized that the project's success in integrating livelihoods with conservation proves that community involvement can enhance environmental protection while improving local economic conditions. |
| 12. | 24 Jul 4.00pm | Dr. Savita, Retd. PCCF & State Project Director Dr. A K Gupta Dr. Neelima Jerath | On-line | Dr. Savita highlighted the uniqueness of the **SECURE Himalaya project**, the first large-scale initiative in India to adopt a landscape approach that addresses both livelihoods and natural resource conservation. Despite being in remote areas often overlooked by other departments, the project has fostered community ownership of bio-resources, demonstrating that conservation can only be sustained through active participation. |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
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| | | | | Key successes of the project include:<br>• **Wildlife Tourism**: The project sensitively addressed wildlife tourism, ensuring tourists respect the environment, while supporting 212 households in establishing home stays, which generate income from Rs. 18,000 to Rs. 2 lakh annually.<br>• **Women's Empowerment**: Initiatives like improved nut crackers, training in packaging, and the KangLa Basket initiative have empowered women economically and socially, with many rising as community leaders.<br>• **Livestock Safety**: Fodder banks and predator-proof corrals have improved livestock safety and grassland restoration.<br>• **Para-Taxonomy Training**: Local youth, including girls, were trained to support biodiversity management, particularly in preparing PBRs.<br>• **Waste Management**: Pilot waste management projects were successfully implemented.<br>Dr. Savita emphasized the project's **inter-sectoral approach**, the generation of Rs. 106 crore in co-financing, and the involvement of multiple departments and local stakeholders. She also noted that at least **40% of women** in the project areas were positively impacted by these interventions. |
| 13. | 25 Jul 24 3 pm – 5 pm | Mr. Anil Thakur, APCCF cum SNO (July 2019 - April 2024).<br>Ms. Neha Tomar, Adm & Fin Assistant, UNDP<br>Mr. Jishu Chakraborty, UNDP<br>Mr. Abhishek, Ex-PMU Hinmachal Pradesh: Co-Founder PIPAL, HP<br>Dr. Neelima Jerath, TE Team<br>Dr. A. K. Gupta, TE, Team Leader | On-line | Mr. Thakur highlighted the success of the project, which was inaugurated by the Chief Minister and has gained significant attention. Key achievements include:<br>• **Collaboration**: Multiple departments and institutions, including agriculture, the biodiversity board, local organizations, and the Wildlife Institute of India, were involved in the project's implementation.<br>• **Biodiversity Conservation**: The project helped establish 35 BMCs, prepare PBRs, and declare the first three Biodiversity Heritage Sites in the state.<br>• **Waste Management**: Local authorities in Keylong and Lahaul implemented waste disposal measures.<br>• **High Altitude Management**: The High Altitude Management Plan, prepared with |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
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| | | | | international support, was submitted to the Wetland Authority and MoEF&CC. <br> • **Gender Empowerment**: The project addressed gender issues by involving women in various livelihood activities like wool-based livelihoods, Kangla Basket, and home stays, which have contributed to women's economic empowerment. <br> • **Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC)**: Measures such as solar fencing helped mitigate HWC incidents. <br> • **Challenges**: COVID delays and fund release issues impacted project timelines. While scientific studies generated valuable data, they weren't always practical for on-site application, and more field activities could have been funded. <br> • **Handloom and Training**: The handloom initiative continues to grow, while training on HWC and wildlife crime prevention has helped reduce HWC incidents. The Rapid Response Force has been instrumental, successfully capturing wildlife post-project. <br> Mr. Thakur emphasized the positive outcomes, particularly in gender empowerment and wildlife conservation, despite some delays and funding challenges. |
| 14. | 7 Aug 24 11.00am | Ms. Rigizin, President, Khondoma SHG <br> Ms. Shanti Devi-Member <br> Ms. Reena, Member <br> Ms. Neema, Member <br> Dr. A K Gupta <br> Dr. Neelima Jerath | On-line | In the Miyar valley, the abundance of Sea-Buckthorn berries, traditionally used for homemade jams and medicines, became the focus for creating marketable products. Initially, a group of 15 women started making and selling products like jams, jellies, and chutneys. This initiative grew into a Self-Help Group (SHG) of 51 women, supported by the project to mechanize berry processing, improve packaging, and promote market linkages. The resulting increase in sales contributed to economic empowerment for the community, especially women. As the project expanded, the women introduced new products, including Sea-Buckthorn tea, leaf powder, toothpaste, and skin creams, leading to the creation of the 'KangLa Basket' brand, named after the local KangLa Pass. <br> The project also encouraged environmental protection, with women actively preserving and planting Sea-Buckthorn to prevent soil erosion and improve soil quality. The initiative has |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
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| | | | | gained national recognition under the "One District, One Project" scheme. In addition to Sea-Buckthorn, women in Udaipur and Kaylong have begun producing natural organic dyes and processing products like Kala zeera and Desi Ghee. The project also promoted eco-tourism and home stays. With ongoing success, the women are now planning to expand their market internationally. This project showcases leadership, teamwork, and a long-term vision for community-driven economic and environmental sustainability. |
| 15. | 8 Aug 24 10.30 am | Dr. Sandeep Tambe, Ex-SNO, PMU Sikkim & CWLW (& Secretary, DST), Ms. Shewani, DFO, SPO, Secure Mr. Deo Prakash, Adm. & Finance Dr. A K Gupta Dr. Neelima Jerath | On-line | Dr. Sandeep Tambe shared key learnings from the project, despite its limited physical success due to COVID and weather-related challenges. The most significant insight was that the majority of the snow leopard population resides outside protected areas, meaning conservation efforts needed to extend beyond these zones. <br> o The project introduced livelihood opportunities, such as Nettle fiber extraction for cloth making, although its success has been limited. Home stays and eco-tourism were promoted through the creation of a Himal Rakshaks cadre. Good work in waste management was done in the Yuksan area, providing a model for replication. Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) were formed, energized, and trained in conservation practices, and three Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS) were identified, one of which is now notified. <br> o Several research studies were conducted, but their findings have not been widely disseminated, as they are site-specific. Dr. Tambe emphasized the need for a bottom-up approach and suggested that more time should have been spent on project planning, budget allocation, and clear implementation strategies from the outset. However, valuable partnerships were built in Yoksam and Lachen, which may prove beneficial in the future. <br> o A unique initiative, a strategically located selfie point, was created to raise awareness about the snow leopard among locals and tourists. Ms. Shewani highlighted that the |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
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| | | | | project empowered women by raising their awareness on conservation and providing training in Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs), with 53% of the beneficiaries being women. Dr. Tambe also noted the valuable inter-state and inter-country knowledge sharing opportunities the project facilitated. |
| 16 | 13 Aug 24 11.00am | H.V. Girisha, IFS, Former Addl. Dir, WCCB Dr. A K Gupta Dr. Neelima Jerath Mr. Jishu Chakraborty | On-line | Mr. Girisha praised the SECURE Himalaya Project for its holistic approach, addressing issues like Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC), wildlife crime, and ecosystem conservation, while emphasizing people's participation and technical aspects. He highlighted the role of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEFCC), which combats organized wildlife crime across India through intelligence collection, dissemination, and enforcement. India is also unique in having a Wildlife Cyber Investigation Unit. Regarding Outcome 3 of the project, WCCB worked closely on capacity building for field officers and the judiciary, focusing on issues like illegal cross-border trade and poaching, with support from TRAFFIC-India and WII. The bureau also collaborates with the army to sensitize personnel on wildlife issues and prevent the killing of collared animals. WCCB has a network of over 500 wildlife volunteers, 30% of whom are women. These volunteers, including young individuals and university professors, have been trained in surveillance, with women specifically trained as informers in the project area. The WCCB also manages a centralized wildlife crime data bank and works with international organizations to combat wildlife crimes globally. Mr. Girisha noted the intensive training provided to frontline forest staff, covering theoretical knowledge, fieldwork, forensic evidence collection, and mock court sessions. He recommended reserving 30% of seats for women in all such training programs. |
| 17. | 15 Aug 24 3.30 pm | Ummed Dhakad, Socio-Economic & Livelihood associate, UNDP, Uttarkashi Bhaskar Joshi, UNV at UNDP Dr. A K Gupta Dr Neelima Jerath | On-line | Mr. Dhakad, who worked extensively on the SECURE Himalaya project in Uttarakhand, highlighted five key actions that contributed to the project's success in a challenging landscape and under difficult circumstances: |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
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| | | | | 1. **Expanded Focus**: The Forest Department extended its focus beyond forest areas and Protected Areas (PAs) to the entire landscape, addressing the needs of local communities. |
| | | | | 2. **SAGE Assessment**: The first-ever Site-Assessment for Governance and Equity (SAGE) was conducted in Uttarakhand alongside the METT, helping to better understand governance and equity in area-based conservation and improve stakeholder strategies. |
| | | | | 3. **Community Engagement**: Building relationships and trust was key to involving local communities in conservation, with local political leaders mobilizing people for collective actions, such as rotational grazing decisions. |
| | | | | 4. **Carrying Capacity Studies**: These studies were conducted to assess the landscape's ability to support both wildlife and local communities. |
| | | | | 5. **Gender Consideration**: The project prioritized the role of women in conservation, recognizing how it could impact their lives and ensuring their involvement in planning. |
| | | | | These efforts helped achieve challenging targets related to awareness and alternative livelihoods. The project also addressed the potential negative impacts of ecotourism on the landscape by raising awareness about sustainability. Additionally, the project focused on **wildlife corridors**, identifying seven corridors for species like blue sheep, and using **geo-coir** for slope stabilization. Efforts to integrate **equity and gender equality** included: training local girls for adventure tourism, establishing cooperatives with 50% of earnings directed to a revolving fund, motivating BMCs to charge for accessed medicinal plant resources, encouraging the cultivation of high-value traditional crops, training on invasive species removal and native grass cultivation, promoting rotational grazing protocols. |
| | | | | Dr. Bhasker Joshi noted that field studies conducted by organizations like GBPIHS and TERI were used to guide the project, and **Geographical Indications (GIs)** were filed for local products such as Budera Craft, Botia |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
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| | | | | Daan, and red Rajmah, which have been awarded. |
| 18. | 17 Aug 24 11.30 am | Mr. Sonam Tashi Gyaltsen, Co-Founder, EchoStream Ms. C Rinchen Lepcha , Consultant, Value addition Mr. Upen Palzon Lepcha, MLAS-NGO Mr Lasngo Mr. Shong, traditional nettle fibre weaver Dr. A K Gupta Dr. Neelima Jerath | On-line | The SECURE Himalaya project introduced the Nettle fiber value chain in Sikkim, focusing on developing handicrafts and handlooms, particularly high-demand Nettle fiber dresses and cloth. The project aimed to mechanize the labor-intensive process traditionally done by women, training 45 women as weavers and trainers. Products showcased at the India Handicraft Exhibition received positive responses, but progress was hindered by flash floods and road damage. Despite challenges, the project holds high potential, with plans to continue once funds are available. The initiative has secured two Geographical Indications (GIs) for Nettle fiber products and aims to empower women artisans with estimated future earnings of Rs 1.5 lakh each. Additionally, ecotourism and cardamom cultivation revival are being promoted in the region. |
| 19. | 19 Aug 24 3:30pm | Mr. Ummed Dhakad Ms. Ambika Rawat, Communication Volunteer Mr. Umesh Panwar Mr. Nathi Rautela, APIO, Apple Processing Unit, Jhala Dr. A K Gupta Dr. Neelima Jerath | On-line | The TE Team's visit to the Gangotri-Govind landscape was hindered by heavy rains and landslides, leading to an online meeting facilitated by Mr. Ummed Dhakad to engage with beneficiaries and project staff. Mr. Dhakad highlighted youth migration from the mountains due to lack of job opportunities, noting that the SECURE Himalaya project has helped mitigate this issue in recent years. Livelihood opportunities, such as home stays, tourism-based activities, and handloom/handicraft value chains, have benefited local communities, particularly women, empowering them financially and socially. However, competition between parallel organizations in the handicraft sector needs to be addressed through government-led guidelines. Other livelihood options include apple and sea-buckthorn products, as well as plant-based goods like 'rakhis' from indigenous plants. While marketing remains a challenge, online sales are considered a promising solution, though a project website has not yet launched due to technical issues. For long-term success, cohesive efforts and reduced internal competition are essential. |
| 20. | 26 Aug 24 5.00 pm | Mr Naveen Anand, SELF HELP Dr. A K Gupta Dr Neelima Jerath | Field visit, | Mr. Anand shared that his society supported local women during the COVID period by providing work on ayurvedic Corona kits while |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
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| | | | Dehradun | continuing traditional crafts. After the COVID impact lessened, a 'Buyer-Seller Meet' was organized in Uttarkashi, resulting in sales worth Rs 2 lakh and orders worth Rs 7 lakh, boosting local morale. In 2021, a self-reliant Cooperative (OFPO) was established, funded by the members themselves, with over 70% of the members being women. The cooperative is now profitable, providing dividends and bonuses. Exposure visits for skills like modern knitting, wool shearing, and natural dye production were conducted through NGOs. Green home stays promoting sustainable practices such as solar power, local cuisines, and waste management have been successful, with 62 home stays registered, 44% of which are listed with 'Make My Trip.' The business has thrived during the tourist season.<br>Efforts to build capacity for product diversification through NIFD and branding, along with the registration for GST, are underway. Additionally, the Ministry of MSME is setting up a Growth Center for Handlooms & Handicrafts. Linking these projects to government schemes like SHE, One-District-One-Product, and Make in India is essential for further growth. Work on MAPs (Medicinal and Aromatic Plants) also needs to be prioritized, and BMCs (Biodiversity Management Committees) should be strengthened for resource identification and value addition. |
| 21. | 26 Aug 24 6.00 pm | Dr SK Khanduri, Sr. Advisor UNDP, former IGF(WL), MoEFCC & PCCF, Kerala<br>Dr A K Gupta, -TE-NC-Cons & TL<br>Dr Neelima Jerath -TE-NC-Liv. | Field visit, Dehradun | Dr. Khanduri shared that the SECURE Himalaya project is part of the "Global Partnership on Wildlife Conservation and Crime Prevention for Sustainable Development," funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The project focuses on promoting the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the Himalayan ecosystems to conserve wildlife, including the endangered snow leopard, by engaging local communities in conservation efforts.<br>Launched in 2017 by the Indian Government with UNDP's support, the project aims to secure livelihoods, promote sustainable use of resources, and reduce dependency on ecosystems through alternative livelihoods. It also contributes to the Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP), a joint |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
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| | | | | initiative involving multiple countries and organizations. <br> The project involved comprehensive assessments of biodiversity, socio-economic conditions, and institutional frameworks. Key threats identified include excessive natural resource use, unplanned infrastructure development, high levels of tourism, human-wildlife conflict, and climate change. Strategies to address these threats include improving governance models, fostering stakeholder cooperation, and setting up mechanisms for sustained funding. |
| 22. | **27 Aug** 10.00 am | Mr Dhananjay Mohan, PCCF & HOFF, UK <br> Ms. Deepika <br> Dr. Ruchi Pant <br> Dr. A K Gupta <br> Dr. Neelima Jerath | Field visit, Dehradun | PCCF/HOFF emphasized the SECURE Himalaya project's focus on landscape-level conservation, unlike previous species or protected area-specific projects. Despite being small, its long-term impact is significant, particularly due to Outcomes 2 and 3, which have contributed to shifting the attitudes of stakeholders, including the government. The Landscape Level Coordination Committees, led by District Magistrates, were crucial in successfully implementing the project using a holistic approach. <br> Ms. Deepika highlighted the formation of Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), with office space provided at Gram Panchayat Bhawans. Twenty-nine BMCs were trained, and biodiversity projects were initiated, including Aconitum and kutki farming, as well as tree planting. Additionally, 29 People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs) were validated. The project's strength lies in its catalytic role, especially in previously neglected areas, making it highly effective in promoting conservation. |
| 23. | 27 Aug 24 10.00 am | Dr. Samir Sinha, CWLW <br> Dr. Ruchi Pant <br> Dr. A K Gupta <br> Dr. Neelima Jerath | Field visit, Dehradun | Feedback on initiatives undertaken to address illegal WL trade and crime. |
| 24. | 27 Aug 24 12.00 Noon | Dr. Satyakumar, Scientist G and Dean, WII <br> Dr.Salvador, WII <br> Dr.Amit Kumar WII <br> Dr. A K Gupta <br> Dr Neelima Jerath | Field visit, Dehradun | Sharing information on existing Research studies by WII and future Plans |
| 25. | 28 Aug 24 3.30 – 5 pm | Dr Ranjan Kumar Mishra,MoEFCC (Former CWLW, UK) <br> Dr A K Gupta | In Person | Mr. Mishra, who served as SPO for the project and Chief Wildlife Warden of Uttarakhand, highlighted the project's significant contributions, including organizing the first |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Dr Neelima Jerath | | formal snow leopard (SL) census in the area, previously identified only by BSF, ITBP, and forest personnel. The project successfully restored vast areas through collaboration between the forest department, local communities, and line departments, implementing an integrated approach. Capacity building was provided to around 1000 staff through nationally recognized institutions. Key outcomes included a drastic reduction in human-wildlife conflict (HWC) involving brown bears, volunteer-driven waste management, and wetland restoration efforts. Additionally, three biodiversity hotspots (BHS) were declared, and youth were trained as para-veterinarians to address zoonotic diseases as part of the government's One Health campaign. The project also trained para-taxonomists for high-end tourism and conducted population estimations of wildlife species in high-altitude areas (3000m to 10,000m) for the first time. The project promoted women's self-help groups (SHGs), launching local products like razma and apples under the Green Value Chain system, and obtained GI tags. It also initiated scientific studies with organizations like WII, TERI, and WWF. However, Mr. Mishra suggested that more state machinery involvement could have better applied these studies. A Wetland Management Guide Book was launched, and Nettle was used for handicrafts and ropes, inspired by Sikkim. Looking ahead, Mr. Mishra proposed that Phase 2 of the project could expand into the remaining 12,000 sq km area and explore snow leopard-based tourism, including establishing an SL center in Gangotri. |
| 26. | 28 Aug 24 4.30 pm | Mr R Raghuprasad, IG, WL, MoEFCC Dr Sunil Kumar, JD WL Dr. A K Gupta Dr Neelima Jerath | In Person | Perspective on importance of the project for India, lessons learned and future Plans |
| 27 | 30 Aug 24 11.00am | Dr. Soumitra Dasgupta, Former MS, Nat. Project Steering Committee SECURE Himalaya Shri S P Yadav, DG, IBCA Dr. A K Gupta Dr Neelima Jerath | In Person | Mr. Dasgupta highlighted the SECURE Himalaya project as a pivotal initiative for snow leopard conservation, with key achievements including:<br>• Energizing snow leopard conservation efforts, a flagship species of the high-altitude ecosystem, and fostering cross-sectoral conservation.<br>• Demonstrating the importance of landscape conservation, showcasing its |

| Sr No. | Date & Time | Names of Participants | Online/In Person | Remarks and summary of field visits |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | positive impact on both ecosystems and local communities, thus advocating for more funding for similar projects.<br>• Recognizing and empowering women in conservation, with a focus on livelihood promotion.<br>• Successfully integrating ecotourism with proper restrictions to boost local economies.<br>• Reducing human-wildlife conflict and illegal wildlife trade through community participation and ecosystem understanding.<br>• Suggesting that METT (Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool) be used in other landscape projects to assess progress and impact. |
| 28 | 03 Sep 24 3 pm | Dr Vishaish Uppal, Director, Governance, Law & Policy, WWF-India<br>Dr. A K Gupta | In-person | Views of knowledge provider on capacity building under the project |
| 29. | 16 Sept 24 12.00 noon | Ms Tshering Uden Bhutia, Khangchendzonga Conservation Committee 2 members of KCC<br>Dr. A K Gupta<br>Dr Neelima Jerath | On-line | Experience sharing on waste management initiative in mountain areas with focus on people's participation. |

## Annexure 3: TE Mission itinerary

| DATE | ACTIVITY | REMARKS | ITINERARY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 27 June 2024 | Online meeting with PMSU | 1:30-2:30 PM | Online |
| 02 July 2024 | TE-NC-Consv & TL( AKG)  and  TE-NC-Liv (NJ) travel from Chennai/Bengaluru to Dehradun (By Air) in the afternoon. Evening Dinner meeting with HOFF, SNA, and other officials (as per availability) **OR** Meeting with Aparna/Vishal | Halt at Dehradun | Travel postponed due to orange alert and landslides at UK |
| 03 July 2024 | Meeting with HoFF, SNA, SBB, Mr. Khanduri, ACS, WII (Mr. Sathya), Tourism and Co-finance Team discuss with the forest officials and other stakeholders at the forest headquarters | | |
| 04 July 2024 | Travel from Dehradun to Gangotri (by Road) | Halt at Uttarkashi/Gangotri | |
| 05 July 2024 | Make visits to different site locations (local travel) & meet stakeholders as requested at Paras 6.4 to 6.8. PMU requested to facilitate. | From Uttarkashi to Harsheel and back to Uttarkashi and halt. | |
| 06 July 2024 | Return to Delhi (by Air) from Jolly Grant Airport, Dehradun after return from Uttarkashi. | Travel from Uttarkashi to Dehradun and then to Delhi and Halt. | |
| 07July 2024 | Meeting in Delhi – WCCB, MoEFCC, IUCN, WWF, other experts. | AKG returns to Bengaluru and NJ to Chandigarh from Delhi. | |
| 08 July 2024 | Compilation of information/data collected and preparation for the second phase of field visit by the TE Team through online discussions | AKG/NJ halts at respective station. | Alternate meetings held on-line and assignment Continued |
| 09 July 2024 | AKG Travels from Bengaluru to Leh (by Air).  NJ Travels from Chandigarh to Leh (by Air) | Halt at Leh | TE-NC-Liv (NJ)  travels to Leh |
| 10 July 2024 | Meeting with SNA, Mr BM Sharma,  Mr. S H Mufti and | | As planned |
| | Meeting with Mantara Himalaya | | |
| 11 July 2024 | Travel from Leh to Rong TE site (by road). TE Team hold discussions with different stakeholders at villages | As suggested by PMU and requested at Paras 6.4 to 6.8. PMU requested to facilitate | New meeting |
| 12 July 2024 | Travel from Leh to Shokar TE site (by road). TE Team hold | | As proposed |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | discussions with different stakeholders at village, | | |
| 13 July 2024 | AKG Travels from Leh to Bengaluru (by Air) NJ Travels from Leh to Chandigarh (by Air) | | Return to Chandigarh |
| 14-18 July 2024 | First draft report and online meetings with Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim State Units | Meetings with communities as suggested by PMU and as requested under Para 6.4 to 6.8. PMU requested to facilitate | Online Meetings had to be postponed as originally planned due to widespread rains at all sites and non-availability of stake holders and beneficiaries. |
| 19-21 July 2024 | Virtual meeting and PSC with ADG / IG and Dissemination workshop | | However, on line meetings held from end-July to mid-August, 2024. |
| 21-26 July 2024 | Final report within 5 days after | | |
| 02-16 August 2024 | Circulation of draft TE report and Incorporation of comments on draft TE report into Audit Trail & finalization of TE report | | Work on first draft initiated. Desk review and data analysis undertaken. |
| 17 August 2024 | Preparation and Issue of Management responses | | |
| 23 August 2024 | Expected date of full TE completion | | |
| 26 Aug, 2024 | | | Field visit to Uttarakhand. AKG travels from Bangalore to D Dun, NJ from Chandigarh to Dehradun. 2 meetings held |
| 27 Aug, 2024 | | | Meetings with UK HoFF, CWLW and WII. Travel to Delhi |
| 28- 29 Aug | | | Meetings at MoEFCC and IBCA |
| 30 Aug | | | Work on Draft continued |
| 16 Sept, 2024 | | | On line meeting with KCC, Sikkim |
| 28 Sept, 2024 | | | First Draft submitted |

## Annexure 4: Evaluation Question Matrix (evaluation criteria with key questions, indicators, sources of data, and methodology)

| Evaluative Criteria Questions | Indicators | Sources | Methodology |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Relevance:** How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF Focal area and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national level? | | | |
| Does the project's objective fit within the national environment and development priorities and appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the country and communities? | Coherence between project objective and national policy priorities and strategies, as stated in official documents | International and National policy documents such as GSLEP, Big Cat Alliance, etc. | Consultation with key agencies |
| To what extent was the project in line with the UNDP Strategic Plan, CPD, and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) | Alignment of project with UNDP Strategic Plan, CPD, UNSDCF | Prodoc | Desk Review |
| Does the project objective fit with the Global Environmental benefits under the GEF-6 biodiversity (BD), land degradation and sustainable forest management (SFM) focal areas | Level of coherence between project objective and GEF strategic priorities | GEF strategic priority documents | Desk review |
| To what extent has the project been formulated according to national and local strategies to advance gender equality? | Formulation of the appropriate strategies to advance gender equality. | APRs, MTR, Government notifications | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| Has the project proved relevant in addressing landscape level issues concerning lack of availability of alternative livelihoods and unsustainable land-use practices by different stakeholders? | Number of alternative livelihood measures initiated and executed on the ground along with various instances of sustainable land-use practices | APRs, MTR, other existing documents | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| Does the landscape-based approach of the project suitably address issues concerning conservation of wildlife especially beyond protected areas and under limitations of different deterrent systems? | Landscape level development of multi-stakeholder and multi-sector coordination governance mechanisms to facilitate convergence of planning, manpower and financial resources. | APRs, MTR, other existing documents | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |

| Did the project concept originate from local or national stakeholders, and have these stakeholders been involved in project development? | Level of involvement of local, sub-national (state governments), and national (MoEFCC) in project origination and/or development | ProDoc and associated documents including PIF, PIR, and MTR<br><br>Discussions with project management unit Consultations with partners | Desk Review; Field visit and Consultations |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance?** | | | |
| Are the project objectives likely to be met? To what extent has progress been made towards the achievement of the outputs/outcomes? | Level of progress toward project indicator targets relative to expected level at current point of implementation | APRs, MTR Project management unit & Project stakeholders | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| What are the key factors contributing to achieving or not achieving the intended targets and how were they overcome? | Identification and Preparedness for project risks, barriers and impact drivers. Rise in incomes w.r.t. baseline data. | APRs, MTR Project management unit & Project stakeholders, success stories. | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| Are there alternative strategies adopted at the local institutional levels for achieving the project's objectives? | Documentation and sustainable execution of alternative strategies on the ground at the local institutional level. | APRs, MTR Project management unit & Project stakeholders, success stories/case studies. | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| Has the project added value, contributed to improvement of processes in local planning, and mainstreamed biodiversity conservation to the ongoing efforts of the local governments and communities in the given landscapes? | Reflection of sustained planning processes, efforts, and ownership in different stakeholders. | APRs, MTR Project management unit & Project stakeholders, case studies. | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| Are there unintended positive and/or negative environmental and/or socioeconomic effects of project related activities observed? If so, how have those affected the vulnerable and marginalized populations, and/or had gender equality related implications? | Identification of environmental and/or socioeconomic impacts | APRs, MTR Project management unit & Project stakeholders | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| **Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in line with international and national norms and standards? It is a measure of how economically resources and inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.** | | | |
| Has the project been cost effective? | Quality and adequacy of financial management procedures<br><br>Financial delivery rate vs. expected rate | Project Financial details | Desk Review |

| | Management costs as a percentage of total costs | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Is the project implementation approach efficient for delivering the planned project results? | Adequacy of implementation structure and mechanisms for coordination and communication.<br><br>Extent and quality of engagement with relevant partners Quality and adequacy of project monitoring mechanisms | APRs, MTR Project management unit & Project stakeholders, case studies. | Desk review and discussions at State and national level |
| Is the project implementation delayed? If so, has that affected cost-effectiveness? | Project milestones in time Planned results affected by delays Required project adaptive management measures related to delays | Project documents Project management unit | Desk review<br><br>Interviews with project management unit |
| Is there adoption of innovative interventions especially techniques and technologies in the project and to what extent and in which area (s)? | Innovative and out-of-the-box thinking /interventions executed at different operational levels. | APRs, MTR Project management unit & Project stakeholders, case studies. | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| To what extent has the project management structure proved efficient in generating the expected results and within given time limits? | Extent and quality of inputs from project management personnel at different levels of operation helping in generating desired outputs and outcomes. | APRs, MTR Project management unit & Project stakeholders, case studies. | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| Extent of co-financing for project implementation both in cash and in-kind? | Percent of cash and in-kind co-financing relative to expected/ agreed levels | Project Financial documents | Desk Review |
| What has been the level of convergence with the programmes and resources of different development agencies in the landscape especially the Local governance; convergence with local institutions like the network of Self-Help Groups of women, and cost efficiency and value for money especially in accessing technical support and implementation? | Integration of project programs with local level sectoral programs and processes, including outsourcing tasks to concerned line departments for expert knowledge inputs and sharing. | Project Financial documents, APRs, MTR Project management unit & Project stakeholders, case studies. | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |

| Overall project outcome: To what extent has the project delivered the stated outcomes? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| To which extent has the project delivered on the identified outcomes? | Achievement of outcome and indicator-wise targets.<br><br>Assessment of quality of outcomes | Project Documents, Stakeholder meetings | Desk Review, Interviews |
| **Sustainability: Sustaining long-term project results** | | | |
| *Institutional framework and governance sustainability* | | | |
| Do relevant stakeholders have or are likely to achieve an adequate level of "ownership" of results, to have the interest in ensuring that project benefits are maintained? | Level of initiative and engagement of relevant stakeholders in project activities and results | Project documents Project management unit Project stakeholders | Field visit interviews Desk review |
| Do relevant stakeholders have the necessary technical capacity to ensure that project benefits are maintained? | Improvement in the technical capacity (knowledge and skill) of concerned stakeholders. | Project Documents, Stakeholders | Desk Review, Interviews |
| To what extent are the project results dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance? | Existence of institutional and governance risks to project benefits | Project Documents, Stakeholders | Desk Review, Interviews |
| To what extent have the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes been successful in promoting accountability, transparency, and knowledge transfer post exit phase for ensuring sustainability? | The existence of legal and policy framework related risks. | APRs, MTR, other project documents, Project management unit & Project stakeholders | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| *Socio-political and environmental sustainability* | | | |
| Is there sufficient public/ stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? | Level of awareness among the relevant stakeholders about the objectives of the project | Stakeholders | Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| Do relevant stakeholders have or are likely to achieve an adequate level of "ownership" of results, to have the interest in ensuring that project benefits are maintained? | Level of initiative and engagement of relevant stakeholders in project activities and results | Project documents Project management unit Project stakeholders | Field visit interviews Desk review |
| Do relevant stakeholders have the necessary technical capacity to ensure that project benefits are maintained? | Improvement in the technical capacity (knowledge and skill) of concerned stakeholders. | Project Documents, Stakeholders | Desk Review, Interviews |

| Any environmental risks that can undermine future sustainability? | Existence of social & environmental risks to project benefits | Project Documents, Stakeholders | Desk Review, Interviews |
|---|---|---|---|
| To what extent is there likelihood of environmental risks and socio-political factors adversely affecting future flow of project impacts and Global Environmental Benefits? | Environmental & Socio-political risks Vs Benefits | Project Documents, Stakeholders | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| Are lessons learned and project's successful mechanisms transferred to concerned stakeholders and potential future beneficiaries (for purpose of replication), and appropriate public/stakeholder awareness created to ensure long-term sustainability within given environmental and socio-political ecosystem? | Environmental & Socio-political risks Vs. transfer of knowledge/awareness creation and appropriate levels. | Environmental & Socio-political risks | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| *Financial sustainability* | | | |
| To what extent are project results likely to be dependent on continued financial support? What is the likelihood that any required financial resources will be available to sustain the project results once the GEF assistance ends? | Financial requirements for maintenance of project benefits<br><br>Level of expected financial resources available to support maintenance of project benefits<br><br>Potential for additional financial resources | APRs, MTR Project management unit & Project stakeholders | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| Have the local institutions established/strengthened, and mechanisms put in place to sustain the ongoing flow of benefits (economic) even during post-project period? | The presence of functional and self-sustaining local level institutions across the project area. | APRs, MTR Project management unit & Project stakeholders, case studies | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| **Gender equality and women's empowerment: How did the project contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment?** | | | |
| Has the average percent increase in income/purchasing power of women increased? | Number of women who adopted additional income generation activities | Income generation data | Desk review and interviews |
| Percentage of women who received Skill training, out of total community members trained | Number of female participants in skill Trainings | Reports, feedback in meetings and personal interactions | Desk review and interviews |
| Has the Project resulted in adverse impacts on gender equality and/or the situation of women and girls? | Participation of women in all project related programs | APRs, MTR, other project documents, Project management unit & Project stakeholders | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| Have the women's groups/leaders' concerns on gender equality during the | Status of engagement of women | APRs, MTR, other project documents, Project | Desk review Field visits, |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| stakeholder engagement process has been addressed in the overall Project proposal and in the risk assessment? | groups/leaders in various project related activities | management unit & Project stakeholders | online & on-site interviews |
| Has the Project discriminated against women based on gender, especially regarding participation in design and implementation or access to opportunities and benefits? | Status of opportunities and benefits accrued to women in different project related activities | APRs, MTR, other project documents, Project management unit & Project stakeholders | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| What are the livelihood options promoted for gender empowerment? | Assessment of Capacity Building, Skill development, Entrepreneurship development, value chains, market links, etc. | APRs, MTR, other project documents, Project management unit & Project stakeholders | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| **Cross-cutting issues: how did the project catalyze cross-cutting issues?** | | | |
| *Gender equality and social inclusion* | | | |
| Was Gender and HR evaluation undertaken at the design stage? Were gender sensitive needs assessed? | Actions taken to meet these needs | Project Documents, Stakeholders | Desk Review, Interviews |
| Did the project activities address the underlying causes of inequality among various social sectors? | indicators (both, quantitative and qualitative) to measure progress on gender inclusivity and HRM | Project Documents, Stakeholders | Desk Review, Interviews |
| Was monitoring data collected and disaggregated according to relevant criteria (gender, age, location, local customs, income etc.)? | indicators (both, quantitative and qualitative) to measure progress on gender inclusivity and HRM | Project Documents, Stakeholders | Desk Review, Interviews |
| Were the capacities of rights holders and local population adequately built? What were the achievements due to actions undertaken under the project with respect to:<br>  o Physical progress of the area<br>  o social empowerment & Decision-making abilities<br>Economic empowerment | Capacity building on gender sensitivity in males and female's attitudinal changes assessment | Project Documents, Stakeholders | Desk Review, Interviews |
| *Capacity Development* | | | |
| To what extent was capacity and awareness developed | Number of Capacity building programs – Stake holder wise | Reports produced, Minutes recorded | Desk Review. Interviews |
| *Knowledge Management* | | | |
| To what extent did project outcomes support knowledge management | Number of Strategies, policies, Knowledge | Document | Desk review |

| | management resources, outreach materials developed | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Climate Change* | | | |
| To what extent the activities undertaken in the project prepare and strengthen the institutions and project personnel to tackle mitigation and adaptation aspects and are able to address appropriately the risks associated with disasters? | Enhancement in the capacity of both institutions and stakeholder, especially the local communities | Capacity Development Score card, Case studies, PIRs, MTR, Stakeholders | Desk Review. Interviews |
| **Impact: Are there indications that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress toward reduced environmental stress and/or improved ecological status?** | | | |
| Policies, plans and activities developed for Climate change mitigation/ adaptation | Number of Policy instruments developed | Project documents and reports | Desk review, field visits and interviews |
| Actions for sustainable resource utilization and waste management | Sites where positive actions were initiated | Micro plans, project documents and reports | Desk review, field visits and interviews |

