

Management response template

UNDP management response template

[Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agricultural Landscape and Community Livelihoods] Date: February 2021

Prepared by: Tshering Penjor

Position: Project Technical Specialist
Unit/Bureau: Environment and Livelihood

Cleared by: Chimi Rinzin

Position: Portfolio Manager,
Environment and Livelihood

Input into and update in ERC: Ugyen Dorji

Position: RBM Specialist
Unit/Bureau: Assurance

Cleared by: Azusa Kubota/Juergen Nagler

Position: RR/DRR
Unit/Bureau: Environment and Livelihood

Key Recommendations

Evaluation recommendation 1.

Revised the existing Result Framework based on the new GEF – 7 indicators and the project local context.

The MTR team recommends to the project management team to revise the indicators in the existing RF to align with the GEF 7 core indicators. To fulfil this requirement:

- a. The project should include core indicators related to management effectiveness of protected areas (GEF core indicator 1.2) and carbon sequestration (from PAs, BCs, SFM, SLM and improved grassland) (GEF core indicator 6.1).
- b. Based on the review project current context, changes in GEF policy on Tracking Tools and their reporting requirements, the MTR team recommends removing the following two indicators from the existing result framework.
 - Existing indicator number 3 (increased status of all indicators in the GEF Climate Change Adaptation Tracking Tool): Key aspects of CCA TT are already covered in the core indicator and the project requires completing TT so this could be taken out from the existing RF. The project however can take it for internal assessment if useful.
 - Existing indicator number 6 (financing gap for sustainable management of the protected area and biological corridor system closed as indicated by improvement in GEF BD-1 Financial Sustainability Scorecard): The Project does not have direct intervention to support sustainable financing. It is also noted that the income from PAs are very less and commercial activities within PAs are being restricted leaving little room for adequate resource mobilization. The MTR team noted, BFL is working in same objective to which the project is collaborating. In addition, this is one component of TTs, which no longer requires reporting to GEF. Hence, this indicator can also be taken out from the existing RF.

Responsibility: Jointly by GNHC, the PB, UNDP and GEF

Duration: Within three months.

Management response: In close consultation with the Regional Technical Advisor, UNDP Bangkok, transition to GEF-7 core indicator was discussed and the following GEF-7 core indicator and sub-indicators were selected for reporting through this project.

Core Indicator 1: Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use.

Sub-indicator 1.2 Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness

Core Indicator 4: Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas).

Sub-indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity

Core Indicator 6: Carbon sequestered, or emissions avoided in the AFOLU sector.

Sub-indicator 6.1 Carbon sequestered, or emission avoided in the AFOLU sector

Indicator 11. Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF.

Since both sub-indicator 1.2 and 6.1 is fully aligned to this project, the project will accordingly report against these two indicators. Irrelevant indicators will be removed. Further, the Department of Forest and Park Services is rolling out Bhutan METT (Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool), which aligns with sub-indicator 1.2

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
a. Transition to GEF-7 core indicators	21 st December, 2020	UNDP CO	Transition to GEF-7 core indicator completed and first reporting was annexed with MTR report	Completed
b. Review of Project Results Framework and removal of irrelevant indicators	30 th June 2021	UNDP & PMU, GNHC	Discussion with PMU initiated during MTR and further discussion will be initiated to finalize the Results Framework	Initiated

Evaluation recommendation 2. **Strategizing the operationalization of Integrated Landscape Management (ILM).**

As the primary focus of the project is to operationalize the ILM approach through the strengthening of biological corridors, sustainable forest and agricultural systems, and build climate resilience of community livelihoods, it will be vital that GNHC and the project reinforce and build a strong knowledge base and document field lessons/experiences. It is expected that a need for a strong knowledge base will grow to trigger policy formulation to support the operationalization of ILM.

To move from the existing 'silo' approach of management towards a truly integrated management of landscapes, the following specific activities should be initiated:

- a. The project should provide additional conceptual clarity on various integrated landscape models and approaches and possible working approaches and modalities on ILM in Bhutan. This can be done through a joint workshop between the IP, RPs, UNDP and other important stakeholders. Based on the ongoing learning (for example integration of irrigation for drinking water and

agriculture along with watershed management), the project should identify and share other possible tools, techniques and approaches to facilitate easy field implementation.

- b. The project should work towards reactivating MRGs at the national level and develop clear roles and responsibilities for RPs to strengthen collaborative actions during the project implementation. Central level MRGs can provide strategic guidance to address the integrated approach for the already existing local level MRGs.
- c. Assessing the existing challenges and opportunities of ILM approach, the project should convene a multi-stakeholder dialogues to sensitize relevant (multi-sectoral) stakeholders and identify strategic actions that help operationalize ILM approach even after the completion of the project.
- d. The Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) Strategy is in a draft stage, but it does have rich content related to human-wildlife interactions, conflicts and solutions. Hence, wider consultations to include inputs of all the stakeholders in streamlining, synergizing and clarifying strategies, seeking investment opportunities and setting of context is crucial. As this is a 10-year strategy, sufficient time and discussion should be allocated for its preparation.

Responsibility: Jointly by GNHC, the PB and UNDP

Duration: Within three months.