## Annexure 5: Questionnaire used and summary of results

| Project Objective: To promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secures conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats, ensure sustainable livelihoods and community socio-economic benefits. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Monitoring data collected and plans and Strategies implemented to support the project's results indicators | Formulation of SMART Indicators Clearly defined baselines | Existing APRs & MTR, NPMU, SPMU & Stakeholders in the field | Desk review and interviews |
| Challenges faced | Identification of barriers & response Strategies | -do- | -do- |
| **Outcome 1** Improved management of high range Himalayan landscapes for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services | | | |
| Has the management strategies of protected areas and other biological rich areas in alpine and sub-alpine landscape outside Pas improved and biodiversity, ecosystem services, climate mitigation, sustainable community resource use and socio-economic considerations are developed in discussion with stakeholders and integrated? | Improvement in the Management Effectiveness reflected in the METT score by average increase by at least 30 points from baselines. | METT score | Desk review of METT score card, MTR, APRs, questionnaire. |
| Have the capacities of different community members, government staff, and existing local level institutions developed for effective long-term conservation of biodiversity developed? | Improvement in the institutional capacities (by a 50% in UNDP CD Scorecard over baseline value) of different stakeholders and institutions for planning, implementation and monitoring of multiuse landscape level plans. leading to | Capacity Development Score Card | Desk Review of CD Score card, Online and site interviews, MTE |
| Have the grazing pressure and degradation following unsustainable use of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forests across landscapes reduced and arrested through project interventions? | Reduction in grazing pressure on 70,000 ha (by at least 20%) and arresting degradation of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forests (in around 10,000 ha) resulting in projected 0.46-0.50 and 0.31-0.36 m tCO2 /30-year period sequestrated and avoided respectively. | Existing APRs & MTR, NPMU, SPMU & Stakeholders in the field | Desk review, questionnaire and on-line & on-site Interviews |
| Has the forest restoration plans for Alpine meadows/pastures/rangelands and sub-alpine forests developed in participation/consultations with the local communities to improve | Most landscape (40,000 ha of the Alpine pastures/rangelands and 2,000 hectares of sub-alpine forests) have been | Existing APRs & MTR, NPMU, SPMU & Stakeholders in the field | Desk review, questionnaire and on-line & on-site Interviews |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| biological connectivity and habitat productivity? | transformed from erstwhile unsustainable management regime to under sustainable management regimes and also resulting in projected 0.16 - 0.18 and 0.42 – 0.05 m tCO2 /30-year period sequestrated and avoided respectively. | | |
| Have the site-specific participatory management and enforcement plans for High Conservation Value Forests, including Protected Areas, and other Key Biodiversity Areas, Biodiversity Heritage Sites, biological corridors, and sustainable natural resource use are designed and brought under community governance and management? | Site-specific High Conservation Value Forests and other rich & key biodiversity areas are brought under improved management through active participation of local communities. Reduction in direct pressure on at least 60,000 ha covering at least 18 newly designated and managed key biodiversity areas registered, including 30,000 ha of HCVFs to ensure connectivity and species conservation resulting in projected avoided 1.38-1.47 m tCO2 over 30-year period.<br><br>Similarly, a reduction in direct pressure on at least 20,000 ha of moist and dry alpine areas and sub- alpine forests managed as Biodiversity Heritage Sites registered resulting in projected avoided 0.46 – 0.49 m tCO2 over 30-year period | Existing APRs & MTR, NPMU, SPMU & Stakeholders in the field | Desk review, questionnaire and on-line & on-site Interviews |
| **Outcome 2: Improved and diversified sustainable livelihood strategies and enhanced capacities of community and government for sustainable natural resources management and conservation to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems.** | | | |
| 2.1: Extent Of area under sustainable Natural Resource Management practices: Has the total cumulative area brought under sustainable management during the project been quantified? | Increase in area in ha under sustainable management Assessment | -do- Information presented in MAPs | -do- Field verification, if possible |
| 2.2: Average % increase in Community incomes: Have community incomes been measured against baseline? What is other evidence of progress, like, lifestyle changes, purchasing | Assessment of financial empowerment, | -do- Evidence through social survey reports | Desk review, questionnaire and on-line & on-site Interviews |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| power of women & marginalized groups, change in social status, etc. | purchasing power of women & marginalized groups, change in social status | | |
| 2.3: Number of Community members (men/women) trained:<br><br>Livelihood options offered and numbers trained in NRM practices, agricultural practices, conservation of pastures, skill development, entrepreneurship and value addition in NRs accessed. | Numbers achieved/ trends<br><br>Impact of Trainings and handholding for skill development | Existing APRs & MTR & Stakeholders in the field | -do- |

| Outcome 3: Enhanced enforcement, monitoring, prosecution and effective trans-boundary cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and related threats | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Have the mechanisms and enabling coordinated programs for ensuring active participation of community members in surveillance, monitoring and wildlife crime and conflict prevention activities established and executed to serve as deterrent to wildlife crime? | Number of community members (men/women) (at least 200) actively volunteering and engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions (at least 20% women). | Existing APRs & MTR & Stakeholders in the field | Desk review, questionnaire and on-line & on-site Interviews |
| Have the effective mechanisms for partnerships on inter-state and transboundary cooperation for tackling wildlife crime and improving species conservation in Himalayan ecosystem developed and implemented? | Number of international agreements (at least 3) for enhancing trans-boundary cooperation between China, Nepal, Bhutan and India developed and implemented | Existing APRs & MTR | Desk review, and on-line & on-site Interviews |
| Has the project helped in mapping of areas prone to human wildlife conflicts and bringing in innovative ideas and approaches to reduce HWC cases through active engagement of communities? | Reduction in annual number of human-wildlife conflicts (at least 50% to baseline) leading to livestock and crop losses and retaliatory killings of wildlife | Existing APRs & MTR & Stakeholders in the field | Desk review, questionnaire and on-line & on-site Interviews |

| Outcome 4: Lessons learned by the project through participatory M&E, including gender mainstreaming practices, Improved knowledge and information systems for promotion of landscape conservation approaches | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator 4.1: Policy & regulatory mechanisms for improved management: | Number of policies and regulatory mechanisms prepared, approved and adopted, and knowledge products developed | Existing Documents | Desk review |
| Indicator 4.2: Project Best Practices:<br>Have these been internalized?<br>Can these promote sustainable practices in future, i.e., replicability | Number of best practices recorded.<br><br>No. of practices shared | APRs, MTR, existing documents | Desk review and interviews |
| Indicator 4.3: % households aware of benefits of conservation, sustainable use, wildlife crime prevention, etc. | Number of households where awareness levels have increased over baseline data | Review of Micro plans and | Desk review, interviews, field visits |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Has gender sensitivity been incorporated? | Change in attitudes of men, women, youth, etc.? | Capacity building materials | and beneficiary discussions |
| **Result Framework and Adaptive management** | | | |
| Were changes made in management arrangements and are they effective? | Theory of change | Project Implementation Review (PIR), progress reports | Desk review, Questionnaires |
| Have the tracking tools and GEF6 scorecards shown improvements from inception of the project through the midterm? | Improved scoring from respective tracking tools | Tracking tool data, stakeholder interviews | Desk review, and interviews |
| **Monitoring and Evaluation** | | | |
| Has the project been successful in promoting the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secures globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats? | Increase in the area of sustainable management at sub-national for conservation of snow leopard, wild prey and associated species and habitats.<br><br>Increase in the population of snow leopard and prey population in all the project landscapes. | APRs, MTR, other project documents, Project management unit & Project stakeholders | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| Has the project succeeded in ensuring sustainable livelihoods and community's socio-economic benefits | Rise in the Number of additional people benefiting from strengthened livelihoods through solutions for management of natural resources and ecosystem services | APRs, MTR, other project documents, Project management unit & Project stakeholders | Desk review Field visits, online & on-site interviews |
| Have best practices been identified and internalized? | Assessment through Action Plans and M&E strategy documents | Annual Work plans, Minutes of meetings of SNOs and Reports | Desk review and interviews |
| Was the project implementation approach efficient to be able to deliver the planned project results? | Adequacy of implementation structure and coordination mechanisms<br>Planned vs actual human and financial resources available.<br>Quality and adequacy of project monitoring mechanisms | Project documents, feedback from stakeholders | Desk review and interviews |

| Was the project cost effective? | adequacy of financial management procedures | Project financial documents | Desk review |
|---|---|---|---|
| **UNDP Oversight/Implementation** | | | |
| What is the current & future relevance of the project in the Indian Context | Consistency with National Strategies/policies. | Project Documents, Minutes of Meetings at State/landscape level | Desk review and interviews |
| Is the project replicable in similar landscapes | Extent of acceptability in states where the project was in operation | Project documents, National level meetings, Inputs from Implementing state government officers | Desk review and interviews |
| Are there any replicable innovative projects in the pipeline? | Extent of replicability and follow up actions undertaken | Project documents, feedback from stakeholders | Desk review and interviews |
| **Implementing Partner Execution** | | | |
| To what extent has the project methodology been successful in implementing the project | Benefits of the project/ Percentage success obtained as perceived by implementing agencies | Inputs from Implementing partners and community, Project document | Desk review and interviews |
| What innovative actions were taken to ensure additional benefits of the project which contribute to sustainability | Number of Innovative actions undertaken | Project Documents | Desk review and interviews |

## Annexure 6: Project Results and Impacts

| Description of Indicator | Baseline Level | Midterm target level | End of project target level | Cumulative progress since project start as of Jun 30, 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mandatory Indicator 1.3.1 Area of sustainable management solutions at sub-national for conservation of snow leopard, wild prey and associated species and habitats, sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem services | Approximately 30,000 – 40,000 hectares (parts of Kanchenjunga National Park and Gangotri National Park) managed effectively | At least 200,000 hectares managed using participatory approaches | At least 1,600,000 hectares effectively managed through participatory approaches | Review of this mandatory indicator during TE assessment, which was adjudged during MTR as 'questionable of achievability' under 'SMART' criteria, is found to have been achieved, rather overachieved by 114.1%. A total of 3,425,451 hectares (as against 1,600,000 ha) is being managed by implementing participatory management through effective coordination of multistakeholder (representatives from government departments, research institutions, and civil society organizations), inter-departmental committees, and national and state level Project Steering Committees which have been established at the national level and in all three States and one Union Territory governments.<br><br>The accomplishment of this indicator has yielded a new landscape-level learning by way of developing and enhancing synergy among ministries and departments, convergence through co-financing, joint decision-making (framing, approving, prioritizing for allocation of human, technical and budgetary allocations, etc. for conservation of snow leopard, wild prey and associated species and habitats, sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem services in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and Ladakh.<br><br>The achievement of this mandatory indicator is also noteworthy and even unique as it has led to generation of many landscape-specific scientific studies on various aspects (unique flora and fauna, high conservation value areas, wetland management, human wildlife conflict, importance of medicinal and aromatic plants both for conservation and source of alternative livelihood, etc.) across entire project landscape by engaging nationally and internationally renowned Institutions/organizations and subject-matter experts. Most of these studies have yielded first-time information and data from some of the inaccessible landscapes. These information and data may prove as base-line information for future conservation efforts and strengthening strategies and policies. Sub-national, division and site-specific level scientific studies may also be conducted on the similar pattern to generate more micro-level data and information.<br><br>The project has achieved habitat protection/restoration by adopting to many innovative measures, namely, rotational grazing, plantation of native species that also support the livelihood measures, setting up community fodder bank, setting up of Medicinal Plants Conservation and Development Areas (MPCDAs) & Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHSs), adopting soil and water |

conservation measures, wetland management, removal of invasive species with active participation of local herders and communities, etc.

State wise achievements are presented in brief:

**Himachal Pradesh**

Rotational grazing has successfully restored 20 ha across three villages, namely, Chasak Bhatori, Hudan Bhatori (Pangi), and Tindi (Lahaul. This initiative has also been topped up with erecting fencing and awareness programmes for the beneficiaries.

State Biodiversity Board has taken lead to notify three HCV areas Biodiversity Heritage Sites over a total area of 21.68 hectares. These are now management jointly by the concerned Gram Panchayats (GPs) and Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs).

Sustainable harvesting and value addition of Sea buckthorn has been successfully initiated by a group of 51 women over 3 ha. Another 5-hectare plantation on forest land has also been undertaken with the technical support of the local communities. These plantations have helped in restoration of degraded/waste/barren lands and support sea buckthorn value chain for livelihood improvement.

Successful management of Feral Dog menace has been addressed over an area of 800,000 hectares in the landscape. This has been preceded by a comprehensive assessment of population of feral dogs and their impact on livestock, humans and wildlife.

The Keylong model on setting up of scientific waste processing and disposal facility (waste shredding and balling machines) covering an area of about 300 ha, is an example of technical support from the Special Area Development Authority (Keylong) and co-financing support from Material Recovery Centre, Govt. of HP.

In collaboration with HP State Biodiversity Board (60:40 sharing basis) a total of 35 BMCs covering about 15462.96 Ha (Only for Project Panchayats i.e. 12 BMCs) have been constituted in the Lahaul Pangi Landscape. These have been further strengthened through the project by creating local biodiversity fund (LBF) for Preparation of people's biodiversity registers (PBRs) and through capacity building workshops and training programmes.

Participatory and integrated landscape-based strategy and plan has been prepared which holds the key to integrate all the line

departments and their policies to work in tandem for the purpose of identification of key conservation-livelihood issues and development of strategies for their implementation in collaboration with schemes of line departments in Pangi-Lahaul area.

A new initiative has been taken through this Project by developing a Model Management Plan for Chandrataal Wetland (760 Ha of wetland and direct catchment area). This is one of its kind about maintaining the capability of the wetland to support human well-being at present and in future, rather than 'use' or 'development' at present (Pritchard, 2018). This is critical for high altitude wetlands, which due to their high ecological sensitivity and fragility, may not be able to sustain high levels of anthropogenic interference. Model management plan has been submitted to State Wetland Authority, Govt. of H.P for further submission to MoEF&CC for approval.

A new approach to remove dependency on the forest department for fodder procurement, the Project has facilitated community fodder bank pilot established over 8-hectare wasteland/degraded land in the Urgos Village (Tingret Panchayat, Miyar Block, Udaipur Range), Lahaul. A total of 27 members are getting benefited thorough this activity where willow, Sea buckthorn, Robinia, popular & palatable grass species etc. are planted over grass trenches. Community governance mechanism is adopted in this Model.

Ladakh:
The local communities in support from the Ladakh Biodiversity Council, panchayats, and the Biodiversity Management Committee have joined hands in protecting a high-altitude lake from waste and environmental degradation caused by unplanned tourism. Based on the scientific detailed studies conducted in the early part of the project, the Biodiversity Council of Ladakh is facilitating in designation of this high-altitude bio-rich area as Yaya Tso Biodiversity Heritage Site (6692.64 Ha).

To boost the local economy by engaging the villagers and specially the women of three villages (200 ha) of Rong Valley, namely, Himya, Khatpu and Tarchit, had been imparted training in various aspects of homestay-based ecotourism. A total of 37 beneficiaries were given lessons (both theory and practical) in nature guide training, hospitality, upkeep of homestays, traditional cooking and presentations, etc. Cultivation of mushroom has helped reduce demand and pressure on medicinal plants from the wild and for other NTFPs.

| | | | | Conflict between humans and blue sheep (bharal) and Tibetan wild ass (kiang) in terms of crop (barley, peas and mustard) depredation has been successfully tackled by the local people installing censor based early warning system (ANIDERS), which are piloted in the Gya, Meru, and Hanle areas effective over an area of about 11,450 Ha. About 50-75% reduction has been observed in agricultural losses. There has been some practical learning from the innovation; ANIDERS work best when paired with other interventions such as walls, fences, barricades, scarecrows etc. to stop wild animals from entering fields; works well when exact entry points are known; it is more helpful if community members are proactive and maintain those post installation; deployment of ANIDERDS is needed only in the critical months (April-July) and not needed post-harvest. All these practical learnings are useful while scaling this up in other areas.

A successful example of collaborative efforts has been presented as Model when the Chumathang hot spring area (11 Ha) has been successfully declared as litter-free zone. The Rural Development Department, Ladakh Pollution Control Committee, Tourism Department, and the local communities have joined hands in this innovative waste management strategy where tourists are required to carry their waste back. This has prompted local authorities to initiate waste collection services and sensitisation workshops on waste segregation have been done by the Rural Development Department.

Project has focused on sustainable livelihood intervention in Rupshu Plateau (60,000 ha) by promoting yak wool through product development training and forging of market linkages. The project has also made conscious efforts in mitigating the possible ecological imbalance likely to be caused by the demand of Pashmina mandating surge in the local changpa goats.

The project has empowered Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) by enhancing their knowledge and skills to oversee biodiversity conservation in the project landscape effectively which have been set up across 21 village panchayats almost covering the entire landscape of the expansive Changthang (1,600,000 Ha) by imparting trainings on technical, administrative and financial management.

A total of about 340 ha has been effectively managed through participatory approaches as the project has supported setting up Medicinal Plants Conservation and Development Areas (MPCDA) near Taglang La (~190 hec ares) and Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHSs) near Wari La (~150 hectares). The Management Plans, developed in consultation with local communities, wildlife dept |

|  |  |  |  | and the Biodiversity Council, have since been approved. Implementation of the MPs have helped in undertaking conservation efforts and generating livelihood opportunities in these challenging high value conservation landscapes by the establishment of the seed banks (for threatened MAPs) and herbaria, which are reflective of sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, and community empowerment.<br><br>Sikkim<br>Ecological security of the Gurudongmar wetland has been protected by supporting management of 2,567 hectares of alpine areas, by making tourists aware about environmental codes of conduct and fostering cooperation with yak herders.<br><br>Extensive plantations of native plant species over 35 hectares area with support from the Project has led to significant enhancement of Soil Moisture Conservation, environmental sustainability and ecosystem resilience.<br><br>The project has supported in association with the State Biodiversity Board, training programmes, capacity-building workshops, equipment and technical assistance to 13 BMCs spread over 13000 ha to empower the BMCs and the local communities to manage and benefit from their bioresources. This has prompted the state biodiversity board to establish 196 BMCs across the state, of which 40 BMCs are in Kanchenjunga Biosphere Reserve in the SECURE Himalaya project landscape.<br><br>Uttarakhand<br><br>A total of 213,832.14 hectares has been managed through participatory landscape management plan by integrating Eco sensitive Zones. Under this plan, a new initiative includes involvement of trained para-taxonomists in the Snow Leopard Population Assessment (a total of 124 snow leopards are confirmed in the state).<br><br>A total of 1,466.80 hectares of pasturelands (Dayara and Gidara), with the support from local communities and Biodiversity Management Committees, have been put under rotational grazing.<br><br>An additional area of 11,299.46 hectares has been restored with the participation of the community women by establishing nurseries and plantations of native species (Sea buckthorn).<br><br>Plastic waste management in the Govind landscape and providing improved sanitation facilities for tourists in the Gangotri landscape |
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| | | | | has also been achieved with the participation of the community women. |
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| | | | | In alignment with the Uttarakhand's Organic Farming policy and promoting sustainable agricultural practices, participatory livelihood strategies have successfully covered 8,528.94 hectares. |
| | | | | By fostering community engagement in biodiversity conservation and resource management, the richness of biodiversity and traditional management practices have been documented in 29 Peoples' Biodiversity Registers covering an area of over 7,891.82 hectares. |
| | | | | By setting up a Medicinal Plant Conservation Area in Gangotri landscape for conservation of 8 medicinal plant species, an area over 200 ha has managed through participatory approach between forest department and local communities. The project has been co-financed by the National Medicinal Plant Board. In addition, 2 sites in Gangotri and 1 in Pithoragarh comprehensive management plans have been developed over approximately 600 hectares for designating as Biodiversity Heritage Sites. |
| | | | | A total of 140 hectares of alpine areas was restored by removing invasive species (Polygonum polystachium) by involving community participation in Gangotri National Park (Gidara Bugyal). |
| | | | | The rotational grazing led to removal of pressure on alpine areas at Bhangeli (Van Panchayat). |
| | | | | A total of 5 hectares of degraded land (in Dharwas) was reclaimed by planting native grasses and establishment of community-led fodder bank. Plantation and sustainable management of walnut in Gangotri landscape helped in restoring about 200 ha of degraded land. |
| Mandatory Indicator 1.3.2 Number of additional people benefiting from strengthened livelihoods through solutions for management of natural resources and | 0 (Baseline of households participating in alternative livelihoods and sustainable resource management | At least 500 households are directly benefiting from improved and alternative livelihoods and incomes (50% of the 2,500 beneficiaries would be women) | At least 2,500 households directly benefit through improved livelihoods and incomes (50% of the beneficiaries would be women) | As the time of MTR, the target was considered as ambitious, and its achievability was considered questionable. However, the project has successfully achieved its target of benefiting 2,502 households across Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Sikkim. This significant milestone underscores the project's effectiveness in directly impacting beneficiaries through enhanced livelihood solutions in the project landscapes.<br>- Uttarakhand (1000HHs, beneficiaries Male –65%, Female- 35%<br>- Himachal Pradesh (769HHs; beneficiaries Male-32%, Female-68%)<br>- Ladakh (206 HHs; beneficiaries Male-34% Female- 66%)<br>- Sikkim (527HHs; beneficiaries Male- 67%, Female-33%)<br>Hence, overall 50.5% beneficiaries were females |

| ecosystem services | will be established through the village microplanning process) | | | The local communities have been empowered through promoting sustainable green livelihood initiatives. These initiatives have been systematically integrated into village-level institutions such as Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), Cooperative societies, and Primary Producer Groups (PPGs). Moreover, the project has laid out a comprehensive sustainability strategy and exit plan, ensuring that the positive impacts continue to benefit communities long after the project conclusion. The project's primary focus has been on promotion and strengthening of various potential value chains aimed at income generation and sustainable livelihood improvement. The details of the value chains promoted are mentioned below: |
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| | | | | 1. **Community-led Ecotourism Value Chain**: This initiative spans across wildlife and cultural tourism, encompassing activities like homestays, nature guides, wildlife spotters, bird watching, and astro-tourism. These activities while providing income opportunities, also fostered responsible natural resource management and biodiversity conservation. Additionally, they played a pivotal role in protecting local customs and traditional knowledge. |
| | | | | 2. **Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) and Medicinal Plants Value Chain**: These value chains emphasized sustainable harvesting practices of resources like Sea-buckthorn, Nettle Fiber, medicinal and aromatic plants. The project supported in strengthening of the local economies while safeguarding these valuable bio- resources. |
| | | | | 3. **Handloom and Handicrafts Value Chain**: By providing necessary equipment and skills enhancement, this value chain has empowered artisans to produce high-quality products, thereby creating local & national market opportunities. |
| | | | | 4. **Dairy Development-based Value Chain**: Enhanced dairy production through improved breeds, fodder management, and facilitating market linkages, which has contributed to increased incomes for communities associated with the dairy cooperatives. |
| | | | | 5. **Renewable Energy Solutions**: Supported households with smokeless cooking stoves, Solar water heaters and other renewable energy solutions, which has reduced dependence on natural resources and mitigated risks associated with human-wildlife conflicts. |
| | | | | **Specific Impact Highlights:**<br>• **Sheep and Yak Wool-based Livelihoods**: A total of 628 households in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and |

| | | | | Ladakh have been supported under this value chain. The project focused on preserving traditional practices and enhancing skills, thereby contributing quantitatively to the conservation efforts.<br><br>• Uttarakhand (363 HHs)<br>• Himachal Pradesh (165 HHs)<br>• Ladakh (100 HHs)<br><br>• **Eco-tourism Value Chain**: This initiative has benefited 858 households across Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, and Sikkim. Activities like homestays, nature guiding, and astro-tourism. These initiatives not only provided income but also promoted sustainable tourism practices and biodiversity conservation.<br><br>• Uttarakhand (194 HHs)<br>• Himachal Pradesh (227 HHs)<br>• Ladakh (81HHs)<br>• Sikkim (356 HHs)<br><br>• **Sea-buckthorn value chain in Himachal Pradesh:** A totally women leadership-based enterprise, the project initially benefitted 51 women of the Khondoma SHG. The KangLa Basket initiative was undertaken which received wide appreciation at State and National Level. Buoyed by their success more women joined the initiative taking the total number to 100. Since then, these women have started protecting the sea-buckthorn plants in the landscape which not only provide berries as raw material, but the roots help as soil binder and fix nitrogen, thus improving soil quality. help to<br><br>• **NTFP and Medicinal Plants**: The project supported 343 households in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Sikkim, emphasizing sustainable harvesting of non-timber forest produces and medicinal plants and value addition.<br><br>• Uttarakhand (144 HHs)<br>• Himachal Pradesh (123 HHs)<br>• Sikkim (76HHs).<br><br>• **Agriculture & Horticulture**: 272 households have been supported through initiatives such as bakery, dairy, and mushroom cultivation, resulting in a income increase of 5-10% post-implementation. |
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|  |  |  |  | • The project also facilitated 301 households with renewable energy solutions, alleviating resource collection pressures and associated risks like human-wildlife conflicts and improving overall community health and safety. |
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**Additional Achievements:**
- In Ladakh, during the tourist season, the project facilitated group bookings that generated income amounting to 500 USD benefiting local communities directly. Equipment distributed for homestays further supported hospitality services in these homestays supported through the project.

- Homestays supported in the Lahul Pangi landscape under the project generated an additional income of USD 600 per household during the last tourism season.

https://notonmap.com/life-with-us/ecotourism-project-with-undp
- The project supported the establishment of India's first Dark Sky Reserve in Hanle, covering 1073 sq. km., stands out as a landmark achievement of this project. This initiative contributed 25 telescopes to the BMCs and trained the local community youth in operating the telescopes and help identify the star constellation. The project has also implemented a Light Management Plan, leading to reduction of light pollution and also enhanced astro-tourism and local incomes in the landscape.

- Partnerships, such as the MoU with the State Rural Livelihood Mission in Sikkim, underscores the project's commitment towards sustainable development. Initiatives like establishing a fulfilment centre for local product marketing are poised to enhance economic opportunities for SHG members. The center has been established and necessary tools and equipment (sealing machine, grain puffing machine, fire safety equipment etc.) have been purchased and installed, the operationalization of this center is yet to be started.

The active participation of the members of all the States' Project Steering Committees ensured effective policy decisions, progress monitoring, and annual work plan approvals. This collaborative approach has ensured coherence, fostered co-financing, and promoted convergence with relevant governmental and non-governmental entities.

In conclusion, the project's holistic approach to sustainable livelihoods not only enhanced the economic resilience but also

| | | | | promoted environmental stewardship and protection of traditional knowledge. By empowering local communities and adopting structured institutional frameworks, the project has set a solid foundation for sustained benefits and resilience against future challenges in all the project landscapes. |
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| Mandatory indicator 2.5.1 Extent to which Institutional frameworks are in place for conservation, sustainable use, access and benefit sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems and improved livelihoods | 0 (Current institutional arrangements do not facilitate significant coordination across multi-sectors and multiple actors) | Multiple use landscape frameworks agreed with key stakeholders and under review for official approval | All four multiple use landscapes have official multi-stakeholder, multi-sector coordination and governance mechanisms that facilitate convergence of planning, manpower and financial resources for conservation, sustainable use and improved livelihood benefits | This project has successfully promoted the establishment and strengthening of institutions that facilitate conservation, sustainable use, and access and benefit-sharing of natural resources and biodiversity, while also improving livelihoods. By the last reporting cycle, all targets had been achieved, with state and landscape-level inter-departmental coordination committees established in all four project states and union territories. These committees, composed of members from line departments, research and development institutions, and civil society organizations (CSOs), ensured effective interdepartmental coordination and convergence for implementing activities and sustaining project outcomes. Regular meetings facilitated major policy-level decisions, progress reviews, and approval of annual work plans, while also ensuring co-financing from relevant departments. At the national level, the project's practices have been institutionalized through the reconstitution of the National Project Snow Leopard (PSL) Steering Committee. The committee's terms of reference include identifying landscapes, preparing landscape-level participatory management plans, and developing Annual Work Plans for states and union territories to secure funding under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (CSS-IDWH). It also oversaw the implementation of management plans, community-based wildlife conservation efforts, and scientific monitoring of snow leopard and prey populations. The PSL Steering Committee reviewed progress across all snow leopard range states in India. Additionally, the project has supported the establishment of 65 Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) across all project landscapes, reinforcing its commitment to conserve local biodiversity and ensure sustainable resource use. |
| Biological Indicator. Status of snow leopard populations in four project states | Estimated at 474 individuals | Snow leopard baselines validated | Stable or increase snow leopard populations in the four project states | The project supported India's first comprehensive snow leopard population survey, conducted between 2021 and 2023, using the Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI) methodology, which was developed and launched in 2019 by the then Hon'ble Minister of the Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Commissioned by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), this landmark survey estimated a population of 718 snow leopards across 120,000 square kilometers of habitat, positioning India as home to 10-15% of the global snow leopard population within just 5% of its global habitat. The results indicated that Ladakh has the highest population, with 477 snow leopards, |

| | | | | followed by Uttarakhand with 124, Himachal Pradesh with 51, and Sikkim with 21. Notably, rural youth trained under the project assisted scientists from the Wildlife Institute of India (WII, GoI) and WWF-India in conducting these assessments across five Himalayan landscapes, further contributing to the status assessment of snow leopard populations in the four project states. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **The progress of the outcomes of the remaining indicators is described as below:** <br> **Outcome 1** <br> **Improved management of high Himalayan landscapes for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services** | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Cumulative progress since project start as on June 30, 2024** |
| Indicator 1.1 Improved management effectiveness of protected areas and biological rich areas in alpine and sub-alpine landscape | Changtang WLS (22) Govind Pasu WLS (25) Gangotri NP (35) Khangchenjunga NP (29) Seichi Tuan WLS (13) Shingba Rhododendron WLS (16) | Average increase by at least 10 points in METT | Average increase by at least 30 points in **METT (Annexure 5.13)** from current PAs baselines | The management effectiveness of protected areas and biologically rich alpine and sub-alpine landscapes has been assessed at the End Term and the scoring indicate full achievement of end of project target level. In fact, except Gangotri National Park, all remaining 5 PAs assessed through METT format have achieved the target even during mid-term assessment, conducted between December 2021 and April 2022. <br><br> Each PA has raised its score over Mid-term during the end term evaluation and key aspects of achievements are noted below: <br> To add from the score sheet. <br> • **Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary: METT score increased from 22 to 67, a rise of 45 points.** <br><br> • **Seichu Tuan Wildlife Sanctuary: METT score increased from 13 to 70, a rise of 57 points.** <br><br> • **Govind National Park & Wildlife Sanctuary: METT score increased from 25 to 73, a rise of 48 points.** <br><br> • **Gangotri National Park: METT score increased from 35 to 79, a rise of 44 points.** <br><br> • **Khangchendzonga National Park and Biosphere Reserve: METT score increased from 29 to 73, a rise of 44 points.** <br><br> • **Shingba Rhododendron Wildlife Sanctuary: METT score increased from 16 to 74, a rise of 58 points.** <br><br> These improvements are attributed to enhanced institutional and staff capacities through targeted training and capacity building in ecosystem restoration, protected area management, species monitoring, human-wildlife conflict mitigation, and combating wildlife crime and illegal trade. Updated management plans, better resource allocations, have also contributed to these gains cumulatively. |

| | | | | Community participation has been decisive, with the local institutions engaging in waste management, trail maintenance, and resource mobilization through visitor fees. The increase in METT scores is linked to intensified community conservation awareness, improved capacity building and training for the frontline staff, increased budget allocations, strategized human-wildlife conflict mitigation initiatives, improved participatory surveillance, and more effective & improved communication.

Capacity building of front-line staff and community is a parameter in the METT and one of the recent achievements includes the engagement of local community along side the forest staff in systematic documentation of butterfly diversity in Ladakh's Changthang landscape. A 20-day survey conducted from August to September 2023, as part of the SECURE Himalaya Project, recorded 39 butterfly species, including an unreported species, through a Visual Encounter Survey across varied habitats and altitudes. This survey represents a epitomized a substantial step in understanding and managing the biodiversity of the region. |
| Indicator 1.2 Improved institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring of multiuse landscape level plans as measured by UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard | Limited institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring of multiple use landscapes. UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline score of 18 | Increase of institutional capacity as measured by a 20% increase in UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline value of 18 | Increase of institutional capacity as measured by a 50% increase in UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline value **(Annexure 5.14)** | The evaluation of the Project indicate that a very special emphasis has been given on enhancing the capacity of different stakeholders and especially that of local communities to ensure that the benefits intended from the Project are conceived and used to the fullest for their empowerment at all fronts. The targeted increase in the capacity development score over the baseline has already been achieved to 100% (45/45) by the Term-end evaluation.

Overall, a total of 2,069 individuals (1,764 men –85%, 302 women – 15%) have been benefited from training, capacity enhancement and exposure visits of front line, mid-level and senior level officials, chairpersons, secretaries and members of the Biodiversity Management Committees across all the project states and UT.

Uttarakhand landscape tops the list with 944 individuals (915 men, 59 women), followed by Himachal Pradesh (550 total: 497 men, 53 women), Ladakh (310 total: 226 men, 84 women), and Sikkim (228 total: 130 men, 98 women),

Authority and legitimacy of lead organization responsible for recognized by stakeholders

- **HWC Management**: A total of more than 30 Rapid Response Team personnel (including forest officers and frontline staff) has undergone a one-day training program held at Govind National Park, Uttarakhand focusing on human-wildlife conflict management, improved knowledge management and operational skills for the Rapid Response Team. It has |

|  |  |  |  | prepared the officials and staff members in better management of the PA Management. |
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|  |  |  |  | • Cyber Unit for Combatting Internet Linked Wildlife Crime: To tackle with the grave issue of combating with the internet-linked wildlife crimes and illegal trade, the project has supported setting up of a cyber cell housed at the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (MoEFCC, GoI). This state-of-the-Art Unit, with advanced software and hardware, will help other law enforcement agencies to check other associated crimes (such as, smuggling of arms, drugs – narcotics and often with terror funding). |
|  |  |  |  | • On-field training to 27 Forest frontline staff (including 3 women) had been imparted on biodiversity assessment in Gangotri National Park, Uttarakhand, has now resulted in maintaining daily records of key wildlife and their habitat by field staff. Similarly, another batch of 140 forest and paramilitary personnel have been trained on wildlife crime & illegal trade, viz. identification of wildlife parts. |
|  |  |  |  | • On similar pattern, short-term training courses on different topics pertaining to wildlife crime, human wildlife conflicts and legal aspects (Training of Forest staff for scientific documentation of wildlife data, Training on Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) in high altitude range lands - Causes and management, and Training on legal procedures for wildlife crime) have been imparted in Himachal Pradesh and a total of 83 (81 Males and 2 Females) forest staff has been trained. |
|  |  |  |  | • Himachal Pradesh also trained 10 (all male) forest officials in a DGCA-Certified "Drone Pilot Training" course in March 2023 through Secure Himalaya Project. |
|  |  |  |  | • Exposure visits for 5 forest officers including 1 female officer (mid to senior level) has been arranged by Himachal Pradesh Forest Department to the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP) secretariat in Kyrgyzstan. This has provided exposure to learn various conservation and livelihood practices. |
|  |  |  |  | • Exposure visit has also been organised by the Ladakh Biodiversity Council (Changthang landscape) for Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) to Goa State Biodiversity Board and local BMCs. A total of 7 participants [3 BMC Secretaries, 3 BMC Chairpersons, and 1 BMC Member (4 men, 3 women) got exposure on the best practices of managing |

|  |  |  |  | Biodiversity Management Committees, preparing Peoples' Biodiversity Registers, and handling Biodiversity Heritage Sites. |
|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  | • Besides arranging the exposure visits for the BMC members, this project has seen providing opportunities for providing training to the officials and members of the Biodiversity Management Committees in Uttarakhand. In one such training, a total of about 203 members (including 58 women) had been trained in promoting long-term community awareness and engagement, in documenting People's Biodiversity Register, Biodiversity Conservation Plans (BCPs), and action plans, which are providing useful informed and effective management of natural resources both for sustainable ecology and economy. |
|  |  |  |  | • Continuing with the capacity building and awareness programme for BMC members carried out in project landscapes 86 members (32 females, 54 males) of the BMCs across 4 blocks of Changthang participated in capacity building program on awareness, documentation of the People's Biodiversity Registers (PBR), preparation of Action Plans, Accounting procedures, etc. |
|  |  |  |  | • Ladakh Biodiversity Council (LBC) was constituted with the support from the Project after Ladakh got the status of Union Territory. This led to establishment of 20 BMCs within Changthang landscape. Besides, support within the project landscapes, additional 20 BMCs has been established through the resources of the project during its course of implementation in Leh district and 20 BMCs in Kargil district. |
|  |  |  |  | • The Project has supported 13 BMCs in Sikkim to empower and enhance their capacity through training, capacity-building workshops, providing equipment and technical knowhow. This has enabled the BMCs to sustainably manage natural resources. This support has also acted as a Model for State Biodiversity Board to scale up establishment of BMCs (196) across the state, of which 40 BMCs are falling within the project landscape (Kanchenjunga Biosphere Reserve). |
|  |  |  |  | • Project has also supported in the establishment of first even Biodiversity Heritage Site in the state, namely, Tunkyong Dho Lake (spans over 0.0650 ha) as proposed by the Hee-Gyathang Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC). The newly notified BHS will highly benefit the local community as it will attract the eco-tourists from all across the globe which will |

| | | | | directly or indirectly improve the socio-economic status of the local community in addition to bringing much needed finances for conservation and associated community development. |
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| | | | | • In Sikkim, the Project has also facilitated updating of two People's Biodiversity Registers in Dzongu, agrobiodiversity documentation in Kanchenjunga landscapes and establishment of 13 seed banks. |
| Indicator 1.3 (a) Reduced pressure and prevented degradation of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forests | Approximately 700,000 ha of alpine meadows under unsustainable grazing with average 75 livestock units/km2 and forests around villages lack sustainable management arrangements | Reduced grazing pressure on 700,000 ha of alpine meadows by at least 10% (from 75 to 67 livestock units/km2) and prevented degradation in around 2,000 ha of sub-alpine forest under community-based management | Reduced grazing pressure on 700,000 ha of alpine meadows by at least 20% (from 75 to 60 livestock units/km2) and prevented degradation in around 10,000 ha of sub-alpine forest under community-based management resulting in projected 0.46-0.50 and 0.31-0.36 m tCO2 /30 year period sequestrated and avoided respectively. | In line with the recommendation during the Mid Term Review (MTR), the end term project target has been revised to 8000 ha. The emphasis must be paid in enhancing the quality of ecosystems through community managed sustainable practices rather than further increase in areas. The project has successfully brought alpine and sub-alpine forests under community management over 8,013.76 hectares, which is little more than the end term target. This has been made possible mainly through two interventions, one, by promoting sustainable grazing practices and two, by reducing the environmental pressure on rangelands across the project landscapes.

**Himachal Pradesh:**

Grazing and Fodder Management through SECURE Himalaya Project has been accomplished by adopting the rotational grazing model in high-pressure grazing areas covering 20 hectares in Lahaul-Pangi landscape. Chasak Bhatori, Hudan Bhatori, and Tindi are three villages where this success has been achieved by installing fencing and sensitizing community sensitization.

A new approach to remove dependency on the forest department for fodder procurement, the Project has facilitated community fodder bank pilot established over 8-hectare wasteland/degraded land in the Urgos Village (Tingret Panchayat, Miyar Block, Udaipur Range), Lahaul. A total of 27 members are getting benefited thorough this activity where willow, Sea buckthorn, Robinia, popular & palatable grass species etc. are planted over grass trenches. Community governance mechanism is adopted in this Model.

Overall, a total of 1548.16 ha of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forest across Tingret, Tindi, and Dharwas panchayats in Himachal Pradesh have witnessed reduction in grazing pressure and community-based management (including local women groups who have participated in plantation drives) through implementation of rotational grazing, pasture and grazing land |

improvement, including afforestation of scrubs and developing community-managed fodder sites.

**Ladakh:**

Value Chain Development:

- Under the Sheep and Yak Wool value chain, Through Project's initiative Sheep and Yak Wool-based Value Chain has been revived and futher developed in Rupshu region of Changthang Landscape in Samad-Rokchen and Angkung villages of Rupshu block across a diverse demography of gender and age. successful sales in Angkung and Samad villages has been observed with a recorded 60-fold increase in value, improving income and stabilizing livestock numbers. The increased incomes through improvement in processes and market linkages is expected to lead to reduced or stabilised livestock numbers in the region and improved ratio of livestock composition.

  Under this initiative, the capacities of community members have been augmented across various aspects of sheep and yak wool value chain, including introducing new designs and processes, usage of newly introduced technologies and equipment, and equipping the local communities with knowledge and capacities around accounts, administration, and marketing.

Fuelwood and Waste Management:

- Himalayan Rocket Stoves: 80 fuel efficient cookstoves for 50 Dokpa families and 30 other households in the landscape were supported for reducing firewood dependency and improved fuel efficiency at household level in the landscape

**Sikkim:**
1. **Sustainable Practices and Waste Management:**

- Management Practices: Implemented community-based management on 2,567 hectares of alpine areas to enhance environmental stewardship.
- Biomass Stoves and Waste Management: The project supported the local communities with improved biomass stoves (43 households) in North and West Sikkim. Solid waste collection and segregation bins has been provided to 40 tourism-related establishments in Lachen and Thangu.

|  |  |  |  | • Solid Waste Biodigesters: Three biodigesters have been procured using the project resources in Sikkim. One unit has been installed at an army camp in Zuluk for processing the food waste generated in this army camp. Earlier this food waste was dumped in the open areas, which also increased the conflict issues with the feral dogs in the landscapes. This initiative is helping the army outposts in converting food waste into bio-manure. Remaining two units are to be installed at an ITBP camp in Chhaten.

**Uttarakhand:**
1. **Forest and Alpine Management:**

   o **Sustainable Forest Management:** In Uttarakhand 1,606.8 hectares of forest are managed sustainably, enhancing ecological health and governed resource use.

   o In Gangotri landscape the Kedar Tal trek routes has been improved through the project resources. The project also supported the forest department staffs in scientific visitor/tourist management, this system enhanced through promotion of solid waste collection, installation of dustbins, and repairing of trekking routes and camping sites. Informative signages have also been added in the trekking route.

   o **Alpine Restoration:** Removal of invasive species *Polygonum (poly stachium)* from 140 hectares in Gidara Bugyal has been done in close association with the forest department to restore alpine biodiversity in the landscape.

   o **Rotational Grazing:** The Van Panchayat of Bhangeli (Bhatwari block, Uttarkashi district) has implemented rotational grazing practices, leading to a notable reduction in grazing pressure in the alpine zone in the landscape |
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| Indicator 1.4 Extent of degraded alpine pastures/rangelands and sub-alpine forests under sustainable management regimes | Approximately 40,000 ha of alpine pastures and 2,000 ha of sub-alpine forests | At least 5,000 hectares alpine pastures and 500 hectares sub-alpine forests under sustainable | 40,000 hectares alpine pastures and 2,000 hectares sub-alpine forests under sustainable regeneration regimes resulting in projected 0.16 - 0.18 and 0.42 – 0.05 m tCO2 /30 year period sequestrated | The project target of 40,000 hectares alpine pastures and 2,000 hectares sub-alpine forests to be brought under sustainable regeneration regimes has been met, rather almost doubled at 75,813.74 hectares (Himachal Pradesh:1836.28 ha; Ladakh: 60,011 ha; Sikkim: 2602 ha; and Uttarakhand: 11,364.00) across the project landscapes. Multi-pronged local-need-based strategies promoted by the Project have led to this achievement, such as, piloting solar-based equipment and appliances and solar-based space heating solutions have reduced the need for fuelwood by the communities; initiation of rotational grazing; |

| | | | |
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| under continued degradation through overuse | regeneration regimes | and avoided respectively. | reduction in dependency of communities on goat (pashmina) by promoting wool based products of sheep and yak.

State wise interventions leading to sustainable regeneration regime are as follows:

Himachal Pradesh

Improved Chulla's/ Himalayan Rocket Stove: The regeneration status of natural resources has been enhanced by reducing pressure on the use of natural resources (firewood) by promoting improved innovative space/water heating energy solution in Lahaul - Pangi Landscape.

Various plantation activities [Sea-buckthorn and Hazelnut Plantations (20 Ha)] coupled with sustainable management techniques like rotational grazing (of 20 Ha) have helped the Project in bringing the landscape under sustainable regeneration regime.

Another innovative step to promote sustainable regeneration regime was taken up by the Project by facilitating installation of Solar passive heating panels, solar water heater, solar cookers etc. in community centers like PHC, schools (35), and government buildings in Lahual & Pangi Valleys, enabling them to remain functional without the consumption of fuel wood, which otherwise is must to ward off almost 6 months' harsh winter.

 Ladakh

The successful declaration of the Chumathang hot spring area (11 Ha) by the project team, as litter-free zone exemplified collaborative efforts involving the Rural Development Department, Ladakh Pollution Control Committee, Tourism Department, and the local communities. This initiative, underpinned by a waste management strategy requiring tourists to carry their waste back, has led to the initiation of waste collection services. A waste segregation workshop has been organised for sensitizing the communities. Additionally, the project participated in the Himalayan Clean-Up Drive in May 2023, organized by various Civil Society Organizations and line departments to clean up the Sindhu Ghat and Shey Fishpond area.

 Sikkim

 Ecological security of the Gurudongmar wetland, located within the trans-Himalayan Tso Lhamo plateau, has been protected by |

supporting management of 2,567 hectares of alpine areas, by making tourists aware about environmental codes of conduct, fostering cooperation with yak herders, installing community fodder bank, etc..

Extensive plantations of native plant species (rhododendron, silver fir, Betula) over 35 hectares area with support from the Project has led to significant enhancement of Soil Moisture Conservation, environmental sustainability and ecosystem resilience.

Sustainable management regime was introduced over 35.19 ha area for restoration of highland areas through soil and moisture conservation and plantation activities in Khangchendzonga National Park and North Territorial Division. This is consisted of: 10 and 12.19 hectares of soil and moisture conservation activities in Pom-Phuni by Wildlife Division and in Sachen, KNP, respectively; and plantations over 12 hectares and 1 ha in Samdong, Salep, Tarum Reserve Forests in Thangu block and in Lachung, respectively.

A pilot initiative for solid waste management on trekking trails has now been scaled up under the Swachh Bharat Mission (co-financing by State govt) to the entire Yuksam Gram Panchayat. Resource Recovery Centre operated by the local Panchayats manage the waste from the national park.

**Uttarakhand**

By adopting to rotational grazing, a total of 1,466.80 hectares of pasturelands (Dayara and Gidara) has been put to sustainable regeneration regime, with the support from local communities and Biodiversity Management Committees.

A total of 11,299.46 hectares has been restored and put to sustainable regeneration regime by establishing nurseries and plantations of native species (Sea buckthorn) with community women participation.

A total of 8,528.94 hectares has been put up to regeneration regime sustainably in alignment with the Uttarakhand's Organic Farming policy and promoting sustainable agricultural practices.

By setting up a Medicinal Plant Conservation Area, an area over 200 ha has been put to sustainable regeneration regime with the help of co-financing from the National Medicinal Plant Board.

| | | | | A total of 140 hectares of alpine areas was restored by removing invasive species (*Polygonum polystachium*) by involving community participation in Gangotri National Park (Gidara Bugyal). A total of 5 hectares of degraded land (in Dharwas) was reclaimed by planting native grasses and establishment of community-led fodder bank. Plantation and sustainable management of walnut (2,000 saplings) in Gangotri landscape helped in restoring about 200 ha of degraded land. 460 Ha area of forest area under various PAs has been restored through assisted natural regeneration (ANR), leading to better alpine area accessibility, reduction in soil erosion and in ground water recharge. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator 1.5 Area of High Conservation Value Forests under improved management | High Conservation Value Forests (dispersal corridors, biodiversity rich areas and buffer areas) lack appropriate management regimes | HCVFs identified and management regimes established | (a) Reduced direct pressure on at least 60,000 ha covering at least 18 newly designated and managed key biodiversity areas, including 30,000 ha of HCVFs to ensure connectivity and species conservation resulting in projected avoided 1.38-1.47 m tCO2 over 30-year period (b) Reduced direct pressure on at least 20,000 ha of moist and dry alpine areas and sub-alpine forests managed as Biodiversity Heritage Sites resulting in projected avoided 0.46 – 0.49 m tCO2 over 30-year period | The project has achieved 112.06% more than the goal in terms of improving the management of 73 High Conservation Value Forests (HCVFs) covering 127,238.32 hectares across all project landscapes. Most of these HCVs have been managed through different innovative institutional arrangements, such as, Biodiversity Heritage Sites under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, Ramsar site, as Dark Sky Reserve, etc. **Himachal Pradesh** Three High Conservation Value Areas (HCVAs), out of 17 HCVs (11 in Lahaul valley and 6 in Pangi), have been notified as Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS) in Himachal Pradesh, namely, Sural Bhatori and (ii) Hudan Bhatori in Pangi and Naingar in Lahaul valley to reduce direct anthropogenic pressure. A new initiative has been taken through this Project by developing a Model Management Plan for Chandrataal Wetland (760 Ha of wetland and direct catchment area). This is one of its kind about maintaining the capability of the wetland to support human well-being at present and in future. This is critical for high altitude wetlands, which due to their high ecological sensitivity and fragility, may not be able to sustain high levels of anthropogenic interference. Model management plan has been submitted to State Wetland Authority, Govt. of H.P for further submission to MoEF&CC for approval. **Ladakh** A total of about 340 ha has been effectively managed through participatory approaches as the project has supported setting up of Medicinal Plants Conservation and Development Areas |

(MPCDA) near Taglang La (~190 hectares) and Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHSs) near Wari La (~150 hectares). The Management Plans, developed in consultation with local communities, wildlife dept and the Biodiversity Council, have since been approved. Implementation of the MPs have helped in undertaking conservation efforts and generating livelihood opportunities in these challenging high value conservation landscapes by the establishment of the seed banks (for threatened MAPs) and herbaria, which are reflective of sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, and community empowerment.

The local communities in support from the Ladakh Biodiversity Council, panchayats, and the Biodiversity Management Committee have joined hands in protecting a high-altitude lake from waste and environmental degradation caused by unplanned tourism. Based on the scientific detailed studies conducted in the early part of the project, the Biodiversity Council of Ladakh is facilitating in designation of this high-altitude bio-rich area as Yaya Tso Biodi versity Heritage Site (6692.64 Ha).

Hanle Dark Sky Reserve in Ladakh (107,300 ha): The Project has facilitated the creation of India's first Dark Sky Reserve in Hanle village cluster (consisting of 6 villages) through signing of a tripartite MoU between the Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Leh on behalf of the community and Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bangalore. The objectives of this Reserve are to improve and diversify local livelihoods; to promote wildlife conservation; and to reduce light pollution.

**Sikkim**

Project has also supported in the establishment of first ever Biodiversity Heritage Site in the state, namely, Tunkyong Dho Lake (spans over 0.0650 ha) as proposed by the Hee-Gyathang Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC). The newly notified BHS will highly benefit the local community as it will attract the eco-tourists from across the globe which will directly or indirectly improve the socio-economic status of the local community in addition to bringing much needed finances for conservation and associated community development.

**Uttarakhand**

By setting up a Medicinal Plant Conservation Area in Gangotri landscape for conservation of 8 medicinal plant species, an area

over 200 ha has been managed through participatory approach between forest department and local communities. The project has been co-financed by the National Medicinal Plant Board.

Seven High Conservation Value Areas covering a total of 2750 hectares have been improved through management actions and of these, about 90 ha area has been designated as Biodiversity Heritage Sites (Kandara – 30 ha & Kheda-30 and Panchachuli-30 ha) through participatory approach by the respective BMCs. Besides being rich in the medicinal plants, the site also houses many flower species, including, Brahmakamal, Rhododendron, Himalayan soorajmukhi, Himalayan gulab, Potentilla sp., Narcissus sp., etc. Species of grasses such as Jufa grass (bugyali grass), Monal grasss, and Dudhia grass are also found in the Kandara bugyal, besides trees such as Bhojptra and White rhododendron.

| Outcome 2 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Improved and diversified sustainable livelihood strategies and enhanced capacities of community and government for sustainable natural resources management and conservation to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems** | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Cumulative progress since project start as of Jun 30, 2024** |
| Indicator 2.1 Extent under sustainable natural resources management practices | 0 (Currently sustainable land management natural resources practices at the village level are absent or limited) | At least 2,000 ha under sustainable natural resources management practices | 0 (Current institutional arrangements do not facilitate significant coordination across multi-sectors and multiple actors)<br><br>At least 10,000 ha under sustainable natural resources management practices | The project has exceeded its end-term target by achieving 13,939 hectares of land under sustainable management, surpassing the 10,000-hectare goal, and more work is on-going at the community level.<br><br>As per desk review and meetings with the officers, NGOs and Community, the following documents were prepared since the inception of the project to steer the work in the field:<br><br>• Landscape Management Strategy and Plan for each landscape<br>• Sectoral Strategies and Plans<br>• 82 village level livelihood plans / micro plans<br>• Livelihood Strategy for each landscape<br><br>Diversified sustainable natural resources management practices were identified and implemented to ensure future sustainability of the livelihood activities.<br><br>State-wise area under sustainable natural resources management practices is as below:<br><br>**Himachal Pradesh**<br>1. 1. With the success of the 'Kangla Basket' initiative, the value of Sea buckthorn plant (*Hippophaë rhamnoides*), which was earlier being ignored/uprooted, has been realized by the local communities. This has resulted in its active protection, thus reducing land degradation (due to soil binding properties of its roots) and improved soil quality (due to its Nitrogen fixing ability) in an area of 504 |

Ha. The Khondoma SHG women have adopted sustainable harvesting practices in over 3 ha area in their vicinity. Additional 5-hectare plantation has also been undertaken with the support of the Forest Department.

2. 2. Hazelnut plantation also been carried out through co-finance with support from the HP Forest Department. This has also resulted in reduced land degradation and improved soil quality in the Pangi area.

3. 3. 20 hectares of land has been conserved by promoting rotational grazing in Chasak Bhatori and Hudan Bhatori in Pangi, and Tindi in Lahaul by the local herder communities. Further, Rotational grazing has been initiated by the local communities in additional 13 Ha area in the vicinity of their villages for better fodder availability without damaging the local grasses.

4. A pilot community fodder bank is being successfully operated in 8 ha area in village Urgos, Tingret, Lahaul through fodder plantation.

5. 760 ha area of Chandertal Wetland complex has been brought under improved management practices as per model plan approved by the H.P. State Wetland Authority.

6. 21.68 Ha area has been brought under sustainable management regimes with the notification of three Biodiversity Heritage sites at (i) Sural Bhatori (ii) Hudan Bhatori (iii) Naingahar in collaboration with Himachal Pradesh State Biodiversity Board.

7. Economic valuation of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BDES) is underway for key pilot sites: Chandratal Wetland, Miyar Valley in Lahaul, and Seichu Tuan Wildlife Sanctuary in Pangi. Interim reports have been submitted.

8. Approximately 300 ha of area has been improved through waste management facility in the form of small-scale scientific waste processing unit established in collaboration with the Special Area Development Authority (SADA) HP.

9. The project has supported installation of 26 solar water heaters in schools to reduce reliance on fuelwood., thus protecting the local environment under Smart School Initiative.

**Ladakh**

10. Approximately 200-hectare area has been brought under sustainable management regimes in three villages of Changthang landscape of Ladakh through promotion of homestay based eco-tourism activities

11. Certain area of the large Rupshu valley area in Changthang plateau, which is home to Changpas, has been brought under sustainable regeneration regime to reduce direct pressure, in Puga area between Tsokar, Tso

Moriri and Chumathang hot springs by promoting sheep and yak wool- based value chain. The local nomadic community has been motivated to increase income through better practices and value addition of existing wool products and restrict sheep and goat populations to protect the alpine grasslands.

12. Yaya so Biodiversity Heritage Site: 0.5 ha

13. About 340 ha area is being managed through participatory approaches by setting up Medicinal Plants Conservation and Development Areas (MPCDA) near TaglangLa and Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHSs) near WariLa. The Management Plans developed jointly with local communities, wildlife dept and the Biodiversity Council. Are being implemented to promote conservation.

14. 2200 ha area of Tso kar wetland Complex (out of total 9500 ha) has been declared as Ramsar site in 2020 and is being conserved.

15. 11 ha of Chumathang hot spring area declared litter free.

**Sikkim**

16. 25 ha area has been brought under sustainable Nettle harvesting techniques by 151 households (direct beneficiaries of nettle value chain).

17. 20 hectares of land conserved for Apiculture practices by 60 beneficiary households in West Sikkim.

18. Plantation of native spp. undertaken in 35 ha area

**Uttarakhand**

19. 7891.82 ha of Panchayati Land being protected through sustainable management practices which have been adopted by 29 Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) The BMCs are managing their biological resources in line with the People's Biodiversity Registers and Bio-cultural Protocols duly accepted and validated by all the BMC members as per the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

20. Apple farming has been promoted on 113.24 Ha land in Gangotri landscape by 25 women Self Help Group members who have economically benefitted through it.

21. 10 Ha of community land is being managed by walnut plantation for natural resource-based livelihood generation. Further, a forest nursery has been upgraded to grow walnut saplings in 0.1 ha area to ensure future supply of plants to the farmers of 8 villages for natural resource-based livelihood generation in future.

22. 1,466.80 hectares of pasturelands placed under rotational grazing in Dayara and Gidara grasslands.

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| | | | | 23. Setting up of Sea-buckthorn processing centre in Jhala village has enabled 300 households to produce marketable products, thereby enhancing their income, and further motivating them to conserve sea-buckthorn and MAP habitat around their village. The activity has been undertaken with the consent of BMC. Sustainable harvesting protocols are being followed. |
| | | | | 24. Another BMC has signed a MoU with Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi and provided raw material of Nettle fibre for research to explore ABS potential. |
| | | | | 25. Seasonal biodiversity assessments have been carried out by 5 BMCs under guidance of state biodiversity board around Gangotri National Park to assess potential for birding and wildlife spotting in the area. Potential economic benefit from the area could lead to protection of the habitat. |
| | | | | 26. The farmers of 5 villages have benefitted to receive early and quick weather information to manage/alter agriculture steps by establishing 10 automated weather stations through co-finance by Japan Supplementary Budget (JSB) project of UNDP. with technical support of State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) Uttarakhand |
| | | | | 27. To enhance climate resilience, nine automated weather stations were installed in the Gangotri-Govind landscape for providing farmers with accurate weather information for improving agricultural practices and timely action for protection of landscape |
| Indicator 2.2 (a) Average percentage increase in community incomes from sustainable livelihood, natural resource management and business activities (calculated for each community) | Baseline to be established in YR1 during village micro-planning | 10% increase in average incomes from sustainable livelihoods, natural resource managemen t and business activities (At least 40% of beneficiarie s are women) | 30% increase in average incomes from sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management and business activities (At least 40% of beneficiaries are women) | The Target has been met although in the MTR this indicator was considered non-measurable and non-achievable and hence, not SMART, because although it aimed to increase average income of the households from sustainable livelihood solutions, but the base line had not been defined. Rather it was to be defined in Year 1.

Accordingly, 82 village level livelihood plans / micro plans were prepared (though delayed) which included livelihood and income enhancing strategies and provided information about, and Integration of, relevant government schemes. A base line was also defined after interactions with the community, especially women.

During TE it has been observed during desk review that the project has benefited a total of 2,502 Households (with 53% men and 47% women) across various project sites, considerably enhancing their income and livelihoods with benefits varying with sites and activities, like, **Himachal Pradesh:** 769 households with 32% men and 68% women beneficiaries, **Ladakh:** 206 households (34% men and 66% women beneficiaries), **Sikkim:** 527 households (with 67% |

men and 33% women) and **Uttarakhand:** 1,000 beneficiaries (with 65% men and 35% women beneficiaries.

**A)**. Two major income generation initiatives stand out for their financial returns to the community, in all project states based on review of fact sheets submitted, field visits and discussions during meetings. These are:

- **Eco-tourism value chain**: This activity stood out leading to a 100% increase in income, wherever adequate support was provided. A total of 843 households (212 in HP, 81in Ladakh, 356 in Sikkim and 194 in Uttarakhand benefitted by setting up home stays. High income through ecotourism has also helped communities realize the importance of natural landscapes for their livelihoods, motivating them to contribute towards conservation. Additional activities like, nature guide, nature trek and local culture guide services, wildlife spotting services, biodiversity/bird watching facilities, astro-tourism, etc., associated with ecotourism are also a good source of additional income.
- **Sheep and Yak wool-based Handloom and Handicraft value chain:** The project landscape is dominated by pastoral communities. In all, 679 households have been supported to strengthen sheep and yak wool-based value chain - Himachal (165), Ladakh (100), Sikkim (51) and Uttarakhand (363) while ensuring conservation of traditional lifestyles and practices of tribal communities. The average increase in annual income of participating households through this value chain is assessed as 25 %, with exceptionally high incomes reported in Ladakh.

**B)**. Another major activity which has had a positive impact on income of women in HP is Sea-buckthorn based value chain.

**C)**. Other initiatives, most of which have a perceivable economic impact but are yet to be evaluated include:

- NTFP based value chain (including Nettle Fiber)
- Dairy development-based value chain
- Small enterprise promotion (bakery, stitching, mushroom cultivation, etc.),
- Medicinal and Aromatic Plant promotion
- The progress against this indicator was slow in the early part of the project due to reasons beyond the control of SPMUs, and initial focus being on building awareness on benefits of participatory natural resource management, as

well as, strengthening of capacities of the community / village-based institutions. However, action was intensified post MTR with escalated efforts made for field implementation, ensuring sustainability of the interventions made.

The **State wise incomes** generated through the above two initiatives, as well as **other livelihood opportunities / value chains** which have made an impact, are as below:

**Himachal Pradesh:**

- 212 households benefitted through this value chain, which emerged as a high income generating eco-friendly livelihood A random assessment of 15 Home stays under this initiative indicates income generation of Rs. 5,71,000/- (USD 6880) during the previous tourist season. Women SHGs in Pangi alone have reported an income of Rs.1,22,000/- in the first year of operation.
- Nature Guide Trainings helped youth to earn an additional income of USD 200 in one month by obtaining bookings for activities like camping, hiking, biodiversity walks, etc.
- 5 souvenir kiosks established in 5 project-supported homestays in Pangi valley helped generate an income of Rs. 35,500 during the tourist season by facilitating sales of traditional handlooms and handicrafts.
- The **Sea-buckthorn value chain** initiated by Khandoma SHG comprising 51 highly motivated women of Miyar Valley of Lahaul & Spiti realized sale of Rs.2,00,000/- (USD 2500) in June 2023 alone. Most of the SHG members who were preparing sea-buckthorn jams, chutneys, and pickles for their personal use from the wild berries of the plant and were motivated under the SECURE Himalaya project to sell their products in response to the local market demand. Co-finance of Rs. 40,0000 was provided by the Industry Department, Himachal Pradesh, as seed money to help scale up the business through S&T interventions to reduce their drudgery and develop a bouquet of products (Sea-buckthorn berry juice, berry powder, leaf powder, toothpaste, etc. developed). Branding as 'KangLa Basket', GI registration and marketing support helped to increase product demand and value. A web portal https://kanglabasket.org/ of the Kangla Basket Initiative has also been developed to promote on-line marketing.

Economic benefit of the following activities is yet to be assessed: -

- Harvesting of MAPs by 51 households in Pangi and development of community-based nurseries. 80 farmers have also registered with the 'Pangi Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Society' set up in collaboration with the State Biodiversity Board.
- Benefits to 107 households through registered Dairy Cooperative.
- Cookie making enterprise by 35 women SHG members.
- Hazelnut value chain promotion.

**Ladakh:**

1). **Eco-tourism/wildlife tourism** around PAs introduced in three villages (Tarchit, Himya, and Khatpu) in Rong valley of Changthang landscape has promoted setting up of home stays which also offer to introduce visitors to the unique Ladakhi culture. As per information provided by the local Women leader who is also BMC Chair & Home stay facility owner in Khaptu (during a visit to her Home Stay by TE-NC-Liv), an income of Rs 40,000/- to Rs 45,000/- approx (USD 500) was generated in the very first year of operation. She expects this to improve in future as the word spreads. The facility has been set up after due diligence and capacity building by Mantra Himalaya (an experienced tourism consultancy organization).

- Home stays are associated with 356 youth (including 36 % women) engaged as nature guides and wildlife spotters. Their additional income is yet to be assessed.
- Partnerships with four key properties—Jade House, Dolkhar Resort, Hotel Indus Valley, and Lena Ladakh in the region has facilitated a steady flow of tourists. During the previous summer season, six group bookings generated USD 500, directly benefiting the local communities

2). **Pashmina goat, sheep, and Yak wool value chain:**

- Commendable work has been undertaken with 100 nomadic pastoral households in Anguk and Puga villages in Niyomi Block of Rupshu plateau in Changthang landscape which were supported for sheep and yak wool-based value chain (as their livelihood depends upon the large herds of 200 to 500 goats and sheep and a few Yak). A Village Women's Group was set up and trainings provided to women on shearing, and segregating raw wool (which was earlier a man's job), training to men on improved scouring, carding, spinning and organic colouring of wool (which was earlier a women's job), setting up of two Wool Processing Centers with S&T interventions (to reduce drudgery and increase

productivity), introduction of new products, including stuffed toys out of wool waste, branding of products and fixing of rates for different qualities of wool, and facilitation of market linkages. As a result t**he sale proceeds of natural and dyed wool and yarn by project beneficiary groups for only 6 sheep amounted to USD 2800 due to enhanced rates after segregation and processing of raw wool (for example, the community was earlier selling raw sheep wool in the range of Rs 350/- to Rs 450/- per kg, which, after processing is sold at Rs. 6,500/- to Rs 9000/- per kg, and further after colouring between Rs 10,00 to Rs, 12,600/- per kg; a jump of 30 times, say 3000%). Similarly, a 60-fold increase in the value of Pashmina wool has been reported.** This has been achieved through sale to wholesale buyers and participation in trade fairs and festivals.