Management response: The recommendation is duly noted. At the project level, integration is happening through bringing all project implementers together during quarterly review and AWP planning workshops. In an attempt to build synergies with other projects within the landscape, PMU staff are being invited to be part of review and AWP planning workshops to share lesson and collaborate. This project works closely with the Bhutan for Life (BFL) initiative in conservation front and RGoB GCF funded project title, 'Supporting Climate Resilience and Transformational Change in the Agriculture Sector in Bhutan.'

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
a. Provide conceptual clarity on Integrated Landscape Management Approaches	Continuous process	PMU	Awareness on ILM is continuous process and in every review meeting, IPs are being familiarized on basic concepts of ILM and integrate into AWP planning and budgeting.	Initiated
b. Revitalizing central Mainstreaming Reference Group (MRG)	31 st December 2021	PMU, GNHC together with DLG, MoHCA	Discussions were initiated with DLG and further discussion is required.	Further discussion to be initiated
c. Multi-stakeholder dialogue to sensitize on ILM	Within the project duration (October 2023).	PMU	As part of knowledge management initiative, write shops and multi-stakeholder dialogues will be organized covering ILM concepts.	Not initiated

			The first write-shop will be convened in the second quarter of 2021.	
d. Conduct wider consultation with relevant partners towards a comprehensive HWC strategy	30 th June 2021	NCD, DoFPS, NPPC, DOA and PMU	First round of discussion was held on 3 rd December 2020 coordinated by PMU and attended by NCD, NPPC and UNDP.	Initiated

Evaluation recommendation 3. Further strengthening the collaborative work with relevant stakeholders

To capitalize on the leadership role of the GNHC and results achieved so far and to take advantage of the momentum generated by the project, the project should further strengthen collaboration with other organizations to address financing gaps for the PAs and BCs. For this,

- a. The project should formalize and institutionalize on-going working modalities with BFL and expand the partnership with other stakeholder where possible.
- b. Further strengthening of the Technical Advisory Coordination Committee (TACC) can improve the collaborative work culture within the project. For this, the project should revisit the current number of representations and maybe reduce it to not more than 10 members with each member assigned clear roles and responsibilities. Making it mandatory for them to hold two meetings per year is also recommended.

Responsibility: Jointly by GNHC, PB and UNDP

Duration: At the earliest.

Management response: The recommendation is duly noted. The project works closely with the Bhutan for Life (BFL) initiated as strategic partner and contributes to achieving their significant milestones. Where relevant and necessary, the project will continue to collaborate with BFL in meeting the goals of financing gaps for Pas and BCs.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
Formalize the engagement of BFL Project Coordination Unit, and other relevant projects such as the GCF in joint planning and review.	NA	NA	BFL is designed to address financing gaps for the Pas and BCs and as such, not further action is required for now.	Initiated
Revisit TACC membership	Continuous process	PMU	TACC membership if flexible and there is provision to invite relevant technical members on need basis.	Completed. TACC membership also includes representative from CSOs, local

				government and other technical agencies.
--	--	--	--	--

Evaluation recommendation 4. M&E, knowledge management and learning

For effective project delivery, outreach and influence:

- a. The project should review its current M&E plan, including data collection and management systems, and enhancing it by making it more comprehensive and result-oriented so that it provides better opportunities for periodic assessment of project implementation and performance of activities, and evaluation of their results in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Although, disaggregated data on women are being collected at the representation level (e. g, number of women attending the training or meeting), improvement could be made by focusing on collecting disaggregated data of women (such as intermediate results on women's access to and control over resources) and other socially & environmentally deprived community members.
- b. Although, the knowledge management aspects of the project are shared between UNDP and the PMU, assigning a dedicated communications person would add value to the documentation of best practices/lessons and dissemination to policy makers and wider audiences. It is expected that a communications person would also be able to fully dedicate his/her time on developing information, communication and education materials that would eventually contribute to operationalizing the ILM, not undermining current practices.

Responsibility: Jointly by GNHC, PB and UNDP

Duration: At the earliest

Management response: Recommendation is dully noted and useful for the project. Outcome 4 of the project requires the project to ensure continuous and effective monitoring and capture best practices and lessons from the implementation of the project.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
Review and revise project M&E Plan including data collection and management system.	30 th June 2021	PMU and UNDP	Initiated	
Dedicated Communications Personnel for the project for effective project communication and knowledge management.	31 st December, 2021	PMU and UNDP	Initiated	

Evaluation recommendation 5. Preparing a practical sustainability plan or exit-strategy

A more strategic and achievable sustainability plan or exit strategy should be prepared by the project in close coordination with stakeholders to ensure that benefits from the smooth project continue even after completion

of the project. The plan should also include expected roles for government stakeholders and be agreed upon by major stakeholders.

Responsibility: Jointly by GNHC, PB and UNDP

Duration: At least one year before project completion

Management response: Agree with the recommendation. While the project formulation and implementation is already integrated with the government systems, more strategic and sustainable plan for targeted project interventions will be useful.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
Preparation of a practical and sustainable plan or exit-strategy	Prior to Terminal Evaluation	PMU/UNDP	Strategy will be developed in close consultation with the IPs	