- The enhanced rates of processed wool are at **Annexure-5.15** (Source: Mrs Tseding Khando, President Village Women Group), however, as a word of caution, the rates and quality need to be assessed by experts in the field of wool (especially Pashmina wool) industry.

**3). Other economic activities** which are yet to be valued**:**

**i). Dark Sky Reserve:** The project has supported the government in establishing India's first Dark Sky Reserve at Hanle, covering 1,073 sq. km. The youth have been provided 25 telescopes under this initiative to diversify local livelihoods and protect nocturnal wildlife in this landscape. Benefits are expected to be generated over time. 2.2B2.2CEvM10

**ii).** The Changthang area is rich in **MAPs.** Local communities have reported that a large volume of medicinal plants is accessed (probably illegally) from the area. A study undertaken jointly by The University of Trans-disciplinary Health Sciences & Technology, Bengaluru, the National Institute of Sowa – Rigpa, Leh, and The Tropicalist, Kargil, has shortlisted 40 out of 113 taxa for detailed assessment and reported 3 critically endangered, 11 Endangered, 10 Vulnerable, 11 Near Threatened, 3 Least Concern and 2 Data deficient taxa. In this regard the economic loss to the community due to loss of ABS money needs to be assessed.

**Sikkim:**

| | | | | The economic benefit of the following initiatives could not be assessed due to flash floods in the area<br><br>**1). Nettle fiber Value chain:** Nettle fiber is a high value product used to weave traditional Lepcha dresses. The fiber is in great demand due to its warmth and as a fashion statement and is valued @ > Rs 30,000/2.5 m (USD 150 per meter). Mechanized weaving of Nettle fibre cloth was undertaken as an alternative livelihood option under the project by NGOs Ecostream and MLA. The product has high income generation potential, but work was hampered due to natural calamities and is still ongoing. With completion of the SECURE Himalaya project, alternate funding sources are being assessed. Hence valuation could not be undertaken.<br><br>**ii). Eco tourism: U**nder this 356 Households have been covered and the local community trained in identification of different native and migrant bird and butterfly species or engaged as nature guides and Himal Rakshaks to promote green sustainable eco-tourism business in the region.<br><br>ii). 51 households have been supported to strengthen sheep and yak wool-based value chain in Sikkim.<br><br>**iii). Fulfilment Centre** has been set up and MoU with the State Rural Livelihood Mission to help the community in value addition through improved packaging, processing of the products and marketing on e-platforms.<br><br>iv). Support to 100 farmers for honey production through bee keeping.<br><br>v). Development of MAP nurseries and distribution of saplings of Tupistra nutan (locally know as 'Nakima'), a high value vegetable crop with medicinal properties, in Leek village in Dzongu<br><br>**Uttarakhand:**<br><br>**1). Ecotourism: A 50% increase in t**he average annual income of households through eco-tourism has been reported, with a total sale of INR 48,39,000/- (USD 60,500 approx) in 7 months (November 2021-May 2023) in Govind WLS area.<br><br>An additional site in Sat-tal area has been developed as a new eco-tourism destination where trekker camping facility, entry check post & trekking routes have been developed, and waste collection facilities and informative signboards installed. However, tourism to the site is yet to take off. Total 8 villages with approximately 2,000 households are expected to get direct and indirect benefits |

through setting up home stays, tour-travel agencies, and nature guides in the area.

The existing eco-tourism project also promotes Income enhancement activities, that include business opportunities to local youth after training in trek leadership, snow leopard-based tourism and adventure tourism from Nehru Centre for Mountaineering. The Off Farm Producer Organisation (OFPO) has signed MoUs with 40 local youth to support landscape level conservation efforts while generating livelihoods through eco-tourism. This has resulted in reducing unorganized tourism and has helped in conservation of Kedarkantha and Har-ki-doon alpine areas while providing income enhancement opportunity to the community.

**2). Marketing of handloom-based products**: -

The traditional woollen products of the area are known for Bhudera crafts. Market linkages through online (https://essenceofhimal.com/ ) and offline promotion have been strengthened under the project. An OFPO outlet and office has been established at the Gangotri National Highway for promotion of Handicrafts and Tourism. The Center has benefitted 207 households with sale of Bhudera products valued at INR 8,93,000/ USD 11,200 since December 2020 till May 2023 and Rs 3,85,600/ USD 4820 in the past one year. Currently online demand has also been generated with an initial business of Rs. 20,000/-. E69. Knitting machines have been provided to 25 women cooperative members.

The Bhudera products have received three awards/certificates from the government and a Geographical Indication has been filed.

3). Other initiatives

**I) Increase in annual incomes through agri-processing:**

Apple-processing value chain has been strengthened and mechanised to improve quality and enhance production efficiency. As of May 2023, this business indicated a 5% increase in income for 19 women. 400 kg processed apple jam (mainly from low grade apples) was sold for Rs. 20000. In addition, 100 kg apple jam was reported to be provided to the Army basecamp. In future Seabuckthorn based products are planned.

Ii) Electric cooking appliances have been provided to 100 households (primarily women) in the project landscape, resulting in a daily saving of 400 kg of fuelwood, thus promoting conservation.

| | | | | Iii)  133 households were engaged in cultivation of community-based nursery of medicinal and aromatic plants. Sea-buckthorn is available in the area but harvesting income benefits are yet to be received |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator 2.3 Number of community members trained, adopting community-based agricultural, agro-pastoral, natural resource management and livelihood activities. | 0 (currently training at the community level is limited and sector specific.) and limited effort at comprehensive training that integrates the multiple dimensions of managing resources across the different sectors and for multiple use. | At least 1,000 community members trained and adopting community-based sustainable resource use, agro-pastoral, agricultural and other sustainable livelihood activities | At least 2,500 community members trained and adopting community-based sustainable resource use, agro-pastoral, agricultural and other sustainable livelihood activities and receiving detectable conservation and livelihood benefits | The target has been <u>over-achieved</u> by 39%.

Overall, 3,471 community members were trained against the end-term target of 2,500 out of which 49% (1,707) were women.
The trainings focused on:
• Diversified, resilient & sustainable livelihood solutions
• Sustainable resource management,
• Improved agricultural practices.
These efforts have led to significant advancements in various livelihood value chains both for the off-farm and on-farm-based activities. The State wise important training activities are enumerated below:

**1). Trainings in Ecotourism and home stay management**

**Himachal Pradesh**
• Basic training to all registered 212 home stay families on demonstration of conservation based eco-tourism
• 3 Advanced training cum-exposure visits to Delhi and Leh to 12 community members for development of visitor facilities and maintenance of home stays focusing on conservation-based eco-tourism, promoting local traditional cuisines. etc
• Basic Training for women from Lahaul-Pangi on hospitality, cooking of local traditional cuisines, hygiene, cultural values, etc.
• Basic level training for nature guides and adventure tourism,
• Basic training on waste segregation and management, especially in Keylong area.

**Ladakh**
• 4-day preliminary Training to eligible/interested family members (34 women and 3 men) from 93 households in Rong valley on importance and benefits of home stays, general Tourism Theory and essentials of home stay management by Mantara Himalaya
• 5-day advanced Training to 12 women home stay owners on Basic facilities required by tourists, language skills, safety of tourist and family providing home stay service, solar power use, developing short nature trails, etc.
• Training to 56 youth on various social aspects of eco-tourism including ethics, do's & don'ts, etc.
• Trainings on wildlife spotting, camera operations for WL recording, etc. |

|  |  |  |  | • Facilitation for setting up of Ladakhi Culture Museum at Khatpu.<br>• Astro-tourism training, prevention of light pollution training, and use of telescopes provided by Indian Institute of Astrophysics to 24 local youth.<br>**Sikkim**<br>• Local community has been trained and engaged as nature guides in both North and West Sikkim. 356 (M-263, F-93) households benefitted through eco-tourism value chain.<br>• Training provided to 21 Himal Rakshaks (honrary mountain guards) on nature trails and trekking and identification of birds and butterflies in Kanchendzonga National Park (KNP)<br>• A workshop on sustainable birding organized for nature guides, NGOs and local conservationists, focusing on ethical birding practices, endangered species, and habitat preservation.<br>**Uttarakhand**<br>• Three training-cum-exposure visits for promotion of an integrated approach towards eco-tourism provided to 40 beneficiaries from Gangotri-Govind landscape which was focused on demonstration of conservation based eco-tourism, promotion of local traditional cuisines, hygiene, hospitality etc. The exposure visits were organized in convergence with Agriculture department Uttarkashi under ATMA project.<br>• Initiatives for promotion of home stays were undertaken in 30 home stays through installation of equipment, videography and catalogues.<br>• 50 youth trained and trekking equipment and gear provided. They have already started earning as nature guides and are organizing trekking activities in the area.<br>**2). Trainings in Handicrafts and Handloom sector –**<br>**Himachal Pradesh:**<br>• 165 households were supported by providing advanced training to 263 women artisans on weaving, knitting, branding, and marketing, contributing to Rs. 30,000 in sales at a Craft Bazar.<br>• Training on eco-friendly packaging provided to two village organizations, enhancing product value.<br>• Training on direct marketing of products<br>• Training for developing linkages through on-line and off-line platforms, like, Delhi Dastkar mela for income enhancement.<br>**Ladakh:**<br>• Six trainings to 102 beneficiaries on Sheep and Yak Wool products in Rupshu area by:<br>• Setting up a Village Women's Group. |

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- Changing attitudes and rejecting division of labour in society by training women for shearing, and segregating raw wool, (which was earlier a men's job) and training men on improved scouring, carding, spinning and organic colouring of wool, (which was earlier a women's job).
- Setting up and mechanization of two wool processing Centers with S&T interventions to reduce drudgery and increase productivity.
- Training on new products, including stuffed toys out of wool waste.
- Training for branding of products, consultative fixing of rates for different types of wool and facilitating market linkages with Lena Ladakh, etc.
- Engagement with the Central Wool Board at the Desi Oon Festival held in New Delhi.

**Sikkim:**
- A 45-day training program for 24 women In Lingdem, Dzongu, focused on sustainable nettle harvesting and product creation. The training aimed to reduce the physical strain and reduce drudgery of nettle collection and processing, providing women with valuable skills for integrating Lepcha cultural motifs in the nettle crafts.
- Establishment of four Producer Groups for finalizing the nettle-based products line and training on mechanization.

**Uttarakhand**
- Upgrading of Handloom processing units with renewal energy-based solutions, new technologies, tools and equipment to meet the increased market demand of the new products mixed with the traditional designs and prepare the communities to compete with the growing textile market at national and global level.
- Total 62 women artisans trained on new designs and managing upgraded processing units.
- A seven-day design diversification training organised for 34 female artisans in Dunda village. It helped them in developing ten new innovative designs.
- This has resulted in receiving bulk orders from top brands like Times Prime and government institutions like Nehru Institute of Mountaineering.

**3). On/OFF Farm-Based Initiatives:**
**Himachal Pradesh**
- 51 beneficiary households identified, Khondoma SHG established, and training provided to all women on improved methods of sea-buckthorn product preparation for sale.

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|  |  |  |  | <ul><li>Training on operation of juice extractors, crushers, boilers, packaging and other machines to SHG women</li><li>Training to local artisans on maintenance and repair of such machines</li><li>Support provided for packaging and branding in the sea buckthorn value chain.</li><li>35 women in Pangi provided three-day training on bakery and other cookery skills.</li><li>Training to Pragati Village Organization comprising 35 women from 7 SHGs for hazelnut value chain.</li><li>107 beneficiaries (47M & 60F) registered under Flote dairy milk Producer and Marketing Cooperative Society Ltd given training on use of milk processing machines provided under the project.</li><li>Youth provided training on Para-Taxonomy.</li><li>Basic training on GI registration process and operation.</li></ul>**Ladakh:**<ul><li>**Training on** oyster mushroom cultivation across three villages in Rong Valley to 28 **community members (26 female and 2 male)**.</li><li>Training on Organic kitchen gardening</li><li>Assistance and training on setting up and maintenance of green house.  25 polyhouse units were provided multiple hands-on sessions for training on harvesting.</li><li>Oyster mushroom spawn to 37 beneficiaries was distributed. Local KVK was involved in training.</li><li>Training to 86 BMC members, out of which 32 are women provided training on PBR preparation.</li></ul><ul><li>**Sikkim:**<ul><li>13 members from Yuksam village participated in the paper-making workshop at Kumarappa National Handmade Paper Institute, Jaipur. Khangchendzonga Conservation Committee (KCC) supported the Gram Panchayat in setting up the paper recycling enterprise in the village as part of their zero-waste management initiative</li><li>Training of communities from five gram-panchayats bordering KMP on waste segregation and reuse.</li><li>Training of youth around Yuksom village on waste management</li></ul></li></ul>**Uttarakhand:**<ul><li>29 BMC members visited Herbal Research and Development Institute (HRDI), Uttarakhand, and learned technical knowhow on cultivation of medicinal plants, seeds, their processing, and usage. Training also provided</li></ul> |
|  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  | by HRDI to these BMCs for developing the medicinal farm in their respective villages for enhancement of the livelihoods.<br>• 60 households trained in beekeeping and provided bee boxes in Gangotri-Govind Landscape. Although honey production was limited in the first year, the initiative saved 1800 USD by eliminating the need for rented pollination boxes.<br>• Considering MTR recommendations, the governance skills of 18 (including 6 female) lead members of OFPO have been trained in business promotion through management of online platform, payment gateway, website handling, packaging and courier services, etc.<br>• Further, 203 BMC members (Out of which 58 are women) were provided training on BMC Operation and PBR preparation.<br>**Additional achievement:**<br>The Initiative of Kangla Basket with Khandoma SHG for Seabuckthorn under SECURE Himalaya provided a platform to district administration of Lahaul to apply for PM Award for excellence in Public Administration 2021 under One District One Product (ODOP) category. This product received 5th position along with appreciation letter from the PM Office and recorded an additional income of 3000USD. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Outcome 3**<br>**Enhanced enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and human-wildlife conflict** | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Cumulative progress since project start as of Jun 30, 2024** |
| Indicator 3.1 Number of community members actively volunteering in security monitoring and surveillance | 0 (There is no coordinated program for community participation in surveillance and monitoring of wildlife crime) | 50 community members actively engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions (At least 20% women) | 200 community members actively engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions (At least 20% women) to serve as deterrent to wildlife crime | The project has made excellent progress in the matters of developing and demonstrating effective anti-poaching, wildlife surveillance, monitoring and crime control, efficient information sharing, and prosecution management systems in all the high Himalayan landscapes where addressing illegal trade, wildlife crime and human wildlife conflicts is a real challenge due to remoteness and rugged nature of landscapes. This has been made possible with the active involvement of local communities, volunteers and other local community groups through capacity building and other appropriate mechanisms across all project landscapes.<br><br>The project has exceeded its end term target of 200 community members (mostly youths, besides involvement of Sarpanches of Panchayats as Honorary Wildlife Wardens) trained, equipped and actively engaged in wildlife crime monitoring in vulnerable border areas and transit locations across all the four landscapes. Although, the women have also been involved and trained on monitoring and surveillance of wildlife crime and various aspects |

|  |  |  |  | of biodiversity conservation and mitigation of human wildlife conflicts, yet the target of at least 20% involvement of women has not been achieved in some of the landscapes. |
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**Himachal Pradesh**

Van Mitra (21, Friend of Forest; 13 men, 8 women) in Himachal landscape besides other 20 community members (all males) have been trained on various aspects of community-based monitoring of wildlife. Van Mitras have also undertaken patrolling agricultural land during cropping season and forest areas within their Panchayat jurisdiction to check and monitor illegal activities. They have been equipped with Deep Search Metal Detectors (DSMD) to detect metal traps and snares to stop poaching more effectively while surveying and monitoring the area. A web based mobile application has been developed feeding to MIS database and Human Wildlife Conflict cases and status of compensation for real time monitoring.

**Ladakh**

In Ladakh, the Sarpanch of all the 194 Panchayats have been nominated as Honorary Wildlife Warden in the Changthang landscape by the Wildlife Protection Department in Ladakh, besides 3 Army Officials (1 from Changthang).

41 young enthusiasts were provided with two-day training in gathering information in wildlife trade, wildlife crime, and human wildlife conflict organized by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) to support hon'rary wildlife wardens

In Ladakh, wildlife Thopas program has been constituted under the Department of Wildlife Protection, wherein a total of 20 Wildlife Thopas or friends of wildlife (14 men, 6 women; as community volunteers from young wildlife enthusiasts across Changthang) have also been engaged to better facilitate information gathering on illegal wildlife activities besides helping the staff in gathering of evidence, which are useful in 'compensation' program of the Wildlife Department. Of these, 14 wildlife Thopas had been also taken for exposure visits to Shey (birding), Ulley (snow leopard tourism), Tar (flora), and Rong Valley. They were also equipped with essential gear and provided with literature on wildlife monitoring to enhance their effectiveness and efficiency.

A protocol / SoP has been drafted for engagement of community members in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance activities. This will further help in incident reporting and mainstreaming community participation in monitoring.

|  |  |  |  | **Sikkim**

Community involvement has also been facilitated through a group of 30 community wildlife wardens, known as Himal Rakshaks. They have been trained and engaged in 3 long range patrolling, periodic monitoring of biodiversity, reporting and control of forest fire across both Khanchondzonga National Park and Khanchondzonga Biosphere Reserve.

The Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) has imparted 5-day comprehensive training in wildlife rescue and rehabilitation at Manas National Park, Assam to 28 frontline staff members, including Head Forest Guards, Block Officers, Range Officers, Environment Assistants, and Himal Rakshaks. This training has helped Himal Rakshaks in enhancing their skills and capacity in wildlife protection and recovery. This training conducted in the company of forest staff has also helped in bringing in coordination and synergy needed to undertake these tasks.

The Project has also facilitated involvement of 30 community members in two patrolling units, besides a separate cluster of 10 local community members for participatory monitoring of the project landscape.

A total of 43 frontline staff & EDC/JFMC members of 2 forest divisions have been given training on illegal wildlife trade, responding to human wildlife conflict situations, security monitoring and surveillance.

**Uttarakhand**

The Project has facilitated active involvement of 76 youths in surveillance and monitoring of wildlife/crime and conservation issues through two different arrangements. One, through Village Response Team (VRTs) for HWC management in the project landscapes in which 66 youth are participating. Thier capacity has also been built to be able to respond to HWC cases at the earliest possible and had also been provided with field patrolling kits. And two, the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has engaged and registered 10 community volunteers (all males, from 14 different villages) as part of the division level surveillance team.

In Gangotri National Park, the project has facilitated joint patrolling by frontline forest officials in participation with the trained Para-taxonomist. This has yielded additional 579 records of various wildlife species (snow leopards, bears, and red foxes),

| | | | | which has added values for the overall ongoing conservation analysis.

The Project has also enhanced capacity of 35-member Village volunteer protection force for wildlife crime prevention and human-wildlife conflict management. They have been trained in incident reporting process and have also been suitably equipped with multipurpose trekking poles.

The Project has facilitated reinforcing the protection of wildlife and natural resources within Gangotri National Park and the Gangotri Range by undertaking 6 Long and 6 short Range Patrols (LRPs & SRPs). |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator 3.2 Number of international agreements for enhancing trans-boundary cooperation between China, Nepal, Bhutan and India | 0 (a number of trans-boundary plans exists, but coordination is limited) | At least 2 effective collaborative agreements negotiated with neighboring countries and protocols agreed to | At least 3 trans-boundary agreements effective and collaborative implementation | The project has provided scope for Inter-Agency coordination to enable effective communication and cooperation for mitigating wildlife crime and related threats. This has been attempted by bringing all the law enforcement agencies across the landscapes and participating States on same platform, conducting meetings and initiating dialogues on tackling wildlife crime issues. Inter-agency coordination committees have also been constituted.

The Project has also sought for trans-boundary cooperation with neighbouring countries to draw on international best practice and experience for the implementation of integrated models of wildlife crime reduction by building awareness and strengthening enforcement of wildlife laws and supporting fast prosecution.

The mid-term evaluation has also recommended to establish cooperation with regional organizations for developing international agreements for transboundary cooperation among Bhutan, China, India and Nepal.

The project has met with the end-term target of facilitating three regional/ bilateral agreements.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Nepal have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on trans-boundary agreements reinforce transboundary effective and collaborative implementation across the 8 Hindu-Kush Himalayan (HKH) countries with the following shared goals: a) Cooperate at all levels across the HKH region for sustainable and mutual benefits; b) Recognize and prioritize the uniqueness of the HKH mountain people; c) Take concerted climate action at all levels to keep global warming to 1.5°C by 2100; d) Take accelerated actions to achieve the SDGs and the nine mountain priorities; e) Enhance ecosystem resilience and halt biodiversity loss and land |

|  |  |  |  | degradation; f) Promote regional data and information sharing and science and knowledge cooperation. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  | Government of India has approved the proposal of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for signing an MoU with the Government of Nepal on biodiversity conservation, with a view to strengthen and enhance the coordination and cooperation in the field of forests, wildlife, environment, biodiversity conservation and climate change, including restoration of corridors and interlinking areas and share knowledge and best practices, between the two countries. The MoU would help in promoting cooperation between the Parties in the field of forests, wildlife, environment, biodiversity conservation and climate change, including restoration of corridors and interlinking areas and sharing knowledge and best practices. It is currently awaiting signatures by Government of India and Nepal. |
|  |  |  |  | In 2024, the Project facilitated a bilateral consultation meeting was organised in New Delhi between India & Nepal under the chairmanship of Secretary General, South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN). The key wildlife enforcement agencies from both countries participated in this event, besides Director General, International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), representatives from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs and the US Embassy. |
|  |  |  |  | This consultation stressed on the needs for theme-based bilateral meetings and consultation between the countries for better coordination among the enforcement networks on collecting, trading, and transferring wildlife products. The need for coordination and cooperation at the regional level was also emphasised. The consultation has reached to several agreements: |
|  |  |  |  | 1. To develop a strategic plan as part of bilateral strategy and focused on combating transnational wildlife crime and illegal trade was agreed upon. |
|  |  |  |  | 2. **To ensure real-Time Information Exchange for real-time sharing the information between** the countries, involving the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) of India, WCCB Nepal, and SAWEN. |
|  |  |  |  | 3. To organise periodic transboundary meetings involving Protected Area (PA) managers to deliberate upon issues concerning human-wildlife conflict, habitat management, wildlife movement, and best practices. |

4. To undertake collaborative efforts among countries on climate change, environmental governance, landscape conservation, and other mutual interests.

5. It has been agreed that SAWEN will facilitate the exchange of good practices related to technological solutions, participatory wildlife conservation, climate-resilient livelihoods, and sustainable resource management.

6. To develop cross-boundary knowledge exchange programs to enhance the skills of forest and wildlife frontline staff in managing wildlife crime, illegal trade, and human-wildlife conflict.

7. **Joint Working Group**: It is also agreed upon to constitute a Joint Working Group with representatives from relevant government agencies and inter-governmental bodies like IBCA and SAWEN to support the implementation of the forthcoming MoU between India and Nepal on biodiversity conservation.

The project has supported the establishment of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) secretariat and facilitated its first international steering committee meeting in India, attended by representatives from 14 countries. This alliance aims to improve coordination and management of transboundary species, enhance biodiversity conservation, and combat wildlife crime and illegal trade.

The Project supported the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) in setting up a Cyber Unit for collection of Cyber Intelligence for Investigation, digital forensics and evidence collection, OSINT investigations, and social media monitoring. This will help in curbing internet-based wildlife crime and illegal trade.

The Cyber – Unit is intended to strengthen cybersecurity measures for combating and controlling wildlife crime, illegal trade in cyberspace and to support investigations through advanced cyber techniques by adopting the approaches of ore-search (lead generation), search (evidence gathering) and post-search (data analysis). This Unit is also likely to narrow the gaps between wildlife enforcement officials and the internet-enabled wildlife crime and illegal trade.

India is already a signatory to the Bishkek Declaration on the Conservation of Snow Leopards, 2013, and the Bishkek Declaration "Caring for Snow Leopards and Mountains - Our Ecological Future" 2017 committed to ensuring the conservation of snow leopards and the people who live among them and has made significant progress in this area through its participation in the Bishkek Declaration, GSLEP, and other initiatives.

| | | | | India is a member of the Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection Programme (GSLEP), which promotes international cooperation for snow leopard conservation. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | India has taken the lead in hosting the 4th Project Steering Committee (PSC) of GSLEP in 2019 and has been regularly participating in PSC meetings and providing country updates. |
| | | | | India took up the Presidency of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which has 8 member States including China and Nepal, latter being a dialogue partner of SCO. India has identified Snow Leopard under theme of Biodiversity Conservation in the context of flora and fauna. As a part of this theme, exchange of ideas, best practices and knowledge related to snow leopard conservation and management is being promoted among SCO member States. India as President of SCO is fostering cooperation of member States towards Snow Leopard conservation with member countries including China and Nepal. |
| | | | | In On July 4, 2023 New Delhi Declaration of The Council of Heads of State of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was adopted in July 2023, in which, besides other aspects, the Member States noted the importance of cooperation in the field of environmental protection, ecological security and prevention of the negative consequences of climate change, development of specially protected nature reserves and eco-tourism, agreed to declare 2024 as the SCO Year of Environment" |
| | | | | India has also made consistent endeavors at bi- and multilateral forums to demonstrate efforts for conservation of environment and biodiversity, including snow leopards and their habitats, as is evident from the above. |
| Indicator 3.3 Annual Number of human-wildlife conflicts leading to livestock and crop losses and retaliatory killings of wildlife | Baseline will be developed in Year 1 | At least 20% decrease in HWCs | At least 50% decrease in HWCs | The target of 50% decrease in HWC cases has been achieved in full.<br><br>It is commendable that despite the unique landscapes of this Project where human, livestock and wildlife literally compete for the same space for meeting their needs, the HWC cases have registered a decline. Depredation of livestock by wild carnivores seems a natural yet a very serious phenomenon. For the herders, especially, in these landscapes, livestock are their main and at times the only source of livelihood and any loss leads to severe monetary loss. For example, Pashmina goats, blue sheep (by snow leopard, Tibetan wolf and more importantly feral dogs). Loss of crops (by blue sheep, black bear, Langurs and Wild pigs is another conflicting issue in practically all the project landscapes besides human injuries, human deaths, loss of properties (by Asiatic black bear, common leopard, wolf and brown bear.<br><br>The Project has successfully met the target of reduction of 50% in Human Wildlife Conflict cases (HWCs) by taking various mitigation and adaptation measures, both proactive and reactive. Some of |

the important measures taken up at different landscapes include collection of databases of all conflict instances to identify HWC hotspots, understand spatio-temporal trends and damage, monitor trends, wildlife species involved, circumstances, possible causes and the amount of damages. Other measures taken are: construction of predator proof corrals (30 units of predator-proof corral pens have been constructed under the project through participatory means with the community); Installation of Animal Intrusion Detection and Repellant Systems (ANIDERS - Fox lights, Animal Deterrent measures) including training to community members for using equipment; community-based livestock insurance scheme; better livestock husbandry practices; rotational grazing schedules; conservation education awareness programs to enhance understanding of the value of sustainable use of natural resources and importance of wildlife; fencing of crop fields, alternative livelihood activities, installation of composite solar fencing, partnership between government and the community-based organizations to enhance effectiveness and sustainability of the initiatives started; etc.

**Himachal Pradesh**

Both migratory and local livestock herders are the worst suffered due to livestock depredation by snow leopard and Asiatic black bear, common leopard, wolf and brown bear. The effectiveness and efficiency of composite solar fencing for mitigating HWC (both loss of livestock and crops) due to brown bears and Himalayan wolves has been successfully achieved over 30 hectares in collaboration with the Agriculture Department.

Two Rapid Response Team (RRTs) with participation of communities in Lahual and Pangi landscape have been established through government notification This has immensely helped in quick resolution of conflict cases and transfer/relocation of problematic animals. The RRT personnel have been trained and equipped with tranquillizing guns, capture cages and smart sticks.

Several teams of Van Mitra (=Friend of Forest) have been constituted to look after HWC cases with respect to crop raids and patrolling activities in forest areas.

To speed up the process of detection, real-time reporting of HWC incidents, assessment of compensation amount, submission of compensation claims for making payments, a wildlife information management system (WMIS) and a mobile application has been developed. This has reportedly helped in improving both wildlife management and mitigating human wildlife conflicts.

Livestock insurance schemes and conservation education awareness programs have also helped in mitigation of HWC cases.

**Ladakh**

| | | | | Depredation of livestock due to wild carnivores has been one major conservation and livelihood issue in this landscape due to Tibetan Wolf, Snow Leopard, Eurasian Lynx, Feral Dogs, Blue Sheep and Tibetan Wild Ass. Loss of livestock, especially the Pashmina goats following HWC adversely affects the economy of local people and more so of the herders. Besides, crop damage by blue sheep in a few pockets of Rong valley is prevalent as well. Joint efforts between the local NGO (Snow leopard Conservancy-India Trust (SLC-IT) and communities by installing predator proof corals with support from the Project aided by the livestock insurance scheme and better livestock husbandry practices has helped in minimizing the HWC cases.

Up to 20% reduction in crop loss has been observed in Hanle village cluster and between 50-75% in Gya-Meru village cluster of Ladakh upon installation of 4 short-range ANIDERS and 4 long-range ANIDERS emanating from crop raiding by blue sheep (bharal) and Tibetan wild ass (kiang).

Implementation of 26 units of participatory predator-proof corral pens have brought down the loss of livestock practically to naught (100% reduction) in the Changthang Landscape.

**Sikkim**

Asiatic black bear, Langurs and Wild pigs are the main wildlife species causing agri- and horticulture crop depredation in the fringe area villages of Khangchendzonga NP and Lachen. In North Sikkim, Shepards suffer from livestock depredation by snow leopard, Tibetan wolf and feral dogs.

Use of ANIDERS, technology-based conflict mitigation solution, has brought down substantial reduction in HWC cases. Use of Smart Sticks (8 units), which has been provided to the forest frontline staff for HWC mitigation in the conflict-prone areas has also proved useful

The Himalayan black bear anothers anotherr major species for HWC for crops damage. The mitigation has been achieved by using biological and chemical repellents and raising low-cost solar fencing.

**Uttarakhand:**

In this landscape, loss of livestock due to snow leopards is a frequent phenomenon, both for migrants and local livestock herders, mostly in summers when shepherds move to the higher ranges. Asiatic black bear, wild boar, monkeys and langurs, porcupines are other species associated with HWC cases of crop |
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| | | | | raiding in Gangotri-Govind landscape and black and brown bear in Darma valley.<br><br>METT assessment in Uttarakhand has reflected upon a substantial reduction in HWC cases in the last five years of the Project period. |
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| **Outcome 4**<br>**Lessons learned by the project through participatory M&E, including gender mainstreaming practices, are used to fight poaching and IWT and promote community-based conservation at the national and international levels** | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Cumulative progress since project start as of Jun 30, 2024** |
| Indicator 4.1 Number of policy and regulatory mechanisms for improved management of high Himalayan areas provisioned | 0 (A number of areas where policy reform is required exists) | Key policy recommend ations discussed and agreed with key stakeholder s | 3 policy recommendations officially approved and implemented | The target has been achieved. Four Policies/Strategies have been approved by MoEFCC and one by State government and implemented:<br>1. Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI) Protocol for Snow Leopard population estimation in the country developed under the project and implemented. The first snow leopard population survey under SPAI was conducted in 2023 and report released in January 2024 which indicated that India is home to 718 individuals spanning across 120,000 sq. km. of potential habitat. India is now known to have a sizeable 10-15% of global population supported by 5% of global habitat.<br>2. The project has also supported the establishment of the Secretariat of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), an initiative of the Government of India, headquartered at N. Delhi. The SECURE Himalaya Project has implemented several wildlife conservation strategies and landscape restoration activities for long-term sustainability and change adaptation with focus on the conservation of Snow Leopard in six landscapes. Learning from the Project through its good practices and knowledge products are being used/replicated by the IBCA member countries (currently 16: Armenia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brazil, Cambodia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ecuador, Kenya, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, Suriname and Uganda: but open to 97 countries). in other similar high-altitude ecosystem for wildlife species conservation projects, as well as, in projects aiming at balancing biodiversity conservation with sustainable livelihoods. EvO42<br>3. 'Management Of High-Altitude Wetlands: A Guidebook for Wetland Managers and Practitioners' has been developed. It has been accepted by the Wetland Division of MoEF&CC and uploaded on the India Wetland Portal. It has also been circulated among all relevant State Wetland Authorities.<br>4. 'A Big Cats Master Plan' has been prepared by Sikkim for long term conservation and management of Big Cats (Snow leopard and Tiger). To facilitate implementation, a 'State level Coordination Committee' and 'Landscape level Committee' |

| | | | | (institutional structure) has been set up vide notification dated 16-9-2021. EvO422 .<br>5. A Resource Mobilization Strategy has been developed by Himachal Pradesh as part of the process of up-dating of State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (SBSAP).<br>6. Two pilot financial solutions for the conservation of snow leopard landscape have been conceptualised and implemented in collaboration with the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP). |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator 4.2 Number of project best practices used in development and implementation of other conservation initiatives | 0 (A few best practice publications etc., but the project will make efforts for additional project specific lessons to be documented) | A majority of best practice and lessons identified and under documentation | 10 best practices documented, disseminated and up scaled in non-project areas | The project has successfully documented and disseminated best practices at various International and national fora, many of which have been up scaled /replicated in other areas:<br><br>**International Fora:**<br>1. A knowledge product in English and French was released and distributed at the South Africa Global Wildlife Program (GWP) Annual Conference.<br>2. The Inter-agency coordination mechanism mandated under the WCCB for law enforcement agencies was operationalized for curbing wildlife crime and illegal trade. This was shared at the Global Wildlife Knowledge Exchange programme held at Mombasa, Kenya in 2022 and was recognised as one of the best practices in the GWP<br>3. Establishment of the International Big Cat Alliance to facilitate conservation of snow leopard across countries.<br>4. As part of UNCCD COP 14, 2019, two side events were organised on Initiatives by the Forest Departments for 'Conservation of High-Altitude Himalayan Region' and, Conservation of MAPs.<br>**National Fora**:<br>1. The Kangla Basket initiative to develop sea buckthorn value chain felicitated as the runner-up in Prime Minister's Award of Excellence in Public Administration. It has been documented by GEF and published in a coffee table book by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Govt of India.<br>2. SECURE Bahuudeshiya Swayatt Sahkarita women self-help group, working on community-based wool handicraft and handloom value chain in Uttarakhand, has been recognized by the state govt. and awarded by the Chief Minister as a sustainable model for livelihood development and women empowerment in remote mountain areas.<br>   a. It has also received an award by the National Cooperative Union of India for successful enterprise development for Himalayan tribal women.<br>3. A State Wildlife Information System was established by Uttarakhand along with an online Wildlife Crime Database Centre. The details were shared with partner states. This has been adopted by Himachal Pradesh Forest Department also. |

| | | | | 4. A Knowledge Product on Best Practices highlighting seven key initiatives related to habitat restoration, biodiversity conservation, livelihood enhancement, wildlife crime control, and gender inclusion was prepared for dissemination. It was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Governor during the Wildlife Week and is being used as a model for replication in other regions through ongoing government schemes. The document is publicly accessible.<br>5. GI registration awarded/applied for the following products developed under the project, serving as an example worth emulating by other States:<br>6. Bhotia Daan carpet weaving technique in Uttarakhand<br>7. Budera Craft in Uttarakhand<br>8. Sea-buckthorn products under Kangla Basket in HP<br>9. This has raised awareness and further triggered GI and PVPFR applications for other products and resources (3 GIs by Ladakh and 2 PVPFR applications by Uttarakhand).<br>10. Best practices in nature-based livelihoods, and community-based tourism and ecosystem management have been documented through films in Sikkim and disseminated across all participating states/UT.<br><br>11. Introduction of short range and long range ANIDERS in HP, Ladakh and Uttarakhand to minimize HWC. The performance evaluation data has been shared among partner states for product improvement and further innovations for up-scaling.<br><br>**State Level Best Practices and Replication/upscaling:**<br>12. India's first Dark Sky Reserve has been set up at Hanle village cluster to help promote Astro tourism among amateur star gazers and general tourists. It is a one-of-its-kind facility in the Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary to provide a unique experience to visitors by reducing light pollution in the surroundings which aids in conservation of crepuscular wildlife of the region (active during dawn and dusk).<br>13. Efforts are now being made to replicate similar conditions in Spiti, Himachal Pradesh for conservation of crepuscular wildlife.<br>14. Organic waste decomposers installed at an army camp in Ladakh have successfully addressed the problem of organic waste management in cold temperatures and rising population of feral dogs. The armed forces have now ordered 25 more bio-digesters to be installed in additional areas in the Ladakh landscape.<br>15. Similarly, two organic waste converters have been installed by the Border Roads Organization at Manul and Tamze camps in Sikkim. The army administration has planned to further upscale this initiative in other areas in the landscapes |
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| | | | | 16. In addition, a sustainable waste management model developed in partnership with local communities and the NGO 'Waste Warriors Society' at Govind National Park has been replicated in Gangotri National Park also. |

16. In addition, a sustainable waste management model developed in partnership with local communities and the NGO 'Waste Warriors Society' at Govind National Park has been replicated in Gangotri National Park also.

17. The 2024 Asian Waterbird Census was conducted in January in Ladakh in collaboration with BNHS, WISA, BMCs and local Communities to monitor bird populations and enhance conservation efforts.

18. Detailed assessment of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants species in Ladakh was undertaken by FRLHT to formulate effective conservation plans and prioritization of Wild Medicinal Plant Species after rapid threat assessment exercise through Conservation Assessment and Management Prioritization (CAMP) Workshops – Using IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria.

19. A similar study was undertaken by FRLHT to assess the MAPs w.r.t. their collection, usage, demand, markets price trends and life cycle in Kanchendzonga – Upper Teesta landscape in Sikkim

20. Identification of Areas of High Conservation Value that can be designated as Medicinal Plants Conservation and Development Areas (MPCDAs) in Ladakh (Mahe, Chang La, Tanglang La, Warila) and submission of MPCDA proposal to National Medicinal Plant Board (NMPB).

21. A similar study was undertaken by ATREE in Sikkim to Identify, assess, delineate and map HCV areas and develop management plans.

22. To strengthen Dhara Vikash program in Uttarakhand, a study was undertaken to identify spring types and aquifers and demarcation of the recharge areas.

23. SBSAP integrated with Resource Mobilization Strategy to demonstrate good practices has been developed by National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) in Sikkim as a model document for other states.

24. A model management planning framework for Gurudongmar High Altitude Wetland developed in coordination with Wetlands International South Asia in Sikkim.

25. Eco-restoration of high-altitude alpine meadows in Dayara Bugyal replicated in Gidara Bugyal and Gangotri National Park in Uttarakhand, and also in Sikkim.

26. Whereas an imposing statue of a snow leopard or 'saagey', as it is known locally has been installed at Thangu village in N Sikkim (in collaboration with Lachen Tourism Development Committee (LTDC), and the Lachen Dzumsa) to sensitize tourists towards the importance of the rare animal, twenty signages have been installed in the Gangotri Landscape to enhance public awareness and education.

27. Best practices in nature-based livelihoods, and community-based tourism and ecosystem management have been

| | | | | documented and disseminated in Sikkim. A comprehensive and participatory livelihood strategy and plan developed for select villages in coordination with WWF India. |
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| Indicator 4.3 Percentage of participating households aware of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits | Baseline to be established in Year 1 through microplanning process | 20% of participating households have good awareness of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits | 50% of participating households have good awareness of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits | The project has surely and successfully increased household-level awareness of conservation, sustainable natural resource management, and wildlife crime prevention across all states and UTs through targeted programs and activities. Since no formal impact studies have been conducted/presented, the information cannot be quantified. This Indicator had been identified as questionable for its Specificity and Measurability in the MTR as well. However, based on the extent of work undertaken with all stakeholders, documents published, and videos prepared and presented during desk review and interaction with Stake holders, and the fact that many targets have been overachieved, this target can be considered as achieved and SMART. **National Level:** 1. It is reported that overall, across the four partner states, 3176 individuals were provided formal trainings on various aspects of community based sustainable resource use, agricultural practices and sustainable livelihoods. Out of these, 1556 were women (49%). 2. In collaboration with the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), the project launched species-specific awareness videos covering four major species: Tibetan Antelope, Asiatic Black Bear, Pangolin, and Musk Deer. The videos were inaugurated by the Additional Director General (Wildlife), MoEF&CC, at a regional inter-agency coordination committee meeting in Guwahati. 3. Trainings of BMCs organized on unique local biodiversity elements, their conservation and sustainable use, equitable benefit sharing of Bio-resources, and preparation of PBRs. The State-wise awareness generation initiatives are as below: **Himachal Pradesh:** 1. Two Green film festivals and film making workshops (organized by CMS VATAVARAN in collaboration with GOI - UNDP -GEF SECURE Himalaya project and Wildlife Wing of HP Forest Department) at State level Wildlife Week Celebrations in 2021 and 2022. The activity provided outreach and engagement opportunities with multiple stakeholders, like, government, media, conservation organizations, experts, |

| | | | | academicians, corporates, youth and public and provided a platform to showcase initiatives and programs undertaken in the SECURE Himalayas Project. The program received a good response from the public. Around 100 students from local schools, colleges and institutions were sensitized.<br><br>2. Celebration of International Snow Leopard Day in Lahaul Landscape, involving 133 participants, including 95 women (71%) and 38 men. Activities included competitions, school rally, etc.<br><br>3. Sensitization-cum-awareness activity for 60 participants on combating HWCs organized at Dhar Panchayat under Pangi Forest Division. Temporary Watcher Facility and Joint Patrolling Exercises and demonstration of equipment procured under various initiatives organised.<br><br>4. Total 638 Households sensitized under the project for conservation and sustainable use of natural resources use and benefits of wildlife crime prevention.<br><br>**Ladakh:**<br><br>1. 761 community stakeholders made aware on biodiversity, conservation, citizen science, sustainable NRM and livelihoods, mitigation of illegal trade and human wildlife conflict.<br><br>2. 6 decentralized village-level mini-nature interpretation centers developed across Changthang landscape to serve as a physical space for interpretation of nature culture relationships and wildlife for incoming tourists and local community members. 2 more are in the process of being set up.<br><br>3. Further, 6 to 8 decentralized mini-nature interpretation centers are being developed across Changthang landscape to serve as a physical space for interpretation of nature for incoming tourists and local community members. Procurements have been carried out for setting these up and installation will be taken up in the coming months.<br><br>4. Further, establishment of additional seven mini–Nature Interpretation Centers (NIC) in BMCs/Panchayats have been approved by the UT administration.<br><br>5. Wildlife Thopas or 'friends of wildlife' programme undertaken.<br><br>6. 21 PRI members and 3 Army Officers (1 from Changthang) appointed as honorary wildlife wardens in the Changthang landscape by the Wildlife Protection Department in Ladakh.<br><br>7. 41 community members involved in participatory monitoring and surveillance in Ladakh |
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| | | | | 8. Exhibition-cum-competitions on biodiversity organised in collaboration with the Biodiversity Management Committee of Hemya Panchayat, involving three villages in the Changthang landscape (Tarchit, Khatpu, Himya). This event, the first of its kind in Ladakh, attracted around 100 villagers and aimed to document bio-resources and traditional ecological knowledge for the People's Biodiversity Register.<br><br>9. Snow Leopard Day was celebrated on October 23 through a multi-modal awareness campaign, including FM radio messages and newspaper ads, to promote snow leopard conservation.<br><br>10. On International Day for Biological Diversity 2023 (May 22), a two-day event was organised at Chumathang Hot Spring area which included stakeholder meetings, local natural history tour, cleanliness drive, a waste segregation workshop, and awareness programs.<br><br>11. World Wetlands Day was celebrated jointly with Department of Wildlife Protection and Wetland Authority of Union Territory of Ladakh with students from Changthang. The celebrations were organized alongside a Winter Bridging Programme being organized by a local youth group called SAVE Changthang. The students belonging from various villages of Changthang engaged in an early morning birding session, led by Mr. Padma Gyalpo, an avid birder from Ladakh, which was followed by a theoretical session orienting student on the importance of wetlands and its conservation, the linkages of wetlands with conservation of wild animals, climate change, water security, and the local cultures of Ladakh were enumerated. E 116<br><br>12. The Himalayan Bird Count and World Migratory Bird Day 2023 were celebrated on May 13 with over 90 school children from Leh, in collaboration with Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust, Nature Conservation Foundation, WWF-India and Wildlife Conservation and Birds Club of Ladakh.<br><br>13. The first Ladakh Bird Festival celebrated.<br><br>14. On Ozone Day, ten students from SAVE Changthang participated in a birding exercise at Shey Marshes, followed by sessions on ozone layer importance and climate change<br><br>15. Communication material (both print and digital) for Rong Valley Ecotourism has been developed and installed in homestays, like, Do's and Don'ts pamphlet, species distribution map of Changthang, village resource maps, 5 short reels, 1 YouTube Video etc. |

| | | | | 16. Educational books for schools, "Tashihas, have been developed for awareness generation. |
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| | | | | 17. To protect the Tibetan gazelle's habitat in Kalaktartar, two signages have been installed to prevent off-road vehicle movement, thereby conserving the habitat for Tibetan gazelle, Tibetan wolf, Tibetan wild ass, and local rangelands. |
| | | | | **Sikkim** |
| | | | | 1. A snow leopard statue cum selfie point installed in Thangu, North Sikkim. The statue also contains an awareness message with code of conduct for visiting tourists. |
| | | | | **Uttarakhand:** |
| | | | | 1. As per information provided, 1149 community stakeholders have been made aware on conservation, sustainable NRM, mitigation of illegal trade and human wildlife conflict through focused group discussions, participation in landscape level fairs and festivals, street theatre and a series of workshops with school students across project landscapes. |
| | | | | 2. Landscape level maps showing PA boundaries and other HCVA have been placed at strategic locations (as per MTR recommendation) to sensitize stakeholders towards the project objectives and benefits and the vastness of the landscape. |
| | | | | 3. 300 community members and tourists (50% women) were sensitized on biodiversity conservation, habitat restoration and plastic waste management in 10 events organized in Gangotri-Govind landscape. |
| | | | | 4. "Mission Life" was celebrated by taking a pledge to adopt environment friendly sustainable lifestyle by all participants. |
| | | | | 5. Wildlife Week celebrations engaged over 200 local community members and stakeholders. Awareness on project benefits through landscape conservation, habitat protection and wildlife management were generated. |
| | | | | These above activities have collectively contributed to increase in community awareness and engagement in conservation efforts across all the project landscapes. However, the benefits of this Indicator are intangible, being linked to attitudinal change. The actual impact will be visible over the years if the project achieves long term sustainability. |

## Annexure 7: TE Rating scales

| Sustainability Ratings Scale | |
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| Ratings | Description |
| 4 = Likely (L) | There are little or no risks to sustainability |
| 3 = Moderately Likely (ML) | There are moderate risks to sustainability |
| 2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU) | There are significant risks to sustainability |
| 1 = Unlikely (U) | There are severe risks to sustainability |
| 0 = Unable to Assess (UA) | Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability |
| **Implementation/Oversight and Execution Ratings Scale** | |
| Rating | Description |
| 6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS) | There were no shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution exceeded expectations |
| 5 = Satisfactory (S) | There were no or minor shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution met expectations. |
| 4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS) | There were some shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution more or less met expectations. |
| 3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU) | There were significant shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution was somewhat lower than expected |
| 2 = Unsatisfactory (U) | There were major shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution was substantially lower than expected |
| 1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) | There were severe shortcomings in quality of implementation/execution |
| 0 = Unable to Assess (UA) | The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of implementation and execution |
| | |
| **Outcome Ratings Scale - Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency** | |
| Rating | Description |
| 6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS) | Level of outcomes achieved clearly exceeds expectations and/or there were no shortcomings |
| 5 = Satisfactory (S) | Level of outcomes achieved was as expected and/or there were no or minor shortcomings |
| 4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS) | Level of outcomes achieved more or less as expected and/or there were moderate shortcomings. |
| 3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU) | Level of outcomes achieved somewhat lower than expected and/or there were significant shortcomings |
| 2 = Unsatisfactory (U) | Level of outcomes achieved substantially lower than expected and/or there were major shortcomings. |
| 1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) | Only a negligible level of outcomes achieved and/or there were severe shortcomings |
| 0 = Unable to Assess (UA) | The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements |

## Annexure 8: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form

**UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators**

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).

**Evaluator 1**

**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 ToR Annex 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'

6. dignity and self-worth. 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: __DR. ATUL KUMAR GUPTA_____
Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant):____NA_____
I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.
Signed at _____BENGALURU_____ (Place) on __24-06-2024_____ (Date)

Signature: __

**Evaluator 2**

**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 ToR Annex 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'
6. dignity and self-worth. 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.
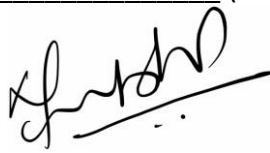
**Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form**

**Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:**
Name of Evaluator: _NEELIMA JERATH,
PhD_____
Name of Consultancy Organization (where
relevant):_____NA_____
**I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation**.
Signed at _____Panchkula_____ (Place) on
_____24.06.2024_____ (Date)

Signature:_____ _Neelima Jerath_ _____

**Annexure 10: Signed TE Report Clearance form – to be attached in final report**

## Annexure 9: Revised Theory of Change

| Problem Tree<br><br>Challenges | Unique high mountainous ecologically vulnerable landscape with climate change and degradation due to anthropogenic & natural causes: Potential adverse impact on flagship species and other flora and fauna under various threat categories, as well as livelihoods of local communities, including women. | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Immediate causes | Snow Leopard an elusive keystone species of the High-Altitude inaccessible Himalayan Landscape. | Increasing habitat degradation & fragmentation | High dependency on Natural resources/biomass for livelihoods and daily use | Human wildlife conflict and Illegal Wildlife Trade | Despite women voices being heard in the family, limited participation in community works | Limited scientific knowledge & examples of proven models of conserving wild species, especially outside PAs |
| Underlying causes | Vast area of spread beyond PA boundaries. Hence poor impact of conservation initiatives | Unsustainable land and forest use due to livestock grazing, fuel wood and fodder collection around the timberline, selective MAP collection, climate change, infrastructure development | Limited options for alternate livelihoods | Reduction of natural prey, illegal transboundary and inter-state wildlife trade | Lack of awareness of women's potential | Lack of cross sectoral and intensive research and field surveys, lack of science and technology-based interventions |
| Root causes | Limited interventions for habitat conservation especially areas outside PAs | Economic pressures, limited interventions by government for promoting value chains for existing resources or providing alternate livelihood options and lack of facilities, capacity and training for creating alternate livelihoods | | Limited training to Forest staff for preventing WL Crime, lack of capacities to negotiate trans boundary cooperation and low exposure to civil and | Limited capacity and lack of training | Decline of taxonomic studies and lack of field training among local youth |

| | | | | criminal laws including WL Protection Act. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Solutions tree**<br><br>Vision | Mainstreaming conservation of keystone species through Landscape approach and promotion of sustainable livelihood practices in predominantly natural resource dependent communities including women, training and capacity building for tackling HWC cases and IWT cases, and dissemination and replication of success stories in other areas and for other important species to all sections of society | | | | | |
| Long-term change Expectations & Outcomes | Interventions for habitat conservation in the entire landscape (within and outside PAs) and ensure long-term protection/ stability/enhancement of numbers of flagship species and associated flora and fauna | Control on wildlife trade. Control on wildlife crime through S&T interventions | • Reduced impact on natural resources by practicing sustainable harvesting & conservation.<br>• Value chain and marketing facilities in place for existing bio-resources used by local communities for their livelihoods.<br>• Alternate livelihood facilities established to reduce pressure on BRs and meet economic and lifestyle aspirations of citizen | Effective Governance mechanisms established and institutionalized, communities including women empowered. Best practices replicated | | |
| Mid-term change outcomes | • Improved conservation measures introduced for endemic and RET species<br>• Interventions for adaptation/mitigation programs to address Climate change issues | Reduction in wildlife conflicts and trade. Reduced wildlife crime. Testing of S&T interventions | • Sustainable resource practices and community-based models for access and benefit sharing established.<br>• Pilot programs for biodiversity friendly business models with strong value chains initiated. | • Policies & Strategies strengthened/developed. Progress appraisal mechanisms established.<br>• Modern S &T interventions adopted in conservation programs | | |
| Immediate change activities | • Capacity building/ training provided to forest and wildlife professionals, Law enforcing agencies, NGOs/ CBOs/ Researchers working in Forestry, Wildlife and Biodiversity domains.<br>• Landscape approach adopted | | • Sensitize communities on the long-term impact of their actions on natural resources and their role in conservation.<br>• Capacity Building & training for self-reliance.<br>• Replication of successful alternate livelihood activities. | • Best practices identified, lessons from existing technical studies learnt, additional studies undertaken to contribute towards Short- & long-term policies. Facilitate/ enhance women participation. Strengthen local institutions, including BMCs & update PBRs. | | |

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| | <ul><li>Develop Responsible Tourism and Home stay protocols</li><li>Recognition, standardization and market facilities for products/facilities developed under the project.</li><li>S&T interventions like mechanization, Solar PV, early warning systems, etc. to reduce drudgery.</li><li>Demonstration and replication of improved safety equipment for livestock.</li></ul> | |

| Assumptions : | Risks: |
|---|---|
| <ul><li>Adequate support shall be provided by the National & State governments (especially Department of Forests & Wildlife), line departments, District level officers, communities, NGOs/CBOs, researchers and all stake holders to implement the project in respective areas.</li><li>Successful interventions will be easily replicable and sustainable in the long run</li><li>These interventions will be dove-tailed with existing government and other programs and institutionalised.</li><li>Success of these interventions will be monitored and, if required, a dynamic approach shall be adopted to maximise benefit to the ecosystem/landscape and the society.</li></ul> | <ul><li>The terrain is difficult and prone to climate impact, natural disasters and anthropogenic pressures.</li><li>Phyto geographic and territorial issues are important considerations and need to be accounted for during landscape conservation efforts.</li><li>Social constraints and cultural variants need to be accounted for while replicating livelihood interventions</li></ul> |
| **Problem Statement:**<br>The project landscape is ecologically vulnerable harbouring High Conservation Value species and inhabited by poor communities whose lives and livelihoods are highly dependent on local Natural Resources. | **Outcome Statement:**<br>Mainstreaming conservation of a globally important threatened species found in a specific habitat only, along with conservation of associated endemic and RET species through active community participation by promoting sustainable livelihood practices and offering alternate livelihood opportunities to reduce anthropogenic pressure on bio-resources. |

## Annexure 10: Assumptions and Risks

| Context | End of Project Target | Assumptions | Risks |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Project Objective** To promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secures conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats, ensure sustainable livelihoods and community socio-economic benefits | At least 1,600,000 hectares effectively managed through participatory approaches | Local communities are expected to actively engage in sustainable management and ecosystem restoration, recognizing the benefits for both livelihoods and ecological security. The State Forest and Wildlife Departments would deploy additional staff to focus on project-specific activities. Furthermore, these departments will collaborate closely with technical institutions to develop and implement the necessary management frameworks. | Restoration efforts could be impacted by natural disasters, while limited government and community capacity may hinder the fulfilment of project obligations. Additionally, low livelihood benefits from sustainable management might deter communities from abandoning unsustainable practices. |
| | At least 2,500 households directly benefit through improved livelihoods and incomes (50% of the beneficiaries would be women) | | |
| | About 800,000 hectares brought under multiple use management as a direct result of the project | | |
| | Staple or increase snow leopard populations in the four project states | Adequate technical assistance available for undertaking validation and monitoring | Discontinuation of institutional support in the long run |
| **Outcome 1** Improved management of high Himalayan landscapes for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services | Average increase by at least 30 points in METT from current PAs baselines | State governments will officially approve development strategies and management plans, with appropriate funding for implementation. Local communities, recognizing the benefits of snow leopard habitat conservation, will engage in restoration efforts. State Forest Departments, equipped with new knowledge and skills from the project, will actively contribute to strategy development and execution. Community-based institutions and Wildlife Departments will establish mechanisms to monitor key biodiversity and ecosystem parameters. | The project may face challenges such as conflicts between public institutions and local communities over natural resource access, particularly grazing lands. Administrative or political changes could undermine management plan implementation, while a lack of alternative livelihoods and slow recovery of grazing areas may deter pastoralist participation. Additionally, limited government and community capacity, along with rapid staff turnover, could hinder progress in skills |
| | Increase of institutional capacity as measured by a 50% increase in UNDP Capacity | | |
| | Reduced grazing pressure on 700,000 ha of alpine meadows by at least 20% (from 75 to 60 livestock units/km$^2$) and prevented degradation in around 8000 ha of sub-alpine forest under community-based management resulting in projected 0.46-0.50 and 0.31-0.36 m tCO$_2$/30 year period sequestrated and avoided respectively | | |
| | 40,000 hectares alpine pastures and 2,000 hectares sub-alpine forests | | |

| Context | End of Project Target | Assumptions | Risks |
|---|---|---|---|
| | under sustainable regeneration regimes resulting in projected between 0.042-0.05 and 0.16 -0.18 m $tCO_2$ /30 year period sequestrated and avoided respectively. | | development for inventory and mapping. |
| | (a) Reduced direct pressure on at least 60,000 ha covering at least 18 newly designated and managed key biodiversity areas, including 30,000 ha of HCVFs to ensure connectivity and species conservation resulting in projected avoided 1.38-1.47 m $tCO_2$ over 30-year period | | |
| | (b) Reduced direct pressure on at least 20,000 ha of moist and dry alpine areas and sub-alpine forests managed as Biodiversity Heritage Sites resulting in projected avoided 0.46 – 0.05 m $tCO_2$ over 30-year period | | |
| **Outcome 2** Improved and diversified sustainable livelihood strategies and enhanced capacities of community and government for sustainable natural resources management and conservation to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems | At least 10,000 ha under sustainable natural resources management practices | After receiving project training, village-level organizations will have the capacity to plan for sustainable livelihoods. Local communities see economic potential in adopting sustainable practices, as they offer greater benefits compared to unsustainable methods. Additionally, regional markets exist for products and services developed through these sustainable and alternative practices. | Conflicts may arise if the priorities of line departments differ from the project's conservation and livelihood development goals, affecting the sustainable use of natural resources. Policy changes that do not align with sustainable livelihood options for local households could diminish the project's impact. Additionally, natural disasters may hinder communities' ability to adopt sustainable management practices for alpine resources. Challenges like insufficient product volumes, high infrastructure and |
| | 30% increase in average incomes from sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management and business activities (At least 40% of beneficiaries are women) | | |
| | At least 2,500 community members trained and adopting community-based sustainable resource use, agro-pastoral, agricultural and other sustainable livelihood activities and receiving detectable conservation and livelihood benefits | | |

| Context | End of Project Target | Assumptions | Risks |
|---------|----------------------|-------------|-------|
| | | | transport costs, and difficulties in forging market linkages can undermine the commercialization of value chains. Moreover, partner organizations may struggle to mobilize or allocate funds for value chain activities. |
| **Outcome 3** Enhanced enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and human-wildlife conflict | 200 community members actively engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions (At least 20% women) to serve as deterrent to wildlife crime<br><br>At least 3 trans-boundary agreements signed and implemented<br><br>At least 50% decrease in HWCs | The Forest Department has committed to assigning staff for implementing new crime surveillance and prevention tools, with plans to secure funding for sustaining these programs post-project. Incentives offered by agencies have encouraged village youth and community workers to take on anti-poaching responsibilities. Additionally, there is sufficient political backing for legislative changes, both within the country and among SAWEN member nations, to support regulatory frameworks that institutionalize information-sharing and collaboration processes. | Maintaining interest and commitment to crime surveillance in challenging terrains and harsh climates may be difficult. The Ministry of Defence might view participation in crime monitoring as an additional strain on resources and manpower. While wildlife research labs (e.g. the Wildlife Institute of India) will need consistent access to genetic resources to develop adequate reference materials, concerns exist over the security of sensitive crime data, as inadequate protections could lead to its misuse by smugglers and traffickers. |
| **Outcome 4** Lessons learned by the project through participatory M&E, including gender mainstreaming practices, are used to fight poaching and IWT and promote community-based conservation at the national and international levels | 3 policy recommendations officially approved and implemented<br><br>At least 10 best practices documented, disseminated and upscaled in non-project areas<br><br>50% of participating households have good awareness of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits | Stakeholders who are eager to engage in the review process will help project management identify, document, and share best practices. Additional best practices will be recognized by the conclusion of both the Mid-Term and End-Term Evaluations. | Political pressure from resource users may lead to changes in government priorities. |

## Annexure 11: Adaptive management

| No. | MTR Recommendations | Management Response & TE Comments |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Establish Snow Leopard "Cell" in the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, GoI and the project should capitalize and dovetail on timing associated with attention on other big cats | Though the formal "Cell" is yet to be established, yet, a the project has provided technical assistance for the inception activities and first Executive Committee meeting of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), a multi-country, multi-agency coalition, established to advance big cat conservation. Announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, IBCA unites 96 big cat range and non-range countries, conservation partners, and scientific organizations. The IBCA secretariat has invited the project to present learnings at the upcoming IBCA General Assembly in December 2024, with participation expected from 12 snow leopard range countries. |
| 2. | Focus on consolidation during the remaining project timeframe. In the remaining period of the project life successful activities and those, which have shown triggers of potential impacts, should beconsolidated. | The project has scaled up successful interventions, emphasizing sustainability through ongoing collaboration with central and state governments and other partners. The exit strategy promotes the adoption of best practices by forest departments, advocating for funding from sources such as CAMPA and relevant Ministry programs. |
| 3. | Enhance cross learning and sharing between the landscapes and states. Some emerging results across states and landscapes should be shared and exchanged among project teams, practitioners andpolicy makers. | The project's learnings have been shared with national and state training institutions through virtual exchanges, webinars, and transboundary meetings. This knowledge is also likely to shape initiatives like the GEF-7 Wildcats project and the GEF-8 Co-Habitat project, supporting conservation and sustainable coexistence along the Central Asian Flyway. |
| 4. | Accelerate the completion of CD Scorecards at MTR. With the easing of COVID-19, it is imperative that the project attempt to complete the CD Scorecards. | The project evaluation highlights a strong emphasis on building the capacity of various stakeholders, particularly local communities, to fully realize and sustain the intended benefits for their empowerment. By the Term-end evaluation, the project achieved its targeted 100% increase in capacity development score, reaching 45/45 over the baseline. |
| 5. | Reduce human wildlife conflicts. Efforts should be made to reduce Human Wildlife Conflict especially black bear in the lower elevations of landscapes in the three states. use of ANIDERS and predator-proof corrals, should also be upscaled and institutionalized. | The project successfully achieved a 50% reduction in Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) cases through various proactive and reactive mitigation and adaptation measures. Some of the important measures taken up at different landscapes include collection of databases of all conflict instances to identify HWC hotspots, understand spatio-temporal trends and damage, monitor trends, wildlife species involved, circumstances, possible causes and the amount of damages. Other measures and details are presented in Annexure 5.12 (Project Results and Impacts; Indicator 3.3) |
| 6. | Promote alpine pastureland restoration and livestock germplasm. | In line with the recommendation during the Mid Term Review (MTR), the end term project target has been revised to 8000 ha (the emphasis must be paid in enhancing the quality of ecosystems through community managed sustainable practices rather than further increase in areas). |

| | | The project has successfully brought alpine and sub-alpine forests under community management over 8,013.76 hectares, which is little more than the end term target. This has been made possible mainly through two interventions, one, by promoting sustainable grazing practices and two, by reducing the environmental pressure on rangelands across the project landscapes. Further details are available in Annexure 5.12 (Project Results and Impacts; Indicator 1.3) |
|---|---|---|
| 7. | Refining, value adding and marketing of livelihood products. Promising nature-based products like ecotourism destinations, handloom, wool and pashmina items, handicrafts, medicinal plants, traditional papers, horticultural produce etc. is being promoted by the project across landscapes. There is a need of improving the local skills for producing, refining, value adding and marketing of these products.<br><br>Support of specialized institutions should be sought in these efforts. This will be most promising initiatives in the context of enhancing livelihoods, promoting conservation and sustainability at community level. | The project developed village-level micro plans across all states, focusing on livelihood development activities that fostered value chains to uplift marginalized local communities. Ecotourism and handloom and handicrafts were particularly promoted in Ladakh and Uttarakhand. In Himachal, the project initiated the "Gangotri Secure Bahuudeshiyae Cooperative Swayat Sahakarita," a multipurpose cooperative supporting handloom, handicrafts, and medicinal plant cultivation, including sea buckthorn. Additionally, the project established a village interpretation center in Khati, Ladakh, to enhance community engagement in conservation efforts. Details may be seen in Annexure 5.12 (Project Results and Impacts; Outcome 2). |
| 8. | Institutionalization of initiatives carried out and supported by SECURE. There are some initiatives promoted, supported and initiated by the project. In the remaining time of the project these should be institutionalized at landscape, state and national levels. | Following the MTR, this recommendation was implemented, leading to the sustained promotion of these activities through the project's termination. The exit strategy proposes their long-term sustainability by integrating them with other schemes, institutions, and organizations, enabling continuity well beyond the project period. The TE also recommends a "SH 2.0" to institutionalize these initiatives. |
| 9 | Revisit baselines and measurement of indicators in advance of the TE. Therefore, it will be essential to revisit indicators such as 1.3, 1.4, 2.2, 3.2 and 4.3 flagged by the MTR as not being SMART, ensure that monitoring strategies are uniform and communicated broadly and establish baselines for those indicators where none exist. | Indicator 1.3 has been fully revised as recommended by the MTR and achieved in full.<br><br>Other indicators, such as 1.4, 2.2, 3.2, and 4.1, initially flagged by the MTR as not being SMART, have now been exceeded and are ranked as "SMART."<br><br>In line with the MTR recommendation, baselines for all indicators have been established to ensure consistent monitoring strategies and to address any indicators that previously lacked baselines. |

| 10 | The indicator 4.1 on policy and regulatory mechanisms is poor and vaguely worded that should be improved MTR also recommends the team tore-visit the end of the project target. | The Mid-Term Review (MTR) initially assessed Indicator 4.1 (related to policy and regulatory mechanisms) as poor and vaguely worded, recommending improvements. However, the end-term assessment ranks it as "over-achieved." The final target was met in the last project year, resulting in several additional policy achievements:<br>▪ The first-ever snow leopard population survey under SPAI was completed recently, and the report, released in January 2024, revealed that India is home to 718 snow leopards across 120,000 sq. km of potential habitat.<br>▪ An interdepartmental committee, chaired by the Additional Chief Secretary and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, oversees the implementation of the Big Cats Master Plan in Sikkim, which was prepared with the project's support.<br>▪ Himachal Pradesh developed a Resource Mobilization Strategy as part of the update of its State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (SBSAP).<br>▪ Two pilot financial solutions for the conservation of snow leopard habitats were conceptualized and implemented in collaboration with the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP). |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 11 | Make efforts on international agreements for transboundary cooperation. The indicator 3.2 is at high risk of not achieving the end of the project target unless special efforts are made. MTR recommends the project to establish cooperation with regional organizations for developing international agreements for transboundary cooperation among Bhutan, China, India and Nepal. | The project created valuable opportunities for engaging with the Government of India to strengthen regional cooperation, including participation in the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Conference of Parties (COP) meetings. It also opened new avenues for collaboration, enabling India to pitch innovative concepts to the Global Environment Facility's (GEF) eighth program cycle, with a focus on enhancing community engagement in safeguarding migratory species along the Central Asian Flyway and advancing Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM).<br><br>Regional dialogue with neighbouring countries, particularly Nepal and Bhutan, through platforms like the South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) and the Global Tiger Forum facilitated. The project actively supported bilateral cooperation between India and Nepal to combat transnational wildlife crime and illegal trade, strengthening cross-border efforts to protect biodiversity in the region. |

## Annexure 12: SES Risks analysis

| Original risk, Risk Category, Impact and Probability | New Risk | Original Rating | Revised Rating | TE Findings |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Conflicts between public institutions and local communities regarding access to natural resources, including pasture resources.<br><br>Social<br>P = 3<br>I = 3 | **No new risk identified during the implementation as reported in PIR** | Moderate | Low | Landscape Planning and Implementation Committee has ensured this conflict is avoided by active engagement and participation of local communities. |
| Lack of capacity in government and communities to meet obligations related to project<br><br>Institutional/ Operational<br>P = 3<br>I = 2 | **No new risk identified during the implementation as reported in PIR** | Low | Low | Training programs provided to community members, including women and marginalized groups, to enhance their skills in sustainable resource management, biodiversity conservation, and alternative livelihoods. These activities were tailored to meet the specific needs of different stakeholders, equipping them to actively participate in various project areas. Community members involved in livelihood development, natural resource management, and wildlife monitoring have received targeted support. |
| Indigenous people and vulnerable groups may be excluded from participation in project planning and investments related to livelihoods and sustainable use practices<br><br>Institutional/ Operational<br>P = 3<br>I = 3 | **No new risk identified during the implementation as reported in PIR** | Moderate | | Local communities were actively involved in planning and decision-making through Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) and participatory landscape management plans, which ensured that their knowledge and needs were integrated into conservation strategies. They participated in investment planning, received training for livelihood activities, and directly benefited from project initiatives. |
| Natural disasters and climate change may affect the implementation and results of project initiatives<br><br>Environmental | **No new risk identified during the implementation as reported in PIR** | Low | Low | The project landscape area ensured through various interventions to secure a continued sustainable flow of ecosystem services; supporting diversification and improvement of community livelihoods; and enhancing community disaster risk reduction capacity (Refer Project objective, Outcome 1 to 4). |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| P = 2<br>I = 3 | | | | |
| The Project may involve utilization of genetic resources (e.g. collection and/or harvesting of NTFP, value addition commercial product development, etc.).<br><br>Environmental<br>P = 2<br>I = 3 | **No new risk identified during the implementation as reported in PIR** | Low | Low | The project ensured that the harvesting of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) was conducted in an ecologically sustainable way. Specific areas were designated for different uses, following internationally recognized criteria. Harvesting was guided by scientific data on sustainable annual yields, and the collection and harvest of these products were closely monitored to protect the ecosystem. |
| Implementation of project initiatives within or near critical habitats in the landscapes; e.g. protected forests and national parks may threaten biodiversity conservation.<br>I = 2<br>P = 1 | **No new risk identified during the implementation as reported in PIR** | **Low** | Low | Although some project activities were carried out within or near critical habitats and environmentally sensitive areas, including legally protected zones, they did not negatively impact the habitats, ecosystems, or local livelihoods. Careful planning and implementation ensured that these activities did not harm endangered species or lead to the introduction of invasive species, and they had no adverse effects on nearby rivers or water ecosystems.<br><br>Additionally, potential livelihood options were thoroughly evaluated for their environmental and biodiversity impacts before receiving funding, ensuring that project activities did not disrupt the natural balance of these sensitive regions or harm nearby water ecosystems. |
| Soil disturbance or plantation of unsuitable pasture and sub-alpine forest species may have some negative effects on sustainable pasture and forest management and biodiversity conservation.<br>I = 2<br>P = 2 | **No new risk identified during the implementation as reported in PIR** | **Low** | Low | To promote sustainable forest and pasture management while enhancing biodiversity conservation, the project has focused on supporting the natural assisted regeneration process rather than relying on traditional reforestation or reseeding methods. It has ensured that natural forest and pasture regeneration occurred with minimal soil disturbance, and implemented soil management techniques designed to create small catchment areas that facilitated rainwater harvesting and supported regeneration efforts. By selecting indigenous sub-alpine forest and pasture species that were best suited for the local environment, the project mitigated the risks associated with soil disturbance and the introduction of unsuitable species, thereby safeguarding the long-term health of these ecosystems and promoting biodiversity conservation. |

## Annexure 13: Mainstreaming of Gender Sensitivity

| Initiatives | Evidences |
|---|---|
| Participation in decision making and mainstream activities | • Facilitating women participation in EDCs, JFMCs, etc, during discussions and interventions.<br>• Existing/new SHGs adopted/created to provide operational support to projects undertaken. 21 such SHGs (out of which 6 were newly set up) with 84% women and 3 Registered Cooperatives/Farmer Producer Organizations (2 new) were formed (in Uttarakhand and in Himachal Pradesh) with 321 shareholders (out of which 123 or 38.3% are women PIR, 2023), These CBOs have helped in promotion of eco-tourism and home -stay operations, , production of value added marketable products from local bio-resources, etc. This is expected to strengthen post project sustainability of the livelihood interventions made in the project.<br>• 206 BMCs have been established at least 33% women representation in each.<br>• 58 women have been informed about implementation of BDA and preparation of PBRs, enhancing the effectiveness of natural resource management and conservation efforts.<br>• "Wildlife thopas" or "friends of wildlife" programme has been initiated under the project in Ladakh to assist the Department of Wildlife Protection for information gathering on conservation, as well as, illegal wildlife trade/hunting, etc. 20 youth were selected as wildlife thopas in this completely 'volunteer' based programme, out of which 14 are women.<br>• In line with the recommendations from the Mid-Term Review Report, women's participation has been promoted in Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), cooperatives, and village-level institutions. They have received training in business and marketing skills. For instance, six women from an OFPO in Uttarakhand were trained in business promotion, including management of an online platform, payment gateway, website handling, packaging, and courier services. In addition, four out of five women leaders were trained in wool branding, business negotiations, and rate-setting in Nayomi District, Ladakh, with support from Lena Ladakh, to improve their governance and marketing skills, thereby enhancing their economic opportunities and business acumen. |
| Support for Income Enhancement | • <u>Management of Home Stays:</u>  Home stay facilities are led and maintained by women across all landscapes. Men play a supportive role, primarily in marketing. In all, women from 843 households (212 in HP, 81 in Ladakh, 356 in Sikkim and 194 in Uttarakhand) benefitted from this activity.  Many home stays have been provided facilities like, solar water heaters, improved cook stoves and other equipment to reduce women's drudgery. Home stays have contributed USD 600 approx. to the income of women from beneficiary households in Ladakh in the first few months, and an income of USD 60,500 in 1.5 years in Uttarakhand. In Rong valley, Ladakh, 25 poly house units, kitchen garden support and mushroom spawn (to 37 beneficiaries) has also been distributed, resulting in increased income of about 25% from mushroom sales (PIR 2024) alone. |

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| | • <u>Sheep and yak wool value chain:</u> Primarily established in Rupshu, Ladakh, (where Changpas rear large herds of sheep, goats (including Pashmina), and Yak for wool for sale/barter, Commendable work has been undertaken with 100 nomadic pastoral households in Anguk and Puga villages in Niyomi Block in Changthang landscape. Two wool Centres have been set up in the area. Women traditionally prepare woollen products for home use and local market. The Wool Centre encouraged gender equality in tasks associated with wool processing, introduced S&T interventions to reduce drudgery, and provided branding and market linkages to 102 beneficiaries. This has led to an impressive increase in wool value from 3 USD/kg to 145 USD /kg for organically dyed yarn.The average increase in income through this facility is an exceptional 3000% in case of Sheep wool and 6000% in Pashmina, after project interventions for sale of wool after selective shearing, scouring, carding, spinning and organic dyeing vs sale of unprocessed raw wool in Ladakh. However, in other project states increase in income through wool sale is about 25% The community has been linked with the schemes of Central Wool Board by the SNO and project staff for better wool price in the market.<br><br>• <u>Handloom handicraft value chain</u>: Women in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh are involved in traditional handloom and handicrafts (Budera craft & Bhotia Daan carpets) for home use. The project motivated these women to increase the volume of production and market their products for which grading, knitting and packaging machines were provided to 25 members of the local cooperative society to enhance their income. The Budera community has earned USD11,200 approx in 2.5 years. The community's income has increased by about 25%. As a further adaptive management intervention, women have been trained by NIFT in modern and innovative design techniques. This increase in income has elevated the social status and confidence of these women, earning them greater respect in society.<br><br>• <u>Sea Buckthorn Value Chain Development</u>: Support was given to women Self Help Groups in the Miyar valley of Himachal Pradesh for enhanced production, packaging, branding and marketing of sea buckthorn products. S&T interventions through IIT Mandi have been made for harvesting and juice extraction of sea-buckthorn berries to reduce drudgery. This initially boosted the income of 51 women members of Khodoma SHG (who earned USD 2500) in one year. As a result, 50 more women have been motivated to protect the sea-buckthorn plant in the wild (thus conserving the soil) and join the activity.<br><br>• Other women targeted income generation activities include development of protocols for MAP harvesting and small enterprises in agri-processing, bakery, extraction of hazelnut and walnut through specially designed machines, etc. In which 310 women are involved. The average increase in income ranges between 5% to 25%. |
| Knowledge enhancement and Capacity Development | • In addition to training for income-generating activities, women's capacities have also been developed in areas traditionally considered to be within men's domain, such as:**20 local women trained (15-day course) in basic mountaineering and guiding skills** to create a cadre of female mountaineering assistants, addressing the increased participation of women in adventure tourism. |

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| | • **30% of seats reserved for women in the para-taxonomist training** at the Forest Research Institute, Uttarakhand, to assist BMCs in preparing People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs). <br> • **Training on wildlife monitoring tools** provided to promote community-based wildlife monitoring, supporting wildlife protection and creating additional livelihood options through wildlife tourism. <br> • **Acceptance of trained girls in the Village Voluntary Protection Force** and as volunteers for the Snow Leopard Census. <br> • **Equal involvement of men and women in video documentation** and in recording/broadcasting of programs through community radio, to develop a cadre of communication specialists supporting community conservation initiatives. Five female participants have been trained and will participate in Training of Trainers (ToT) programs. <br> • **Design Diversification Training**: A seven-day workshop conducted for 34 female artisans on new design techniques in Dunda village, Uttarakhand. <br> • **Participatory annual bird surveys** with 50% female involvement. <br> • |
| Leadership and decision-making | • Kangla basket initiative successfully led and expanded by a woman SHG leader in HP. Also, resolve to conserve and enhance area under sea-buckthorn for conservation of soil in the mountain slopes and promote its plantation in vacant lands for better future harvest. <br> • An all-women led Biodiversity Management Committee formed in Ladakh which significantly enhances women's participation in management of natural resources. <br> • Some important women led decisions include: <br> • Resolution to declare Yaya-Tso, a biologically rich area with high potential for Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS), as a Biodiversity Heritage Site in Ladakh. <br>     • Declaration of the hot spring area in Chumathang, Ladakh, as a litter-free zone, accompanied by a voluntary cleanliness drive with participation from both men and women. <br>     • Finalization and adoption of sustainable harvesting protocols for medicinal and aromatic plant (MAP) harvesting in Himachal Pradesh. <br>     • Resolution to restrict the movement of tourists and local grazers in specific patches of the Dayara pasture in Uttarakhand to support restoration efforts. |
| Recognition of best practices | • UNDP regional office has featured the story of a woman leader from the Budhera community of Uttarakhand on International Women's Day-2023 in recognition of her initiatives. <br> • The Initiative of Kangla Basket of Khandoma SHG for Sea-buckthorn processing recognised by PMO under 'One District One Product (ODOP)' program, attaining 5th position along with an appreciation letter from the PM Office. This was a morale booster for the participating women. <br> • The Off Farmers Producer Organisation (OFPO) women members have received three awards and certificates for their commendable work in promoting green value chain: <br> • Certificate & Award at the 'National Geographical Indication Fair -2022' to Bhotia Dann and Budera Himalayan Craft |

| | |
|---|---|
| | • Appreciation Award from Chief Minister of Uttarakhand for promoting green enterprise in Gangotri Landscape by reducing carbon footprint at each step, while processing the wool till product making.<br>• Certificate of participation in National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) 'Delhi Haat' (market). |

## Annexure 14: Geo-referenced maps of the project landscapes

- o Changthang, Union Territory of Ladakh:
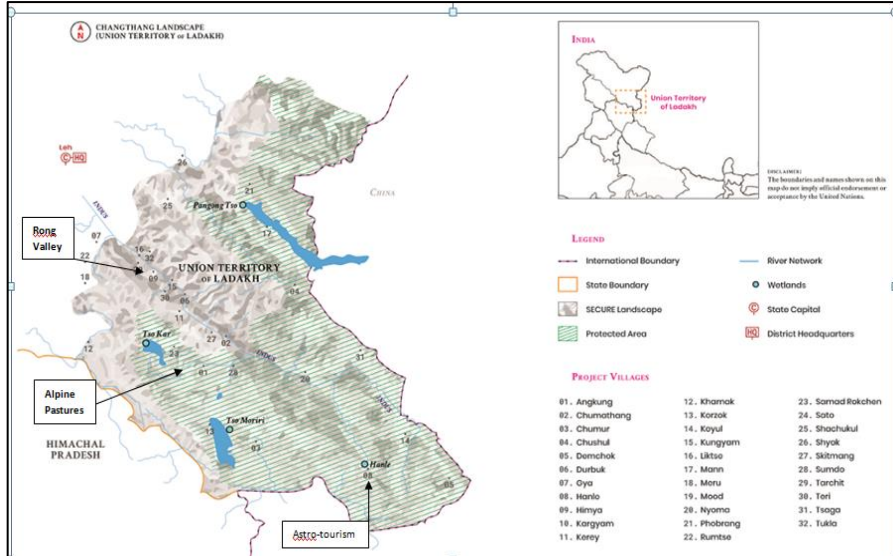


*Figure: Changthang, Ladakh*

*The Changthang Plateau lies in the Upper Indus Landscape in Eastern Ladakh, with elevations ranging from 4,400–6,000m. The vegetation consists of alpine dry scrub, desert steppe, marsh meadows and water bodies. The landscape is contiguous with Tibetan plateau. Key faunal species comprise snow leopard, blue sheep, Argali, Tibetan gazelle, and Tibetan wolf. The area is home to the nomadic pastoral community (Changpas) and Tibetan refugees who rear yaks and pashmina goats.*

- o Lahul-Pangi & Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh:
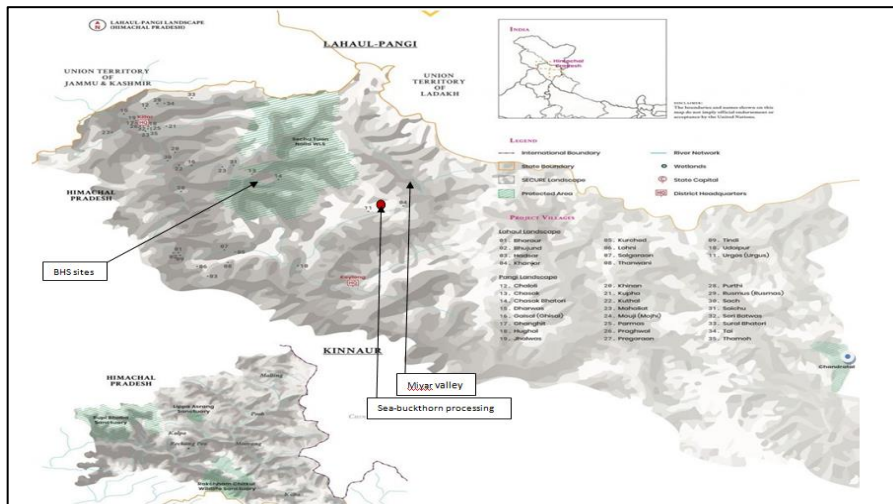


*Figure: Himachal Pradesh Landscape*

This landscape forms the upper catchment of Chandrabhaga (Chenab) river with mean elevation ranging from 3,000 – 5,500 m. The vegetation includes Alpine dry and moist scrub pastures and scattered sub-alpine conifer forests dominated by *Juniperus semi-globosa, Pinus wallichiana, Cedrus deodara and Betula utilis*. The snow leopard, brown

bear, Asiatic black bear, blue sheep, Himalayan ibex, Himalayan tahr and Himalayan musk deer are the characteristic mammalian fauna. The higher altitudes of Kinnaur district also represent important wildlife habitat, biocorridors and junctions of biogeographic provinces. Heavy livestock grazing by local pastoralists (Pangwals) and migratory pastoralists (Gaddi), excessive collection of high value medicinal plants and human-wildlife conflicts are serious issues in the area. The project covers 35 villages in the landscape.

    o    Kanchenjunga-Upper Teesta Valley, Sikkim:

The landscape extends from Kanchenjunga national park in west Sikkim to upper catchment of Teesta and the Tso Lhamu plateau in the north. Valleys of Lachen and Lachung are included in this landscape. Altitudinal range of the landscape is from 3,000 to over 7,000 m. The area represents some of the pristine temperate broadleaf and mixed conifer forests with rich understory vegetation dominated by bamboos. The fauna includes red panda, Himalayan must deer, Asiatic black bear and serow. Alpine habitats in the western part of the landscape are narrow and rugged which provide home to the snow leopard. Sikkim plateau (Tso Lhamu) represents one of the smallest biogeographic provinces in India, characterized by presence of Tibetan elements such as Tibetan gazelle, Argali sheep and Tibetan wild ass. The area is rich in high value medicinal plants including caterpillar mushroom. Livelihood opportunities are generally lacking. The project covers 16 villages in North Sikkim and 11 villages in West Sikkim.
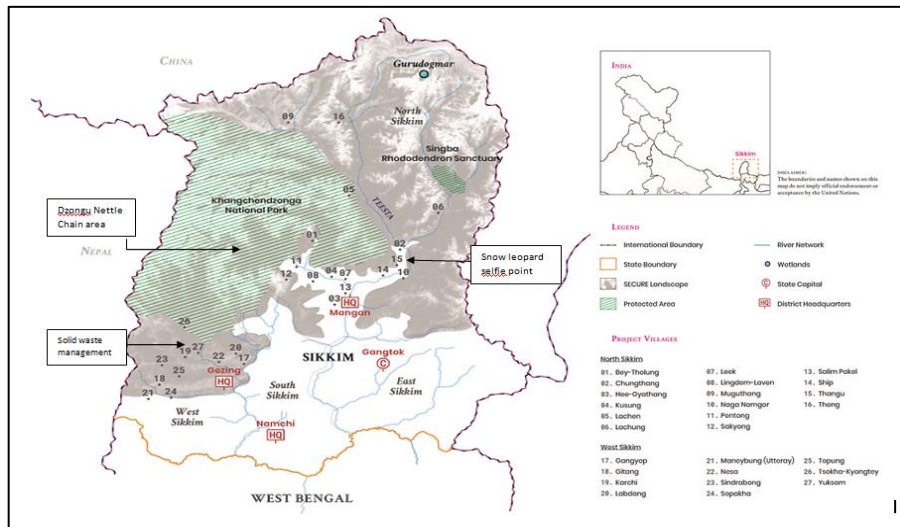


*Figure: Sikkim*

    o    Gangotri-Govind and Darma-Byans valley, Uttarakhand:
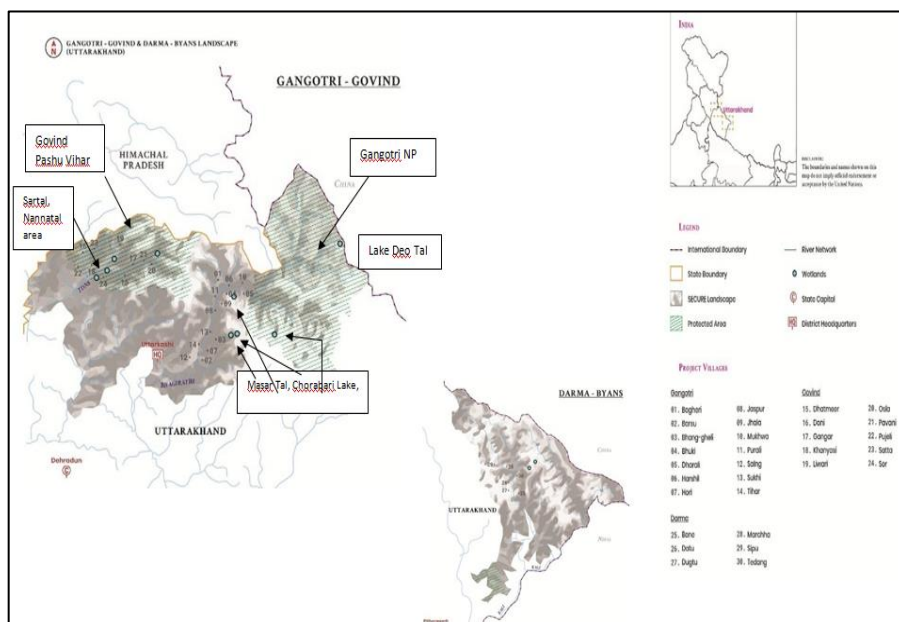
*Figure: Uttarakhand*

The Gangotri-Govind landscape lies in the upper catchments of river Ganges and Yamuna. Whereas the upper parts of Gangotri National Park lie in the cold arid region, parts of the park and the Govind Pashu Vihar area represent cool temperate. Vegetation includes sub-alpine forests (mixed conifers of blue pine, deodar, and birch), alpine moist meadows and glaciated, extremely rugged, and broken areas. The altitude ranges from 3,000 to over 6,000 m. are in subalpine areas. Within Gangotri landscape there are riverine scrub and dry alpine scrub, besides alpine desert steppes in Gangotri National Park. In Govind NP area, the alpine zone supports moist alpine scrub and moist meadows. Typical faun
a includes snow leopard, Himalayan musk deer, blue sheep, goral, and black and brown bear.
The Darma-Byans valleys of Pithoragarh District represents alpine habitats in the Kailash trans-boundary landscape. Fauna includes snow leopard and other high altitude faunal species. The area is known for religious pilgrimage and tourism in Gangotri – Gomukh area, seasonal grazing by migratory livestock and commercial extraction of high value medicinal plants.
The project covers 24 villages in Gangotri-Govind and 6 villages in Darma-Byans areas.

All the selected landscapes have a high conservation value but few livelihood opportunities. Hence the population primarily depends on its natural resources.

## Annexure 15: TE ToRs

| Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) | Rating |
|---|---|
| M&E design at entry (including gender sensitive indicators) | |

Terminal Evaluation

Terms of Reference (ToR) for UNDP-supported GEF-financed project "SECURE Himalaya"

<u>INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT –(NATIONAL)</u>

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Monitoring & Evaluation policies and procedures, all full- and medium-sized UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects are required to undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE) at the end of the project. This Terms of Reference (ToR) sets out the expectations for the TE of the full-sized project titled *Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE Himalaya),* implemented through the Ministry of Environment. The project started in 2017.

The TE process must follow the guidance outlined in the document '[Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects](#)'.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The high-range Himalayan ecosystem in India is of critical importance for the biodiversity and ecosystems of global significance that it harbours and forms an important life-support system for a large number of remote and agro-pastoral communities that depend on it. The Himalayan ecosystem provides several essential ecosystem services – a source of fresh water, maintains hydrological functions, reduces erosion and sedimentation downstream, provides food security and maintains landraces of food crops grown in much of northern India. Hundreds of millions of people depend on these ecosystems for water for hydropower and agriculture, forage for livestock and food for themselves, mineral resources, medicinal and aromatic plants and their products, cultural traditions and spiritual values, and inspiration that draws an increasing number of people from around the globe to experience these places. A rapid estimate of the economic value of some prominent services generated from snow leopard habitats in India is nearly $4 billion a year, the bulk of which comes from hydropower and generated electricity (US$3 billion), followed by livestock and agriculture (US$0.5 billion), and tourism (US$0.4 billion)[1].

In view of the above, to promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high-range Himalayan ecosystems that secures the conservation of globally significant wildlife, including vulnerable snow leopard and their habitats, ensures sustainable livelihoods and community socio-economic benefits,  Government of India, Ministry of Environment,

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[1] [http://www.globalsnowleopard.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/India_NSLIP.pdf](http://www.globalsnowleopard.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/India_NSLIP.pdf)

Forests and Climate Change and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has designed the project titled "Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE) Himalaya". The said Project was approved by GEF in the 6th replenishment cycle and launched in 2017.

The Project has adopted a landscape-based approach to conservation and management and is being implemented by the Wildlife Division, MoEFCC in partnership with the State Forest Department of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim and the Department of Wildlife Protection, Union Territory of Ladakh in select landscapes in  Changthang, Leh district (UT of Ladakh), Lahaul: Lahaul & Spiti district, Pangi: Chamba district & Kinnaur (Himachal Pradesh), Gangotri–Govind (Uttarkashi district) & Darma-Byans Valley in Pithoragarh district (Uttarakhand) and Khangchendzonga–Upper Teesta Valley, North and West Sikkim district (Sikkim). The total area of the landscapes under the project is 34,456 sq. km.

The project supports four inter-linked outcomes that are aimed at achieving the objective as mentioned below:

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

Outcome 2:     Improved and diversified livelihood strategies and improved capacities of community and government institutions for sustainable-based natural resources management and conservation to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems.

Outcome 3:     Enhanced enforcement, monitoring, prosecution, and effective transboundary cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and related threats.

Outcome 4:     Lessons learned by the project through participatory M&E, including gender mainstreaming practices, are used to fight poaching and IWT and promote community-based conservation at the national and international levels.

PURPOSE OF TERMINAL EVALUATION (TE)

The overall objective of TE is to review the achievements made to deliver the specified objectives and outcomes of the project titled *"Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE Himalaya)".* The TE will also establish the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, performance, and success of the project, including assessing the sustainability of results, contribution to gender equality and the project exit strategies. The TE will analyse lessons learned through the project, best practices of the strategies employed, and implementation arrangements, which may be utilised to inform future programmes.

APPROACH & METHODOLOGY FOR TERMINAL EVALUATION (TE)

The TE report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable, and useful. The TE National Consultant Conservation (TE-NC-Conv) will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Environmental & Social Safeguard Policy, the Project Document, project reports including Annual Project Review/PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports,

national strategic and legal documents, gender mainstreaming guidance note, UNDP corporate gender equality strategy, the India CO gender equality strategy, SOP on evaluation, GEF guidelines, and any other materials that the consultant considers useful for this evidence-based review, and summarise assessment methodologies, results, and recommendations in a report. The TE report should promote accountability and transparency and assess the extent of project accomplishments. The TE NC will review the baseline and midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at the CEO endorsement and midterm stages and assess the terminal Core Indicators, UNDP Capacity Development Score Cards, Management Effectiveness Tracking Tools (METT) that must be completed by the TE- NC Conv.

The TE National Consultant-Conservation (TE-NC-Conv) will lead the TE, and is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with the Project Management Unit staff (past and present), Mid Term Review Evaluator, government counterparts at the national, state, sub-state levels (past and present), Implementing Partners, the UNDP Country Office, the Regional Technical Advisor, direct beneficiaries (50% Women) and other stakeholders including women groups, gender experts, civil society.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful TE. Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to (list); executing agencies, senior officials and task team/component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project beneficiaries, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Additionally, the TE team is expected to conduct field missions to the selected project sites.

The specific design and methodology for the TE should emerge from consultations with the TE National Consultant Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the TE purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given the limitations of budget, time and data. The TE-NC-Conv must use gender-sensitive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues such as social inclusion and SDGs, are incorporated into the TE report.

The final methodological approach including interview scheduling, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation must be clearly outlined in the TE Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed upon between UNDP, stakeholders, and the TE -NC-Liv.

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

DETAILED SCOPE OF THE TERMINAL EVALUATION (TE)

The TE National Consultant Conservation (TE-NC-Conv) will be responsible for assessing the progress in the following categories of project: Component I (Improved management of high Himalayan landscapes for conservation of Snow Leopard and other endangered species and

their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services), Component III (Enhanced enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife related threats).

The TE-National Consultant Conservation (TE-NC-Conv) will assess the project's performance against the expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework (see ToR Annex A). The TE will assess results according to the criteria outlined in the Guidance for TEs of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects.

The findings section of the TE report must cover the topics listed below. A full outline of the expected TE report's content is provided in ToR Annex C.

The asterisk "(*)" indicates the criteria for which a rating is required.
Project Design/Formulation
National priorities and country-drivenness.
Theory of Change*
Gender equality and women's empowerment*
Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)
Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators*
Assumptions and Risks
Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design
Planned stakeholder participation
Planned meetings with select Project Management Unit members (past and present), and past government nodal officers.
Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
Management arrangements

Project Implementation
Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements*
Project Finance and Co-finance
Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (*), implementation (*), and overall assessment of M&E (*)
Implementing Agency (UNDP) (*) and Executing Agency (*), overall project oversight/implementation and execution (*)
Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards),
Contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment (*)
Project Results
Assess the achievement of outcomes against indicators by reporting on the level of progress for each objective and outcome indicator at the time of the TE and noting final achievements.
Relevance (*), Effectiveness (*), Efficiency (*) and overall project outcome (*)
Sustainability: financial (*), socio-political (*), institutional framework and governance (*), environmental (*), overall likelihood of sustainability (*)
Country ownership

Gender equality and women's empowerment (*)

Cross-cutting issues (poverty alleviation, improved governance, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster prevention and recovery, human rights, capacity development, South-South cooperation, knowledge management, volunteerism, etc., as relevant) (*)

GEF Additionality

Catalytic Role / Replication Effect

Progress to impact

 Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

The TE-NC-Conv will include a summary of the main findings of the TE report. Findings should be presented as statements of fact that are based on analysis of the data.

The section on conclusions will be written considering the findings. Conclusions should be comprehensive and balanced statements that are well substantiated by evidence and logically connected to the TE findings. They should highlight the strengths, weaknesses, and results of the project, respond to key evaluation questions, and provide insights into the identification of and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to project beneficiaries, UNDP and the GEF, including issues in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Recommendations should provide concrete, practical, feasible and targeted recommendations directed to the intended users of the evaluation about what actions to take and decisions to make. The recommendations should be specifically supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation.

The TE report should also include lessons that can be taken from the evaluation, including best practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance, gender equality and success that can provide knowledge gained from the circumstance (programmatic and evaluation methods used, partnerships, financial leveraging, etc.) that are applicable to other GEF and UNDP interventions. When possible, the TE-NC should include examples of good practices emanating from project design and implementation.

It is important for the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned of the TE report to incorporate gender equality and empowerment of women.

The TE report will include an Evaluation Rating Table, as shown below:

ToR Table 2: Evaluation Rating Table for
*Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE Himalaya)*

| Project Design /Formultion | Rating[2] |
|---|---|
| Theory of Change | |
| Gender equality and women's empowerment | |
| Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators | |
| Overall Project Design/ Formulation rating | |
| M&E Plan Implementation | |
| Overall Quality of M&E | |
| **Implementation & Execution** | **Rating** |
| Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight | |
| Quality of Implementing Partner Execution | |
| Contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment | |
| Overall Quality of Implementation/Execution | |
| **Assessment of Outcomes** | **Rating** |
| Relevance | |
| Effectiveness | |
| Efficiency | |
| Contribution to gender equality and social inclusion | |
| Overall Project Outcome Rating | |
| **Sustainability** | **Rating** |
| Financial resources | |
| Socio-political/economic | |
| Institutional framework and governance | |
| Environmental | |
| Overall Likelihood of Sustainability | |
| **Gender & Empowerment** | **Rating** |
| Gender equality and women's empowerment | |
| Overall rating | |
| **Cross-cutting issues (As relavant)** | **Rating** |
| Poverty alleviation | |
| Improved governance | |
| Climate change mitigation and adaptation | |
| Disaster prevention and recovery | |
| Human rights | |

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[2] Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight & Execution, Relevance are rated on a 6-point scale: 6=Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5=Satisfactory (S), 4=Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3=Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), 2=Unsatisfactory (U), 1=Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability is rated on a 4-point scale: 4=Likely (L), 3=Moderately Likely (ML), 2=Moderately Unlikely (MU), 1=Unlikely (U)

| Capacity Development | |
|---|---|
| South-South cooperation | |
| Knowledge management, | |
| Overall rating | |

TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the TE will be approximately 2 months. The tentative TE timeframe is as follows:

10 June: Selection of TE Team

12 June: Prep the TE team (handover of project documents)

17 June: Documents reviewed and submitted the TE Inception Report

18 June - 04 July: Field mission

17 July: Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of TE mission

19 July: Submission of draft TE report

25 July: Circulation of draft TE report and Incorporation of comments on draft TE report into Audit Trail & finalization of TE report

30 July: Preparation & Issue of Management Response

10 August: Expected date of full TE completion

The expected date start date of the contract is 12 June 2024.

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

TERMINAL EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

| # | Deliverable | Description | Timeline//No of working days | Responsibilities |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | TE Inception Report | TE National Consultant Conservation (TE-NC-Conv) clarifies the objectives, methodology and timeline of the TE | 5 days from the start date of the contract | TE National Consultant Conservation (TE-NC-Conv) submits the Inception Report to the Commissioning Unit and project management unit. |
| 2 | Field mission completed and Presentation of findings | The TE National Consultant (TE-NC) undertakes field missions in the selected project states/ landscapes (UT of Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand & Sikkim); Initial Findings from the field mission and draft METT report based on the field mission submitted | Within 40 days (including travel) & presentation by End of Field Mission | TE National Consultant Conservation (TE-NC) conducts meetings/consultations with the beneficiaries, PMUs, and other relevant stakeholders |

| 4 | Draft TE Report | Full draft report *(using guidelines on report content in ToR Annex C)* with annexes Final report on METT, CD Score Card | 45 days from the start date of the contract | TE-NC-Conv submits to Commissioning Unit; reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFP |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | Final TE Report* + Audit Trail | Revised final report and TE Audit trail in which the TE details how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final TE report *(See template in ToR Annex H)* | 60 days from the start date of the contract | TE-NC-Conv submits both documents to the Commissioning Unit |

*All final TE reports will be quality assessed by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). Details of the IEO's quality assessment of decentralized evaluations can be found in Section 6 of the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines.[3]

TE ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing the TE resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's TE is the UNDP India. The Commissioning Unit will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of travel arrangements within the country for the TE National Consultant (TE-NC-Conv). The Project Management Unit will be responsible for liaising with the TE National Consultant (TE-NC-Conv) to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

9. TE NATIONAL CONSULTANT CONSERVATION (TE-NC-CONV) COMPOSITION

The TE team will be composed of two consultants including 01 team leader (National Consultant-Conservation) and 01 National Consultant-Livelihoods who shall have prior experience in evaluating environmental projects with knowledge of Biodiversity Management & experience of promoting biodiversity-based livelihoods and strengthening of community institutions in India. The National Consultant will be expected to conduct field missions in the select locations of the project landscape. The TE National Consultant-Conservation (TE-NC-Conv) will be designated as the Team Leader and shall be responsible for the overall design and writing of the TE report as well as the overall quality of the final report submitted to UNDP. The TE National Consultant Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) shall support the Lead (TE-NC-Conv) in drafting the report by providing the data gathered from the field mission and interviews. The TE National Consultant Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) and the TE National Consultant Conservation (TE-NC-Conv) will be recruited separately; however, the two consultants shall form a team carrying out this

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[3] Access at: http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/section-6.shtml

TE, under the overall guidance of the team leader and overall management of the Commissioning Unit.

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

The selection of the National Consultant Conservation (TE-NC-Conv) will be aimed at maximizing the overall "team" qualities in the following areas:

Eligibility Criteria:

Education (20% weightage)

A master's degree or higher in Environmental Sciences, Biodiversity conservation, Wildlife Conservation, Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Land and Forest Management or any other related field (20%)

Experience (50% weightage)

Minimum 7 years of relevant experience of working in the Indian Himalayan region with experience in result-based management evaluation methodologies, biodiversity conservation, & sustainable natural resource management (20%)

Minimum 7 years of experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios. (10%)

Competence in adaptive management, as applied to Biodiversity focal areas, Wildlife Conservation, Natural Resource Management, promoting biodiversity-based livelihoods and strengthening of community institutions. (5%)

Minimum 05 years of experience in evaluating externally aided projects in India. (5%)

Demonstrated understanding of issues related to the nexus between gender and biodiversity, wildlife conservation, land degradation and sustainable forest management (5%)

Excellent communication skills. Demonstrable analytical skills. Project evaluation/review experience within the United Nations system is desirable. (5%)

Good understanding of different geographies, environment, and conservation issues in India and experienced in community-based biodiversity conservation models.

Fluency in written and spoken English and Hindi.

Language:

Excellent command of English is required.


## 10.    EVALUATOR ETHICS

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

## 11.     PAYMENT SCHEDULE

20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final TE Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit
20% payment upon satisfactory submission and presentation of the initial findings, CD Scorecards, and METT report after the completion of the field mission.
40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the draft TE report to the Commissioning Unit
20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final TE report and approval by the Commissioning Unit and RTA (via signatures on the TE Report Clearance Form) and delivery of completed TE Audit Trail

Note:
The final TE report should include all requirements outlined in the TE TOR and follow the TE guidance.
The final TE report should be clearly written, logically organized, and specific to this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other TE reports).
The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

## 12.     APPLICATION PROCESS[4]
Recommended Presentation of Proposal:
Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability using the template[5] provided by UNDP;
CV and a Personal History Form (P11 form[6]);
Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page) (pls ensure we make gender responsiveness of the approach a criterion for selection)

Financial Proposal that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the Letter of Confirmation of Interest template. If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.
All application materials should be submitted to the address (insert mailing address) in a sealed envelope indicating the following reference "*Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE Himalaya)*" Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

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[4] Engagement of evaluators should be done in line with guidelines for hiring consultants in the POPP
https://popp.undp.org/SitePages/POPPRoot.aspx
[5] https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/pso/Support%20documents%20on%20IC%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx
[6] http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc

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

13.     TOR ANNEXES

ToR Annex A: Project Logical/Results Framework
ToR Annex B: Project Information Package to be reviewed by TE National Consultant Conservation (TE-NC-Conv)
ToR Annex C: Content of the TE report
ToR Annex D: Evaluation Criteria Matrix template
ToR Annex E: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators
ToR Annex F: TE Rating Scales
ToR Annex G: TE Report Clearance Form
ToR Annex H: TE Audit Trail

ToR Annex A: Project Logical/Results Framework

*The Results Framework is mentioned in the project document (page 62-67)*
*https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/IND/00091297-Prodoc-00096606-Secure%20Himalayas.pdf*

ToR Annex B: Project Information Package to be reviewed by TE National Consultant Conservation (TE-NC-Conv)

| # | Item (electronic versions preferred if available) |
|---|---|
| 1 | Project Identification Form (PIF) |
| 2 | UNDP Initiation Plan |
| 3 | Final UNDP-GEF Project Document with all annexes |
| 4 | CEO Endorsement Request |
| 5 | UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) and associated management plans (if any) |
| 6 | Inception Workshop Report |
| 7 | Mid-Term Review report and management response to MTR recommendations |
| 8 | All Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) |
| 9 | Progress reports (quarterly, semi-annual or annual, with associated workplans and financial reports) |
| 10 | Oversight mission reports |
| 11 | Minutes of Project Board Meetings and of other meetings (i.e. Project Appraisal Committee meetings) |
| 12 | GEF Tracking Tools (from CEO Endorsement, midterm and terminal stages) |
| 13 | GEF/LDCF/SCCF Core Indicators (from PIF, CEO Endorsement, midterm and terminal stages); for GEF-6 and GEF-7 projects only |
| 14 | Financial data, including actual expenditures by project outcome, including management costs, and including documentation of any significant budget revisions |
| 15 | Co-financing data with expected and actual contributions broken down by type of cofinancing, source, and whether the contribution is considered as investment mobilized or recurring expenditures |
| 16 | Audit reports |
| 17 | Electronic copies of project outputs (booklets, manuals, technical reports, articles, etc.) |
| 18 | Sample of project communications materials |
| 19 | Summary list of formal meetings, workshops, etc. held, with date, location, topic, and number of participants |
| 20 | Any relevant socio-economic monitoring data, such as average incomes / employment levels of stakeholders in the target area, change in revenue related to project activities |
| 21 | List of contracts and procurement items over ~US$5,000 (i.e. organizations or companies contracted for project outputs, etc., except in cases of confidential information) |
| 22 | List of related projects/initiatives contributing to project objectives approved/started after GEF project approval (i.e. any leveraged or "catalytic" results) |

| 23 | Data on relevant project website activity – e.g. number of unique visitors per month, number of page views, etc. over relevant time period, if available |
|----|----|
| 24 | UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) |
| 25 | List/map of project sites, highlighting suggested visits |
| 26 | List and contact details for Project Management Unit, key project stakeholders, including Project Board members, RTA, and other partners to be consulted |
| 27 | Project deliverables that provide documentary evidence of achievement towards project outcomes |

ToR Annex C: Content of the TE report
     i.     Title page
Title of UNDP-supported GEF-financed project
UNDP PIMS ID and GEF ID
TE timeframe and date of final TE report
Region and countries included in the project.
GEF Focal Area/Strategic Program
Executing Agency, Implementing partner and other project partners
TE National Consultant Conservation (TE-NC-Conv) members ii. Acknowledgements iii. Table of Contents iv. Acronyms and Abbreviations 1. Executive Summary (3-4 pages)
Project Information Table
Project Description (brief)
Evaluation Ratings Table
Concise summary of findings, conclusions and lessons learned.
Recommendations summary table
Introduction (2-3 pages)
Purpose and objective of the TE
Scope
Methodology
Data Collection & Analysis
Ethics
Limitations to the evaluation
Structure of the TE report
Project Description (3-5 pages)
Project start and duration, including milestones
Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope
Problems that the project sought to address, threats and barriers targeted
Immediate and development objectives of the project
Expected results
Main stakeholders: summary list
Theory of Change
Findings

(in addition to a descriptive assessment, all criteria marked with (*) must be given a rating[7])
Project Design/Formulation
Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators

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Assumptions and Risks
Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design
Planned stakeholder participation
Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
Gender equality (*)
4.1 Project Implementation
Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements
Project Finance and Co-finance
Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (*), implementation (*), and overall assessment of M&E (*)
UNDP implementation/oversight (*) and Implementing Partner execution (*), overall project implementation/execution (*), coordination, and operational issues
Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)
Gender Equality (*)
Project Results and Impacts
Progress towards objective and expected outcomes (*)
Relevance (*)
Effectiveness (*)
Efficiency (*)
Overall Outcome (*)
Sustainability: financial (*), socio-economic (*), institutional framework and governance (*), environmental (*), and overall likelihood (*)
Country ownership
Gender equality and women's empowerment (*)
Cross-cutting Issues
GEF Additionality
Catalytic/Replication Effect
Progress to Impact
Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons
Main Findings
Conclusions
Recommendations
Lessons Learned
Annexes
TE ToR (excluding ToR annexes)
TE Mission itinerary, including summary of field visits

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[7] See ToR Annex F for rating scales.

List of persons interviewed
List of documents reviewed
Evaluation Question Matrix (evaluation criteria with key questions, indicators, sources of data, and methodology)
Questionnaire used and summary of results
Co-financing tables (if not include in body of report)
TE Rating scales
Signed Evaluation Consultant Agreement form
Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form
Signed TE Report Clearance form
*Annexed in a separate file*: TE Audit Trail
*Annexed in a separate file:* relevant terminal GEF/LDCF/SCCF Core Indicators or Tracking Tools, as applicable

Terminal Evaluation
Terms of Reference (ToR) for UNDP-supported GEF-financed project "SECURE Himalaya"
<u>INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT – LIVELIHOODs (NATIONAL)</u>

1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full- and medium-sized UNDP supported GEF-financed projects are required to undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE) at the end of the project. This Terms of Reference (ToR) sets out the expectations for the TE of the full-sized project titled *Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE Himalaya),* implemented through the Ministry of Environment. The project started in 2017.
The TE process must follow the guidance outlined in the document '[Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects](#)'.

## 2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The high range Himalayan ecosystem in India is of critical importance for the biodiversity and ecosystems of global significance that it harbors and forms an important life-support system for a large number of remote and agro-pastoral communities that depend on it. The Himalayan ecosystem provides a number of essential ecosystem services – a source of freshwater, maintains hydrological functions, reduces erosion and sedimentation downstream, provides food security and maintains land races of food crops grown in much of northern India. Hundreds of millions of people depend on these ecosystems for water for hydropower and agriculture, forage for livestock and food for themselves, mineral resources, medicinal and aromatic plants and their products, cultural traditions and spiritual values, and inspiration that draws increasing number of people from around the globe to experience these places. A rapid estimate of the economic value of some prominent services generated from snow leopard habitats in India is nearly $4 billion a year, the bulk of which comes from hydropower and generated electricity (US$3 billion), followed by livestock and agriculture (US$0.5 billion), and tourism (US$0.4 billion)[8].

In view of above, to promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secures conservation of globally significant wildlife, including vulnerable snow leopard and their habitats, ensures sustainable livelihoods and community socio-economic benefits, Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has designed the project titled "Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE) Himalaya". The said Project was approved by GEF in 6th Project cycle and launched in 2017.

The Project has adopted landscape based approach to conservation and management and is being implemented by Wildlife Division, MoEFCC in partnerships with State Forest Department of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim and Department of Wildlife Protection, Union Territory of Ladakh in select landscapes in Changthang, Leh district (UT of Ladakh), Lahaul: Lahaul & Spiti district, Pangi :Chamba district & Kinnaur (Himachal Pradesh), Gangotri–Govind (Uttarkashi district) & Darma-Byans Valley in Pithoragarh district (Uttarakhand) and Khangchendzonga–Upper Teesta Valley, North and West Sikkim district (Sikkim). The total area of the landscapes under the project is 34,456 sq.kms.

The project supports four inter-linked outcomes that are aimed at achieving the objective as mentioned below:

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

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

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[8] http://www.globalsnowleopard.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/India_NSLIP.pdf

Outcome 3: Enhanced enforcement, monitoring, prosecution and effective trans-boundary cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and related threats

Outcome 4: Lessons learned by the project through participatory M&E, including gender mainstreaming practices, are used to fight poaching and IWT and promote community-based conservation at the national and international levels

## 3. TE PURPOSE

The overall objective of TE is to review the achievements made to deliver the specified objectives and outcomes, particularly Outcome 2 and cross cutting activities related to livelihoods across other 3 Outcomes of the project titled *Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE Himalaya).* The TE will also establish the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, performance, and success of the project, including the sustainability of results, contribution to gender equality and the project exit strategies. The TE will draw and analyse lessons learned through the project and best practices pertaining to the strategies employed, and implementation arrangements, which may be utilised to inform future programmes.

To achieve the objectives of TE described above, the TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv)will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Environmental & Social Safeguard Policy, the Project Document, project reports including Annual Project Review/PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the consultant considers useful for this evidence-based review), and summarise assessment methodologies, results, and recommendations in a report. The TE report should promote accountability and transparency and assess the extent of project accomplishments.

## 4. TE APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The TE report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable, and useful. The TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv)will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (*i.e.,* PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP), the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, gender mainstreaming guidance note, and any other materials that the evaluator considers useful for this evidence-based evaluation. The TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) will review the baseline and midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators submitted to the GEF at the CEO endorsement and midterm stages and the terminal Core & Mandatory Indicators that must be completed before the TE field mission begins.

The TE-NC-Liv is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with the Project Management Unit staff (past and present), government counterparts at the national, state, and sub-state levels (past and present), Implementing

Partners, the UNDP Country Office, the Regional Technical Advisor, direct beneficiaries (50% women), and other stakeholders including women groups, gender experts, civil society.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful TE. Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to (list); executing agencies, senior officials and task team/component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project beneficiaries, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Additionally, the TE team is expected to conduct field missions to the selected project sites.

The specific design and methodology for the TE should emerge from consultations between the TE National Consultant Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) s and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the TE purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The TE National Consultant livelihoods (TE-NC-liv) s must use gender-sensitive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues such as social inclusion and SDGs are incorporated into the TE report.

The final methodological approach including interview scheduling, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation must be clearly outlined in the TE Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders, and the TE National Consultant Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv).

5. DETAILED SCOPE OF THE TE

The TE National Consultant – Livelihood (TE NC-Liv) will be responsible for assessing the progress in the following two categories of project: Component II (Improved and diversified sustainable livelihoods for communities to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems) and Component IV (Improved knowledge and information systems for promotion of landscape conservation approaches).

The TE NC- Livelihood will assess project performance against expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework (see ToR Annex A). The TE will assess results according to the criteria outlined in the Guidance for TEs of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects.

The Findings section of the TE report will cover the topics listed below. A full outline of the TE report's content is provided in ToR Annex C.

The asterisk "(*)" indicates the criteria for which a rating is required.
i. Project Design/Formulation
National priorities and country-driven ness.
Theory of Change*
Gender equality and women's empowerment*
Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)
Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators*
Assumptions and Risks

Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design.
Planned stakeholder participation.
Planned meetings with select Project Management Unit members (past and present), and past government nodal officers.
Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
Management arrangements

ii. Project Implementation
Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements*
Project Finance and Co-finance
Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (*), implementation (*), and overall assessment of M&E (*)
Implementing Agency (UNDP) (*) and Executing Agency (*), overall project oversight/implementation and execution (*)
Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)
Contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment (*)

iii. Project Results
Assess the achievement of outcomes against indicators by reporting on the level of progress for each objective and outcome indicator at the time of the TE and noting final achievements.
Relevance (*), Effectiveness (*), Efficiency (*) and overall project outcome (*)
Sustainability: financial (*), socio-political (*), institutional framework and governance (*), environmental (*), overall likelihood of sustainability (*)
Country ownership
Gender equality and women's empowerment (*)
Cross-cutting issues (poverty alleviation, improved governance, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster prevention and recovery, human rights, capacity development, South-South cooperation, knowledge management, volunteerism, etc., as relevant) (*)
GEF Additionality
Catalytic Role / Replication Effect
Progress to impact

Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned
The TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) will include a summary of the main findings of the TE report. Findings should be presented as statements of fact that are based on analysis of the data.
The section on conclusions will be written considering the findings. Conclusions should be comprehensive and balanced statements that are well substantiated by evidence and logically connected to the TE findings. They should highlight the strengths, weaknesses, and results of the project, respond to key evaluation questions, and provide insights into the identification of

and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to project beneficiaries, UNDP and the GEF, including issues in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment. Recommendations should provide concrete, practical, feasible and targeted recommendations directed to the intended users of the evaluation about what actions to take and decisions to make. The recommendations should be specifically supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation.

The TE report should also include lessons that can be taken from the evaluation, including best practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success that can provide knowledge gained from the circumstance (programmatic and evaluation methods used, partnerships, financial leveraging, etc.) that are applicable to other GEF and UNDP interventions. When possible, the TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) should include examples of good practices emanating from project design and implementation.

It is important for the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned of the TE report to incorporate gender equality and empowerment of women and promotion of women's livelihoods.

The TE report will include an Evaluation Ratings Table, as shown below:

ToR Table 2: Evaluation Ratings Table for
*Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE Himalaya)*

| Project Design /Formulation | Rating[9] |
|---|---|
| Theory of Change | |
| Gender equality and women's empowerment | |
| Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators | |
| Overall Project Design/ Formulation rating | |
| Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) | Rating |
| M&E design at entry (including gender sensitive indicators) | |
| M&E Plan Implementation | |
| Overall Quality of M&E | |
| Implementation & Execution | Rating |
| Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight | |
| Quality of Implementing Partner Execution | |
| Contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment | |
| Overall quality of Implementation/Execution | |
| Assessment of Outcomes | Rating |
| Relevance | |
| Effectiveness | |

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[9] Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight & Execution, Relevance are rated on a 6-point scale: 6=Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5=Satisfactory (S), 4=Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3=Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), 2=Unsatisfactory (U), 1=Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability is rated on a 4-point scale: 4=Likely (L), 3=Moderately Likely (ML), 2=Moderately Unlikely (MU), 1=Unlikely (U)

| | |
|---|---|
| Efficiency | |
| Contribution to gender equality and social inclusion | |
| Overall Project Outcome Rating | |
| **Sustainability** | **Rating** |
| Financial resources | |
| Socio-political/economic | |
| Institutional framework and governance | |
| Environmental | |
| Overall Likelihood of Sustainability | |
| **Gender & Empowerment** | **Rating** |
| Gender equality and women's empowerment | |
| Overall rating | |
| **Cross-cutting issues (As relevant)** | **Rating** |
| Poverty alleviation | |
| Improved governance | |
| Climate change mitigation and adaptation | |
| Disaster prevention and recovery | |
| Human rights | |
| Capacity Development | |
| South-South cooperation | |
| Knowledge management, | |
| Overall rating | |

6. TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the TE will be approximately 2 months. The tentative TE timeframe is as follows:

10 June: Selection of TE Team
12 June: Prep the TE team (handover of project documents)
17 June: Documents reviewed and submitted the TE Inception Report
18 June - 04 July: Field mission
17 July: Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of TE mission
19 July: Submission of draft TE report
25 July:  Circulation of draft TE report and Incorporation of comments on draft TE report into Audit Trail & finalization of TE report
30 July:  Preparation & Issue of Management Response
10 August:  Expected date of full TE completion

The expected date start date of the contract is 12 June 2024.

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

7. TE DELIVERABLES

| # | Deliverable | Description | Timeline//No of working days | Responsibilities |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | TE Inception Report | TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) clarifies objectives, methodology and timeline of the TE | Within 5 days from the start date of contract | TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) submits the Inception Report to Commissioning Unit and project management |
| 2 | Field mission completed and Presentation of findings | The TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) commissions field mission in the selected project states/ landscapes (UT of Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand & Sikkim); Initial Findings | End of Field Mission (40 working days from the start date of the contract including travel) | TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) conducts meetings/ consultation with the beneficiaries, PMUs and other relevant stakeholders; |
| 3 | Draft TE Report | Full draft report *(using guidelines on report content in ToR Annex C)* with annexes | 45 days from the start date of contract | TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) submits to Commissioning Unit; reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFP |
| 5 | Final TE Report* + Audit Trail | Revised final report and TE Audit trail in which the TE details how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final TE report *(See template in ToR Annex H)* | 60 days from the start date of contract | TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) submits both documents to the Commissioning Unit |

*All final TE reports will be quality assessed by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). Details of the IEO's quality assessment of decentralized evaluations can be found in Section 6 of the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines.[10]

## 8. TE ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing the TE resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's TE is the UNDP India. The Commissioning Unit will

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[10] Access at: http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/section-6.shtml

contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the TE consultants. The Project Management Unit will be responsible for liaising with the TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

9. TE NATIONAL CONSULTANT- LIVELIHOODS (TE-NC-LIV) COMPOSITION
The TE team will be composed of two consultants including 01 team leader (National Consultant- Conservation) and 01 National Consultant-Livelihoods who shall have prior experience of evaluating environment projects with knowledge of Biodiversity Management & experience of promoting biodiversity-based livelihoods and strengthening of community institutions in India. The National Consultant will be expected to conduct field missions in the select locations of project landscape. The TE National Consultant-Conservation (TE-NC-Conv) will be designated as Team Leader and shall be responsible for the overall design and writing of the TE report and as well as the overall quality of the final report submitted to UNDP.  The TE National Consultant Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) shall support the Lead (TE-NC-Conv) in drafting the report by providing the data gathered from the field mission and interviews. The TE National consultant Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) and the TE National Consultant Conservation (TE-NC-Conv) will be recruited separately; however, the two consultants shall form a team carrying out this TE, under the overall guidance of the team leader and overall management of the Commissioning Unit.
The consultants cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.
The selection of the National Consultant - Livelihoods will be aimed at maximizing the overall "team" qualities in the following areas:

Eligibility Criteria:
Education: (20% weightage)
A master's degree in the field of Natural Resource Management/Environmental Science/ Biodiversity Conservation/ social sciences/Economics/Social Work/ Sociology or related field or any other closely related field.  Preference would be given to individuals with higher educational qualifications.
Experience: (50% weightage)
Minimum 7 years of relevant experience of working on sustainable natural resource management linked to improvement/diversification of livelihoods, biodiversity conservation, and strengthening of community institutions related with result-based management evaluation methodologies. Good understanding of different geographies, socio-economy, environment, and conservation issues in India, particularly in community-based biodiversity conservation models. (15%)
Understanding/experience of linking livelihoods with biodiversity conservation practices will be desirable.
Minimum 7 years of experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios. (10%)

Minimum 05 years of experience in evaluating externally aided or government projects in India. (10%)

Minimum 3 years of experience of working on the issues related to gender, biodiversity, sustainable livelihoods, land degradation and sustainable forest management, experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis. (10%)

Competence in adaptive management, as applied to Biodiversity focal area, Natural Resource Based Livelihoods and strengthening of community institutions. (5%)

Excellent communication skills.

Fluency in written and spoken English and Hindi.

Language:

Excellent command of English is required.

## 10.      EVALUATOR ETHICS

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

## 11.      PAYMENT SCHEDULE

20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final TE Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit

40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the draft TE report to the Commissioning Unit

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

Note:

The final TE report should include all requirements outlined in the TE TOR and is in accordance with the TE guidance.

The final TE report should be clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other TE reports).

The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

12. APPLICATION PROCESS[11]

Recommended Presentation of Proposal:

Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability using the [template](link)[12] provided by UNDP;

CV and a Personal History Form ([P11 form](link)[13]);

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

Financial Proposal that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the [Letter of Confirmation of Interest template](link). If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

All application materials should be submitted to the address (insert mailing address) in a sealed envelope indicating the following reference "*Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE Himalaya)*" Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

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

13. TOR ANNEXES

ToR Annex A: Project Logical/Results Framework

ToR Annex B: Project Information Package to be reviewed by TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv)

ToR Annex C: Content of the TE report

ToR Annex D: Evaluation Criteria Matrix template

ToR Annex E: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators

ToR Annex F: TE Rating Scales

ToR Annex G: TE Report Clearance Form

ToR Annex H: TE Audit Trail

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[11] Engagement of evaluators should be done in line with guidelines for hiring consultants in the POPP https://popp.undp.org/SitePages/POPPRoot.aspx

[12] https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/pso/Support%20documents%20on%20IC%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx

[13] http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc

ToR Annex A: Project Logical/Results Framework

*The Results Framework is mentioned in the project document (page 62-67)*
*https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/IND/00091297-Prodoc-00096606-Secure%20Himalayas.pdf*

ToR Annex B: Project Information Package to be reviewed by TE National Consultant-Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv)

| # | Item (electronic versions preferred if available) |
|---|---|
| 1 | Project Identification Form (PIF) |
| 2 | UNDP Initiation Plan |
| 3 | Final UNDP-GEF Project Document with all annexes |
| 4 | CEO Endorsement Request |
| 5 | UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) and associated management plans (if any) |
| 6 | Inception Workshop Report |
| 7 | Mid-Term Review report and management response to MTR recommendations |
| 8 | All Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) |
| 9 | Progress reports (quarterly, semi-annual or annual, with associated workplans and financial reports) |
| 10 | Oversight mission reports |
| 11 | Minutes of Project Board Meetings and of other meetings (i.e. Project Appraisal Committee meetings) |
| 12 | GEF Tracking Tools (from CEO Endorsement, midterm and terminal stages) |
| 13 | GEF/LDCF/SCCF Core Indicators (from PIF, CEO Endorsement, midterm and terminal stages); for GEF-6 and GEF-7 projects only |
| 14 | Financial data, including actual expenditures by project outcome, including management costs, and including documentation of any significant budget revisions |
| 15 | Co-financing data with expected and actual contributions broken down by type of cofinancing, source, and whether the contribution is considered as investment mobilized or recurring expenditures |
| 16 | Audit reports |
| 17 | Electronic copies of project outputs (booklets, manuals, technical reports, articles, etc.) |
| 18 | Sample of project communications materials |
| 19 | Summary list of formal meetings, workshops, etc. held, with date, location, topic, and number of participants |
| 20 | Any relevant socio-economic monitoring data, such as average incomes / employment levels of stakeholders in the target area, change in revenue related to project activities |

| 21 | List of contracts and procurement items over ~US$5,000 (i.e. organizations or companies contracted for project outputs, etc., except in cases of confidential information) |
|----|----|
| 22 | List of related projects/initiatives contributing to project objectives approved/started after<br>GEF project approval (i.e. any leveraged or "catalytic" results) |
| 23 | Data on relevant project website activity – e.g. number of unique visitors per month, number of page views, etc. over relevant time period, if available |
| 24 | UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) |
| 25 | List/map of project sites, highlighting suggested visits |
| 26 | List and contact details for Project Management Unit, key project stakeholders, including Project Board members, RTA, and other partners to be consulted |
| 27 | Project deliverables that provide documentary evidence of achievement towards project outcomes |

ToR Annex C: Content of the TE report
      i.     Title page
Title of UNDP-supported GEF-financed project
UNDP PIMS ID and GEF ID
TE timeframe and date of final TE report
Region and countries included in the project.
GEF Focal Area/Strategic Program
Executing Agency, Implementing partner and other project partners
TE National Consultant- Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv)members ii. Acknowledgements iii. Table of
Contents iv. Acronyms and Abbreviations 1. Executive Summary (3-4 pages)
Project Information Table
Project Description (brief)
Evaluation Ratings Table
Concise summary of findings, conclusions and lessons learned.
Recommendations summary table
Introduction (2-3 pages)
Purpose and objective of the TE
Scope
Methodology
Data Collection & Analysis
Ethics
Limitations to the evaluation
Structure of the TE report
Project Description (3-5 pages)
Project start and duration, including milestones

Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope

Problems that the project sought to address, threats and barriers targeted

Immediate and development objectives of the project

Expected results

Main stakeholders: summary list

Theory of Change

Findings

(in addition to a descriptive assessment, all criteria marked with (*) must be given a rating[14])

Project Design/Formulation

Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators

Assumptions and Risks

Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design

Planned stakeholder participation

Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector

4.1 Project Implementation

Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)

Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements

Project Finance and Co-finance

Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (*), implementation (*), and overall assessment of M&E (*)

UNDP implementation/oversight (*) and Implementing Partner execution (*), overall project implementation/execution (*), coordination, and operational issues

Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

Project Results and Impacts

Progress towards objective and expected outcomes (*)

Relevance (*)

Effectiveness (*)

Efficiency (*)

Overall Outcome (*)

Sustainability: financial (*), socio-economic (*), institutional framework and governance (*), environmental (*), and overall likelihood (*)

Country ownership

Gender equality and women's empowerment

Cross-cutting Issues

GEF Additionality

Catalytic/Replication Effect

Progress to Impact

Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons

Main Findings

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[14] See ToR Annex F for rating scales.

Conclusions

Recommendations

Lessons Learned

Annexes

TE ToR (excluding ToR annexes)

TE Mission itinerary, including summary of field visits

List of persons interviewed

List of documents reviewed

Evaluation Question Matrix (evaluation criteria with key questions, indicators, sources of data, and methodology)

Questionnaire used and summary of results

Co-financing tables (if not include in body of report)

TE Rating scales

Signed Evaluation Consultant Agreement form

Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form

Signed TE Report Clearance form

*Annexed in a separate file*: TE Audit Trail

*Annexed in a separate file:* relevant terminal GEF/LDCF/SCCF Core Indicators or Tracking Tools, as applicable

D: Evaluation Criteria Matrix template

| Evaluative Criteria Questions | Indicators | Sources | Methodology |
|---|---|---|---|
| Relevance: How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF Focal area, and to the environment and development priorities a the local, regional and national level? | | | |
| *(include evaluative questions)* | *(i.e. relationships established, level of coherence between project design and implementation approach, specific activities conducted, quality of risk mitigation strategies, etc.)* | *(i.e. project documentation, national policies or strategies, websites, project staff, project partners, data collected throughout the TE mission, etc.)* | *(i.e. document analysis, data analysis, interviews with project staff, interviews with stakeholders, etc.)* |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved? | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in line with international and national norms and standards? | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-political, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results? | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Gender equality and women's empowerment: How did the project contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment? | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Impact: Are there indications that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress toward reduced environmental stress and/or improved ecological status? | | | |
| | | | |
| *(Expand the table to include questions for all criteria being assessed: Monitoring & Evaluation, UNDP oversight/implementation, Implementing Partner Execution, cross-cutting issues, etc.)* | | | |

E: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators

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:

Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained, and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.

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:

_____

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant):

_____

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

Signed at _____ (Place) on _____ (Date)

Signature: _____

F: TE Rating Scales

| Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight, Execution, Relevance | Sustainability ratings: |
|---|---|
| 6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS): exceeds expectations and/or no shortcomings<br>5 = Satisfactory (S): meets expectations and/or no or minor shortcomings<br>4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS): more or less meets expectations and/or some shortcomings<br>3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): somewhat below expectations and/or significant shortcomings<br>2 = Unsatisfactory (U): substantially below expectations and/or major shortcomings<br>1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe shortcomings<br>Unable to Assess (U/A): available information does not allow an assessment | 4 = Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability<br>3 = Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks to sustainability<br>2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks to sustainability<br>1 = Unlikely (U): severe risks to sustainability<br>Unable to Assess (U/A): Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability |

ToR Annex G: TE Report Clearance Form

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Terminal Evaluation Report for *(Project Title & UNDP PIMS ID*) Reviewed and Cleared By:

Commissioning Unit (M&E Focal Point)

Name: _____

Signature: _____          Date:
_____

Regional Technical Advisor (Nature, Climate and Energy)

Name: _____

Signature: _____          Date:
_____

H: TE Audit Trail

To the comments received on *(date)* from the Terminal Evaluation of *Protect human health and the environment from unintentional releases of POPs originating from incineration and open burning of health care- and electronic waste (PIMS 4567)*

The following comments were provided to the draft TE report; they are referenced by institution/organization (do not include the commentator's name) and track change comment number
("#" column):

| Institution/ Organization | # | Para No./ comment location | Comment/Feedback on the draft TE report | TE National Consultant-Livelihoods (TE-NC-Liv) response and actions taken |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
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## Annexure 16: Signed TE Report Clearance form

To be completed once all the comments on the audit trail are addressed.

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**Annexure 16: TE Report Clearance Form**

**Terminal Evaluation Report for** *Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, Sustainable Use, and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems; UNDP PIMS ID #: 3298*

**Reviewed and Cleared By:**
**Commissioning Unit (M&E Focal Point)**

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**Regional Technical Advisor (Nature, Climate and Energy)**
Name: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

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## Annexure 17: TE Audit Trail

Attached separately

## Annexure 18: Relevant terminal GEF/LDCF/SCCF Core Indicators or Tracking Tools, as applicable

Attached separately

Annexure **19: Semi-SGD_ Gender Evaluation Questions**

**Semi-SGD_ gender evaluation Questions**
**Note:**
1. Some questions may be repetitive or the same information sought differently.
2. Many questions are for both, males and females. These are to be tweaked based on the stakeholders being interviewed to make these gender/community/group-specific in the field.

**Questionnaire for Outcome 2**

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

| Criteria | Questions | Govt/ PMU | NGO/ CBO/ BMCs /JFMs | Women, Marginalised groups, Others |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Relevance:** DA | Were the needs and interests of stake holder groups assessed during project formulation? How? How many women were invited, how many participated and how many gave their views?<br><br>What was the primary concern of Men ? What was the major concern of women? | √ | √ | √ |
| DA | Existing social fabric of the region including matriarchal/patriarchal society | √ | | |
| DA | Was data generated for assessment of demography, existing livelihood options, land holdings and income levels? Was this data gender disaggregated ? | √ | | |
| DA | Was an assessment made on extent of dependence of local population on natural resources of the area, associated traditional knowledge and practices, impact of access of these resources (especially on marginalized groups, including women), vulnerability of communities to climate change and other environmental factors | √ | | |
| DA & IA | Extent of sensitivity of various stakeholders towards environmental issues | √ | √ | √ |
| DA &IA | Extent of sensitivity of women towards environmental issues | √ | √ | √ |
| Baseline: DA | Women's contribution to household income through activities which are not assigned an economic value | √ | √ | √ |
| DA | Women's contribution to household income, if any, through income generation activities . | √ | √ | √ |
| IA | Alternate livelihood options promoted? Extent of population covered? | √ | √ | √ |
| IA | Skill development activities undertaken? Extent of population covered? List and extent of Stake holders benefitted | √ | √ | √ |
| IA | Capacity building actions (including gender sensitivity) undertaken for various societal strata? Extent of population covered? Separate information for Govt. personnel, trainers, NGOs, CBOs, BMC, women, youth, other rural and urban stake holders | √ | √ | √ |
| IA | Number of entrepreneurial interventions? | √ | √ | √ |
| IA | Revival of local handicrafts and trends in Market linkages | | √ | √ |
| IA | Development of market linkages and financial management trainings, including number of male and female beneficiaries, if possible, age wise. | | √ | √ |

| | | Govt/ PMU | NGO/ CBO/ BMC/ JFM | Women, Marginalised groups, Others |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| IA | Have women noticed any harmful impact of the project? If yes, please specify. If no, please elaborate the benefits which women feel have accrued to them? | | | √ |
| **Efficiency DA** | Any land acquisition undertaken? | | | √ |
| **DA** | How much land is owned by women in the area | | | √ |
| IA | Any physical displacement or restrictions imposed on access of local materials? | √ | | √ |
| RA | Percentage of population benefitted? | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Increase in income levels, especially gender disaggregated data | | | √ |
| RA | Positive and negative impacts on local lifestyles and environment of eco-tourism and/or other interventions | | | √ |
| RA | Special interventions like GI certifications, registrations under PVPFRA, etc | √ | √ | |
| **Effectiveness :IA** | Number of Knowledge products, Strategies and policies developed developed | √ | √ | √ |
| IA | Number of capacity building programs undertaken and unique pedagogic methods adopted for various target groups | √ | √ | √ |
| IA | Number of grievances received vs. addressed Grievance Redress Policy in place? | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Percentage of physical targets achieved | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Extent of pressure on natural resources reduced | √ | √ | |
| RA | Has women drudgery decreased or increased due to the project | | | √ |
| RA | If decreased what in women's opinion is the contributory factor | | | √ |
| RA | Have families be provided solar PVs/ water heaters/ pressure cookers/ LPG/improved cook stoves/ any other equipment | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Information on revival/ conservation of keystone/ threatened species | √ | √ | √ |
| **Sustainability :IA** | Efforts for implementation of BDA,2002 ( as Amended) | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Number of initiatives which contribute to State/National Progress | √ | | |
| RA | Efforts towards future Sustainability (preferably self-sustainability) and institutionalization of project activities | √ | √ | √ |

Note: The number of Stake holders would be many more. Columns will be increased if further segregation is required

DA : Design Assessment, IA : Implementation Assessment, RA: Results Assessment

**Outcome 4: Questions to assess** Gender Mainstreaming, Monitoring, Evaluation and Knowledge Management

This component aims to increase overall awareness of key target groups from government agencies, non-governmental organizations, farmer associations and community groups, researchers, and increase participation of women and the most vulnerable segments of the population in conservation and natural resource management.

**Questionnaire for Outcome 4:**

| Criteria | Questions | Govt/ PMU | NGO/ CBO/ BMC/ JFM | Women, Marginalised groups, Others |
|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Relevance:** DA | Was Gender and HR evaluation undertaken at design stage? Were gender sensitive needs assessed? | √ | √ | √ |
| IA | Was adequate action taken to meet these needs? If yes, to what extent? If no, why? | √ | √ | √ |
| IA | What livelihood options were offered and Strategies adopted to promote these needs, especially for women and marginalized groups? | √ | | |
| IA | Could the project activities address the underlying causes of inequality among various social sectors? | | | √ |
| RA | Do the results indicate positive response to needs of stakeholders as identified at the design stage? | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Has the project led to attitudinal change? | | | √ |
| **Effectivity:** DA | Does the project have well defined baseline data? | √ | √ | |
| DA | Does the project have well defined indicators (both, quantitative and qualitative ) to measure progress on gender inclusivity and HRM | √ | | |
| DA | Were various groups of stakeholders (including women and marginalized groups) included during project planning and implementation? Get details | √ | √ | |
| IA | Was monitoring data collected and disaggregated according to relevant criteria (gender, age, location, local customs, income etc.)? | √ | | |
| IA | Was monitoring information adequately shared with stakeholders including land/forest rights-holders, farmers, NGOs, CBOs, women, men? | √ | √ | √ |
| IA | Were the capacities of rights holders and local population adequately built? Which agencies/individuals were involved? What methodology was followed? | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | What were the achievements due to actions undertaken under the project w.r.t. <br> o Physical progress of the area <br> o Social empowerment & Decision making abilities <br> o Economic empowerment | √ | √ | √ <br> √ <br> √ |
| RA | Can achievement be monitored in percentage of population benefitted, or in any other suitable parameter | √ | √ | √ |
| **Efficiency** DA | Adequacy of Resource and time availability | √ | √ | |
| DA | Extent of Gender based budgeting | √ | | |
| IA | Constraints if any, in implementation | √ | √ | |
| RA | Percentage of results achieved *vis-a vis* resources allocated. | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Were resources provided adequate/ inadequate/ grossly inadequate ? | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Trends in access of MAPs, NTFPs, other NBRs | | √ | √ |
| RA | Trends in value addition of NBRs | √ | √ | √ |
| **Cohesive-ness &Sustainability**:DA | Was institution building and capacity building prioritized in project design. If yes, extent of success? If no, to seek suggestions for future . | √ | | |
| IA | What were the organizational challenges, including gender sensitivity, HR and Gender responsive evaluation? | √ | √ | |
| IA | Number and relevance of Knowledge products developed. Were these gender sensitive? | √ | √ | √ |
| IA | Number and relevance of capacity building programs. Was gender sensitivity an integral part of Training and outreach programs? | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Number of research and popular articles, papers published which contribute to knowledge development | √ | √ | √ |

| RA | Percentage of physical targets achieved, including HR & GE | √ | √ | √ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| RA | Percent increase in economic status of households (especially separately reported for women)due to additional livelihoods and/or entrepreneurial activities under the project | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Perceived improvement in life styles/quality of life of local population, including of women | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Number of Best practices documented | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Responsiveness of men towards gender inequality/ neutrality/sensitivity/specificity/positivity | | √ | √ |
| RA | Extent of reduction in drudgery of women due to project implementation | | | √ |
| RA | Percentage of women empowered and developed higher self esteem | | √ | √ |
| RA | Number of local women who have become Change Agents in the society after implementation of the project | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Per cent population aware of Climate Change issues, benefits of conservation and reduction of Human wildlife Conflict | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Any major positive or unintended negative impacts of the project and in which ways did/can these impacts affect different stakeholders? | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Any specific interventions worth mentioning | √ | √ | √ |
| **Other** | | | | |
| RA | Do men in the area contribute in household work traditionally? To what extent? | | √ | √ |
| RA | Have they started contributing in household activities, especially when women are busy in income generation activities, after the project ? | | | √ |
| RA | How much rest time is available to women ? | | | √ |
| RA | How do they use their free time? | | | √ |
| RA | Number of individuals, especially women who are aware of medicinal plants and Biodiversity | | | √ |
| RA | Have any women contributed in preparation of PBR? | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | What are the livelihood options promoted for gender empowerment? | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Number of women who adopted additional income generation activities | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Number of female participants in skill Trainings | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Participation of women in all project related programs | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Status of engagement of women groups/leaders in various project related activities | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Status of opportunities and benefits accrued to women in different project related activities | √ | √ | √ |
| RA | Assessment of Capacity Building, Skill development, Entrepreneurship development, value chains, market links, etc | √ | √ | √ |

Note: The number of Stake holders would be many more. Columns will be increased if further segregation is required

DA : Design Assessment, IA : Implementation Assessment,  RA: results Assessment

Annexure **20: SMART Analysis of Results Framework**

**Annexure 20**

The project results framework has been assessed against "SMART" (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time- bound) criteria during Terminal Evaluation. It has been found that by and large all the slated targets have been met at the end-of-project as tabulated below:

**Project Objective: To promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secures the conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats, ensure sustainable livelihoods and community Socio-economic benefits**

At TE, the 'SMART' criteria have been revised beyond the assessment made during the midterm review of the project's results framework. All three indicators at the 'Objective level' are now 'SMART', as is the 'biological indicator' as presented in the **Table** below:

Table: Project Objectives

| Progress towards achieving the project objective is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Indicator** | **Baseline** | **TE project target** | **TE SMART Analysis** | | | | | **Achievement Status** |
| | | | **S** | **M** | **A** | **R** | **T** | |
| Mandatory Indicator 1.3.1 Area of sustainable management solutions at sub-national for conservation of snow leopard, wild prey and associated species and habitats, sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem services | Approximately 30,000 – 40,000 hectares (parts of Kanchenjunga National Park and Gangotri National Park) managed effectively | At least 1,600,000 hectares effectively managed through participatory approaches | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | During the TE assessment, the mandatory indicator, previously deemed "questionable of achievability" during the MTR, was found to have been not only achieved but overachieved by 114.1%. A total of 3,425,451 hectares (vs. the target of 1,600,000 ha) are now managed through participatory approaches involving multistakeholder coordination, including government departments, research institutions, civil society organizations, and national and state-level Project Steering Committees. This achievement has fostered landscape-level learning, enhancing synergy among ministries and departments, promoting co-financing, and facilitating joint decision-making for snow leopard conservation, sustainable livelihoods, and ecosystem services across Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and Ladakh. Additionally, the effort has led to numerous landscape-specific scientific |

| Progress towards achieving the project objective is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Indicator** | **Baseline** | **TE project target** | **TE SMART Analysis** | | | | **Achievement Status** |
| | | | **S** | **M** | **A** | **R** | **T** | |
| | | | | | | | studies on biodiversity, wetland management, human-wildlife conflict, and the role of medicinal plants, engaging renowned institutions and experts. These studies, often providing first-time data from remote areas, will serve as valuable baseline information for future conservation initiatives and policy development. Achieved |
| Mandatory Indicator 1.3.2 Number of additional people benefiting from strengthened livelihoods through solutions for management of natural resources and ecosystem services | 0 (Baseline of households participating in alternative livelihoods and sustainable resource management will be established through the village microplanning process) | At least 2,500 households directly benefit through improved livelihoods and incomes (50% of the 12,500 beneficiaries would be women) | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | At the time of the MTR, the target was considered ambitious, with its achievability in question. However, the project successfully benefited 2,502 households across Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Sikkim, demonstrating its effectiveness in improving livelihoods. Local communities were empowered through sustainable green livelihood initiatives, integrated into village-level institutions like Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), cooperative societies, and Primary Producer Groups (PPGs). The project also developed a sustainability strategy and exit plan to ensure continued benefits long after its conclusion, focusing on strengthening value chains for income generation and sustainable livelihood improvement. Achieved |
| Mandatory indicator 2.5.1 Extent to which Institutional frameworks are in place for conservation, sustainable use, access and benefit | 0 (Current institutional arrangements do not facilitate significant coordination across multi-sectors and multiple actors) | All four multiple use landscapes have official multi-stakeholder, multi-sector coordination and governance mechanisms that facilitate convergence | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | This project has successfully established and strengthened institutions that support conservation, sustainable use, and access and benefit-sharing of natural resources, while improving livelihoods. By the last reporting cycle, all targets |

| Progress towards achieving the project objective is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Indicator** | **Baseline** | **TE project target** | **TE SMART Analysis** | | | | | **Achievement Status** |
| | | | **S** | **M** | **A** | **R** | **T** | |
| sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems and improved livelihoods | | of planning, manpower and financial resources for conservation, sustainable use and improved livelihood benefits | | | | | | were met, with state and landscape-level inter-departmental coordination committees formed in all four project states and union territories. These committees, comprising members from line departments, research institutions, and civil society organizations (CSOs), facilitated coordination, policy decisions, progress reviews, and co-financing. At the national level, the National Project Snow Leopard (PSL) Steering Committee institutionalized project practices, overseeing landscape-level management plans, wildlife conservation, and monitoring of snow leopard and prey populations. The project also supported the establishment of 65 Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) across the project landscapes to enhance biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use. Achieved |
| Biological Indicator. Status of snow leopard populations in four project states | Estimated at 474 individuals | Stable or increase snow leopard populations in the four project states | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The project supported India's first comprehensive snow leopard population survey, conducted between 2021 and 2023 using the Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI) methodology, launched in 2019 by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC). The survey, which covered 120,000 square kilometers of habitat, estimated 718 snow leopards, placing India as home to 10-15% of the global population in just 5% of the species' global habitat. Ladakh had the highest population with 477 snow leopards, followed by Uttarakhand (124), Himachal |

| Progress towards achieving the project objective is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator | Baseline | TE project target | TE SMART Analysis | | | | Achievement Status |
| | | | S | M | A | R | T | |
| | | | | | | | Pradesh (51), and Sikkim (21). Rural youth trained under the project assisted scientists from the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and WWF-India in conducting the assessments across five Himalayan landscapes. Achieved |
| *SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound* | | | | | | | |

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

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

Table: Analysis of Outcome 1

| Progress towards achieving Outcomes 1 is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator | Baseline | TE project target | TE SMART Analysis | | | | Achievement Status |
| | | | S | M | A | R | T | |
| Indicator 1.1 Improved management effectiveness of protected areas and biological rich areas in alpine and sub-alpine landscape | Changtang WLS (22) Govind Pasu WLS (25) Gangotri NP (35) Khangchenjunga NP (29) Seichi Tuan WLS (13) Shingba Rhododendron WLS (16) | Average increase by at least 30 points in METT from current PAs baselines | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Each PA has raised its score over Mid-term during the end term evaluation and key aspects of achievements are noted below: To add from the score sheet. **Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary: METT score increased from 22 to 67, a rise of 45 points.** Seichu Tuan Wildlife Sanctuary: METT score increased from 13 to 70, a rise of 57 points. Govind National Park & Wildlife Sanctuary: METT score increased from 25 to 73, a rise of 48 points. Gangotri National Park: METT score increased from 35 to 79, a rise of 44 points. Khangchendzonga National Park and Biosphere Reserve: METT score increased from 29 to 73, a rise of 44 points. |

| Progress towards achieving Outcomes 1 is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator | Baseline | TE project target | TE SMART Analysis | | | | | Achievement Status |
| | | | S | M | A | R | T | |
| | | | | | | | | Shingba Rhododendron Wildlife Sanctuary: METT score increased from 16 to 74, a rise of 58 points. These improvements are due to enhanced institutional and staff capacities through targeted training in ecosystem restoration, protected area management, species monitoring, human-wildlife conflict mitigation, and wildlife crime prevention. Updated management plans and better resource allocation have also contributed to these gains. Community participation has been key, with local institutions involved in waste management, trail maintenance, and resource mobilization via visitor fees. The rise in METT scores reflects increased community conservation awareness, improved training for frontline staff, higher budget allocations, strategic conflict mitigation, enhanced participatory surveillance, and better communication. Achieved |
| Indicator 1.2 Improved institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring of multiuse landscape level plans as measured by UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard | Limited institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring of multiple use landscapes. UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline score of 18 | Increase of institutional capacity as measured by a 50% increase in UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline value | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The evaluation of the project indicates that special emphasis has been placed on enhancing the capacity of various stakeholders, particularly local communities, including women, to ensure that the intended benefits are fully realized for their empowerment across all fronts. The targeted increase in the capacity development score over the baseline has been achieved in full, with a 100% achievement (45/45) by the Term-end evaluation. Achieved |
| Indicator 1.3 (a) Reduced pressure and prevented degradation of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forests | Approximately 700,000 ha of alpine meadows under unsustainable grazing with average 75 | Reduced grazing pressure on 700,000 ha of alpine meadows by at least 20% (from 75 to 60 livestock units/km2) and | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | In line with the Mid Term Review (MTR) recommendation, the end-term project target was revised to 8,000 ha, emphasizing the enhancement of ecosystem quality through community-managed sustainable practices |

| Progress towards achieving Outcomes 1 is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator | Baseline | TE project target | TE SMART Analysis | | | | | Achievement Status |
| | | | S | M | A | R | T | |
| | livestock units/km2 and forests around villages lack sustainable management arrangements | prevented degradation in around 10,000 ha of sub-alpine forest under community-based management resulting in projected 0.46-0.50 and 0.31-0.36 m tCO2 /30 year period sequestrated and avoided respectively. | | | | | | rather than expanding areas. The project successfully brought 8,013.76 hectares of alpine and sub-alpine forests under community management, slightly exceeding the target. This was achieved through two key interventions: promoting sustainable grazing practices and reducing environmental pressure on rangelands across the project landscapes. Achieved |
| Indicator 1.4 Extent of degraded alpine pastures/rangelands and sub-alpine forests under sustainable management regimes | Approximately 40,000 ha of alpine pastures and 2,000 ha of sub-alpine forests under continued degradation through overuse | 40,000 hectares alpine pastures and 2,000 hectares sub-alpine forests under sustainable regeneration regimes resulting in projected 0.16 - 0.18 and 0.42 – 0.05 m tCO2 /30-year period sequestrated and avoided respectively. | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The project target of 40,000 hectares of alpine pastures and 2,000 hectares of sub-alpine forests for sustainable regeneration has been exceeded, reaching 75,813.74 hectares (Himachal Pradesh: 1,836.28 ha; Ladakh: 60,011 ha; Sikkim: 2,602 ha; Uttarakhand: 11,364 ha). This achievement is due to multi-pronged, locally tailored strategies, such as piloting solar-based equipment and space heating solutions to reduce fuelwood use, introducing rotational grazing, and promoting wool-based products from sheep and yak to reduce community reliance on goat (pashmina). Achieved |
| Indicator 1.5 Area of High Conservation Value Forests under improved management | High Conservation Value Forests (dispersal corridors, biodiversity rich areas and buffer areas) lack appropriate management regimes | (a) Reduced direct pressure on at least 60,000 ha covering at least 18 newly designated and managed key biodiversity areas, including 30,000 ha of HCVFs to ensure connectivity and species conservation resulting in projected avoided | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The project has achieved 112.06% more than the goal in terms of improving the management of 73 High Conservation Value Forests (HCVFs) covering 127,238.32 hectares across all project landscapes. Most of these HCVs have been managed through different innovative institutional arrangements, such as, Biodiversity Heritage Sites under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, Ramsar site, as Dark Sky Reserve, etc. Achieved |

| Progress towards achieving Outcomes 1 is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Indicator** | **Baseline** | **TE project target** | **TE SMART Analysis** | | | | **Achievement Status** |
| | | | **S** | **M** | **A** | **R** | **T** | |
| | | 1.38-1.47 m tCO2 over 30-year period<br><br>(b) Reduced direct pressure on at least 20,000 ha of moist and dry alpine areas and sub-alpine forests managed as Biodiversity Heritage Sites resulting in projected avoided 0.46 – 0.49 m tCO2 over 30-year period | | | | | | |

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

There are three indicators established for the Outcome 2, as described below in **Table** below:

Table: Analysis of Outcome 2

| Progress towards achieving Outcomes 2 is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Indicator** | **Baseline** | **TE project target** | **TE SMART Analysis** | | | | **Achievement Status** |
| | | | **S** | **M** | **A** | **R** | **T** | |
| Indicator 2.1 Extent under sustainable natural resources management practices | 0 (Currently sustainable land management natural resources practices at the village level are absent or limited) | 0 (Current institutional arrangements do not facilitate significant coordination across multi-sectors and multiple actors)<br>At least 10,000 ha under sustainable natural resources management practices | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The project has exceeded its end-term target by achieving 13,939 hectares of land under sustainable management, surpassing the 10,000-hectare goal, with ongoing work at the community level. Following a desk review and consultations with officers, NGOs, and communities, the following documents are reportedly prepared to guide fieldwork:<br>• Landscape Management Strategy and Plan for each landscape<br>• Sectoral Strategies and Plans<br>• 82 village-level livelihood plans/micro plans |

| Progress towards achieving Outcomes 2 is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator | Baseline | TE project target | TE SMART Analysis | | | | | Achievement Status |
| | | | S | M | A | R | T | |
| | | | | | | | | • Livelihood Strategy for each landscape  Diversified sustainable natural resource management practices have been identified and implemented, ensuring the long-term sustainability of livelihood activities.  Achieved |
| Indicator 2.2 (a) Average percentage increase in community incomes from sustainable livelihood, natural resource management and business activities (calculated for each community) | Baseline to be established in YR1 during village micro-planning | 30% increase in average incomes from sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management and business activities (At least 40% of beneficiaries are women) | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The target is met, despite the MTR marking this indicator as non-measurable and non-achievable due to an undefined baseline meant to be set in Year 1. A total of 82 village-level livelihood plans were eventually prepared, including income-enhancing strategies and integration with relevant government schemes. A baseline was then established through community interactions, especially with women. By the TE, it was observed that the project benefited 2,502 households across project sites, enhancing income and livelihoods. Beneficiaries included Himachal Pradesh (769 households, 32% men and 68% women), Ladakh (206 households, 34% men and 66% women), Sikkim (527 households, 67% men and 33% women), and Uttarakhand (1,000 households, 65% men and 35% women). Achieved |
| Indicator 2.3 Number of community members trained, adopting community-based agricultural, agro-pastoral, natural resource management and livelihood activities. | 0 (currently training at the community level is limited and sector specific.) and limited effort at comprehensive training that integrates the multiple dimensions of managing resources across the different sectors and for multiple use. | At least 2,500 community members trained and adopting community-based sustainable resource use, agro-pastoral, agricultural and other sustainable livelihood activities and receiving detectable conservation and livelihood benefits | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The target has been over-achieved by 39%.  Overall, 3,471 community members were trained against the end-term target of 2,500 out of which 49% (1,707) were women. The trainings focused on:  • Diversified, resilient & sustainable livelihood solutions  • Sustainable resource management, |

| Progress towards achieving Outcomes 2 is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator | Baseline | TE project target | TE SMART Analysis | | | | Achievement Status |
| | | | S | M | A | R | T | |
| | | | | | | | | • Improved agricultural practices. These efforts have led to significant advancements in various livelihood value chains both for the off-farm and on-farm-based activities. The State wise important training activities are enumerated below: Achieved |

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

There are three indicators established for the Outcome 3, as described below in **Table** below:

Table: Analysis of Outcome 3

| Progress towards achieving Outcomes 3 is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator | Baseline | TE project target | TE SMART Analysis | | | | Achievement Status |
| | | | S | M | A | R | T | |
| Indicator 3.1 Number of community members actively volunteering in security monitoring and surveillance | 0 (There is no coordinated program for community participation in surveillance and monitoring of wildlife crime) | 200 community members actively engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions (At least 20% women) to serve as deterrent to wildlife crime | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The project has registered significant progress in developing anti-poaching, wildlife surveillance, monitoring, and crime control systems across the project landscapes, addressing the challenges of illegal trade, wildlife crime, and human-wildlife conflicts in remote, rugged areas. This progress has showcased active involvement of local communities, volunteers, and other groups through capacity building, etc. The project has surpassed its target by training and engaging over 200 community members, including young people and Panchayat Sarpanches as Honorary Wildlife Wardens, in wildlife crime monitoring across vulnerable border and transit areas. Although women have also been trained in wildlife crime monitoring, biodiversity conservation, and HWC mitigation, 20% target of women involvement is not met in some areas. Achieved |

| Progress towards achieving Outcomes 3 is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator | Baseline | TE project target | TE SMART Analysis | | | | Achievement Status |
| | | | S | M | A | R | T | |
| Indicator 3.2 Number of international agreements for enhancing trans-boundary cooperation between China, Nepal, Bhutan and India | 0 (a number of trans-boundary plans exists, but coordination is limited) | At least 3 trans-boundary agreements effective and collaborative implementation | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The project has achieved its end-term target of facilitating three regional or bilateral agreements to enhance inter-agency coordination and transboundary cooperation in combating wildlife crime. By bringing law enforcement agencies across landscapes and states onto a common platform, the project enabled effective communication, conducted meetings, and initiated dialogues to address wildlife crime. Inter-agency coordination committees were also formed. Efforts for transboundary cooperation with neighboring countries have drawn on international best practices, aiming to strengthen enforcement, raise awareness, and support swift prosecution in wildlife crime reduction. Achieved |
| Indicator 3.3 Annual Number of human-wildlife conflicts leading to livestock and crop losses and retaliatory killings of wildlife | Baseline will be developed in Year 1 | At least 50% decrease in HWCs | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The project successfully achieved a 50% reduction in Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) cases through a range of proactive and reactive mitigation measures. Key actions included creating a conflict database to identify hotspots, track trends, and assess damages by species, location, and causes. Measures also involved constructing 30 predator-proof corrals with community participation, installing Animal Intrusion Detection and Repellant Systems (ANIDERS), and training community members in their use. Additional initiatives included community-based livestock insurance, improved livestock husbandry, rotational grazing, conservation awareness programs, crop field fencing, alternative livelihoods, composite solar fencing, and partnerships between government and community-based organizations to ensure the sustainability of these efforts. Achieved |

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

There are three indicators established for the Outcome 4, as described below in Table below:

Table: Analysis of Outcome 4

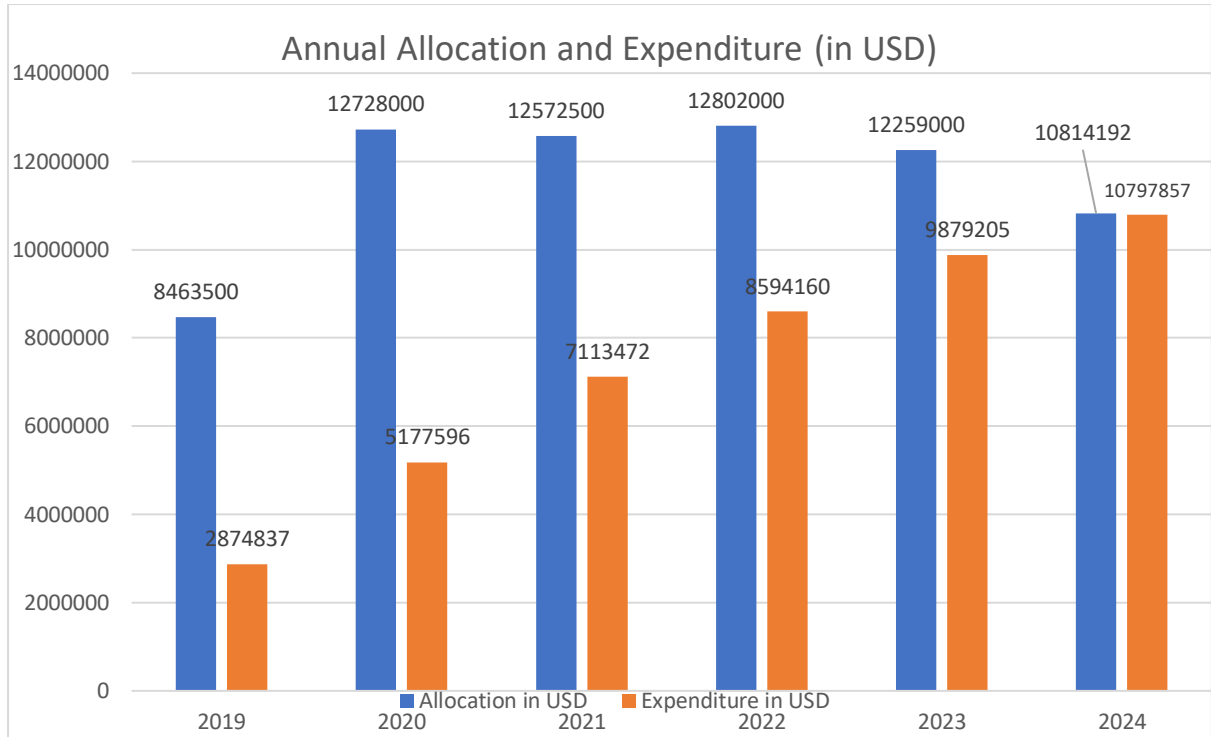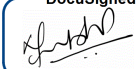| Progress towards achieving Outcomes 4 is rated as: Highly Satisfactory | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicator | Baseline | TE project target | TE SMART Analysis | | | | | Achievement Status |
| | | | S | M | A | R | T | |
| Indicator 4.1 Number of policy and regulatory mechanisms for improved management of high Himalayan areas provisioned | 0 (A few areas where policy reform is required exists) | 3 policy recommendations officially approved and implemented | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The target has been achieved. Four Policies/ Strategies have been approved by MoEF&CC and one by the State government and implemented. The details are presented in Annexure 5.12 (Outcome 4.1). Achieved |
| Indicator 4.2 Number of project best practices used in development and implementation of other conservation initiatives | 0 (A few best practice publications etc., but the project will make efforts for additional project specific lessons to be documented) | 10 best practices documented, disseminated and up-scaled in non-project areas | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The project has successfully documented and disseminated best practices at various International and national fora, many of which have been up scaled /replicated in other areas The details are presented in Annexure 5.12 (Outcome 4.2). Achieved |
| Indicator 4.3 Percentage of participating households aware of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits | Baseline to be established in Year 1 through microplanning process | 50% of participating households have good awareness of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The project successfully raised household awareness of conservation, sustainable resource management, and wildlife crime prevention across all states and UTs through targeted programs. The extensive work with stakeholders, publications, and videos presented in the desk review, along with overachievement on several targets, collectively affirm that this target is now SMART and fulfilled - though initially flagged as questionable in specificity and measurability during the MTR. Achieved |

**Annexure 21: Status of M&E at TE**

**Status of M&E at TE**

| GEF M&E requirements | Primary responsibility | Indicative costs to be charged to the Project Budget47 (US$) | | Time frame | Status at TE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **GEF grant** | **Co-financing** | | |
| **Inception Workshop** | UNDP Country Office | USD 15,000 | USD 30,000 | Within 3 months of project document signature | Achieved |
| **Inception Report** | Project Manager | None | None | Within three weeks of inception workshop | Achieved |
| **Standard UNDP monitoring and reporting requirements as outlined in the UNDP POPP** | UNDP Country Office | None | None | Quarterly, annually | Followed |
| **Monitoring of indicators in project results framework (Wildlife Institute of India)** | Project Manager | USD 240,000 | USD 60,000 | Annually | Achieved. |
| **GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR)** | Project Manager and UNDP Country Office and UNDP-GEF team | None | None | Annually | Achieved. Six reports made available timely. |
| **NIM Audit as per UNDP audit policies** | UNDP Country Office | Per year: USD 5,000 (35,000) | Per year: USD 10,000 (60,000) | Annually or other frequency as per UNDP Audit policies | Conducted as per plan |
| **Lessons learned and knowledge generation** | Project Manager | USD 60,000 | USD 40,000 | Annually | Generated timely along with each PIR |
| **Monitoring of environmental and social risks, and corresponding management plans as relevant** | Project Manager UNDP CO | None | On-going | **Monitoring of environmental and social risks, and corresponding management plans as relevant** | Achieved |
| **Address environmental and social grievances** | Project Manager UNDP Country Office BPPS as needed | None for time of project manager, and UNDP CO (already allocated) | Costs associated with missions, workshops, BPPS expertise etc. can be | **environmental and social grievances** | Achieved as noted in PIRs |

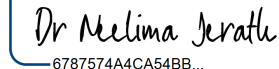| GEF M&E requirements | Primary responsibility | Indicative costs to be charged to the Project Budget47 (US$) | | Time frame | Status at TE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **GEF grant** | **Co-financing** | | |
| | | | charged to the project budget. | | |
| **Project Board meetings** | Project Board UNDP Country Office Project Manager | PER-YEAR USD 2,000 (12,000) | PER-YEAR USD 8,000 (48,000) | At minimum annually | Timely held |
| **Supervision missions** | UNDP Country Office | None**48** | Annually | **Supervision missions** | Conducted as per AWP |
| **Oversight missions** | UNDP-GEF team | None48 | Troubleshooting as needed | **Oversight missions** | Assurance visits made |
| **Knowledge management as outlined in Outcome 4** | Project Manager | None49 | On-going | **Knowledge management as outlined in Outcome 4** | Achieved |
| **GEF Secretariat learning missions/site visits** | UNDP Country Office and Project Manager and UNDP-GEF team | None | To be determined. | **GEF Secretariat learning missions/site visits** | Conducted as noted in some of the PIRs |
| **Mid-term GEF Tracking Tool to be updated by (Wildlife Institute of India)** | Project Manager | Cost covered above under Monitoring of indicators in project results framework | Before mid-term review mission takes place. | **Mid-term GEF Tracking Tool to be updated by (Wildlife Institute of India)** | Done |
| **Independent Terminal Evaluation (TE) included in UNDP evaluation plan, and management response** | UNDP Country Office and Project team and UNDP-GEF team | USD 40,000 | USD 50,000 | At least three months before operational closure | Conducted |

**Annexure 22: Annual Allocation and Expenditure**

## Annual Allocation and Expenditure (in USD)



| Year | Allocation in USD | Expenditure in USD |
|------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 2019 | 8463500 | 2874837 |
| 2020 | 12728000 | 5177596 |
| 2021 | 12572500 | 7113472 |
| 2022 | 12802000 | 8594160 |
| 2023 | 12259000 | 9879205 |
| 2024 | 10814192 | 10797857 |

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Dr. Atul Kumar Gupta

29-Nov-2024

Signed by:

Dr Neelima Jerath

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Dr Neelima Jerath

28-Nov-2024

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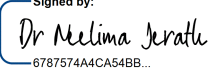| | | |
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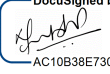| Signer Events | Signature | Timestamp |
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