



2021 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BES	Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
BES-Net	Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network
BMU	German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
COVID-19	2019 Novel Coronavirus
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GC-RED	Global Policy Centre on Resilient Ecosystems and Desertification
IKI	International Climate Initiative
ILK	Indigenous and Local Knowledge
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPLCs	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
MEB	Multiple Evidence Base
NEA	National Ecosystems Assessment
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre

I. INTRODUCTION

The Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net) is a capacity sharing “network of networks” that promotes dialogue among science, policy and practice communities for effective management of biodiversity and ecosystem services (BES), contributing to long-term human well-being and sustainable development. Hosted by the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) Global Policy Centre on Resilient Ecosystems and Desertification (GC-RED), the first phase of the BES-Net initiative (BES-Net I) has been implemented since 2016 and will be completed in June 2022. Building on the success of the first phase, the second phase of the BES-Net initiative (BES-Net II) commenced in 2020 with the financial support US\$ 21.6 million from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) through the International Climate Initiative (IKI). It continues to be hosted by GC-RED and runs up to 31 December 2028.

BES-Net II remains fully committed to supporting the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services’ (IPBES) Rolling Work Programme up to 2030. Inter alia, the initiative will complement the capacity building work of IPBES by undertaking its activities in close line with the Platform’s Capacity-building Rolling Plan. It draws from, and maintains, the proven practices under BES-Net I at national (e.g. national ecosystem assessments [NEAs]), regional (e.g. regional science-policy-practice dialogue support, or “Trialogues”) and global (e.g. online BES communication platform and networking support) levels. At the same time, the initiative extends its interventions to the new key priority areas based on the needs, interests and recommendations of the partners and stakeholders. They include, among others, the provision of technical and financial support for the uptake of the IPBES assessments and NEAs, and the improved engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) across the components. To this end, the three UN collaborating partners of IPBES, i.e. UNDP, the UN Environment Programme’s World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), jointly implement the initiative as a consortium in close coordination with the IPBES Secretariat and its respective units.¹

A new agreement with SwedBio for the implementation of the Support to BES-Net II (hereafter referred to as “the project”) was signed on 28 September 2021, with the financial support of SEK 2,300,000.00 between 1 July 2021 and 31 December 2024. The main objective of the project is to improve the multiple evidence base (MEB) of ongoing NEAs in Cambodia, Malawi and Thailand and regional understanding of transdisciplinary cooperation in safeguarding and restoring ecosystems (Please see Box 1 for the Tranche arrangements of the NEA countries). These efforts are expected to:

- Enhance the capacity of IPLCs within the target countries to apply their knowledge and participate in the BES related decision-making process; and
- Expand collaboration and interaction among scientists/knowledge holders, policymakers and practitioners on BES-related topics to promote MEB decision making.

Please note that the status and the progress of the overall BES-Net initiative, including this project, are reported to the Advisory Committee on a biannual basis, which consists of the project donors, IPBES and its UN collaborative partner organizations and other key partner institutions to solicit guidance on the short-term and long-term directions of the project. The Committee warmly welcomed the commencement of the project during the latest meeting on 10 December 2021.

¹ The UN Agency to UN Agency Contribution Agreement between UNDP and UNESCO was signed in April 2020 and the Responsible Party Agreement between UNDP and WCMC was amended in August 2020 to formalize the BES-Net II consortium arrangement.

In addition, in 2021, the project kick-off meeting and the annual review meeting were organized on 25 October and 6 December respectively, with the SwedBio focal person, Ms. Ashnapuri Hertz, and her team. The project greatly appreciates these opportunities as they enabled the team to have an in-depth, dedicated consultation on the latest progress of the project in both programmatic and financial deliveries, and other key points such as emerging issues, risks and opportunities, implementation capacity and cross-cutting issues.

This section (**Section I**) provides a synopsis of BES-Net II and SwedBio’s support to the project. Please see Table 1, which summarizes the status of the project outputs in 2021 vis-à-vis the targets outlined in the logical framework of the approved project proposal. Please see **Annex I** for the annual work plan for 2022.

Section II of this report presents the key activities carried out and achievements realized under these two project result areas within the period of July-December 2021. **Section III** outlines the overview of the activities undertaken to enhance donor visibility during the reporting period. **Section IV** provides the latest status of the project risk logs. The financial status of the project is outlined in **Section V**.

As outlined in the approved proposal, the project is implemented jointly by UNDP (as the administrative agent and a lead of stakeholder engagement and BES-Net Trialogue components) and UNESCO (leading the BES-Net ILK support). Please see **Annex II** in complement to this report for the details of the UNESCO-led activities and their results in 2021, covering both IKI-funded and SwedBio-funded components of BES-Net II.

Box 1. NEA Tranches

Depending on the starting dates of the assessments and the project framework under which the assessments are implemented, NEAs are divided into three Tranches as follows. The SwedBio support is directed to Tranche II (particularly Cambodia) and III (particularly Malawi and Thailand).

Tranche	NEA Countries	Start Year	Stages	Projects
I	Cameroon, Colombia, Ethiopia and Viet Nam	2017	Approval/Use of assessment findings	BES-Net I
II	Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia and Grenada	2019	Evaluation	NEA Initiative
III	Dominican Republic, Malawi and Thailand	2021	Scoping	BES-Net II

Table 1: Logical Framework for the SwedBio Support to BES-Net II (2021-2024) and Results in 2021

Objective 1: To improve the multiple evidence basis of NEAs and regional understanding of transdisciplinary cooperation in safeguarding and restoring ecosystems				
Outcome 1: Capacity of IPLC enhanced to apply their knowledge and participate in the BES related decision-making process				
Outcome Indicator 1.1: Percentage of IPLC beneficiaries with positive feedback on the project's contribution to their capacity building		Target: 70% (2024)*	Results: N/A	Comments: Achievement of the outcome indicator will be assessed in 2024
Outputs	Output Indicators	Target	Planned Activities	Actions undertaken/results achieved in 2021
1.1. Key IPLC partners identified and their BES related indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) applied to the NEA process	1.1.1. No. of community/local partner/network maps developed	3 (2022)	Organize workshops/interviews for participatory mapping or other geospatial processes	Results: 1 UNESCO guided the Malawi team to identify and map ILK holders to participate in 3 ILK sub-regional framing workshops held in December 2021. 43 ILK holders participated in the workshops and a roster of ILK potential contributors and experts was developed. UNDP supported in organizing a series of regional awareness-raising/training sessions on stakeholder engagement for both Tranche II and III countries.
	1.1.2. No. of community-based ILK research tools designed	3 (2022)	Work with the NEA teams and IPLCs to co-design and select locally suitable research tools and methods in compliance with the free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) principles.	Results: N/A (work in progress) UNESCO drafted tips for organizing ILK dialogue workshops and shared them with the Malawi team. Also, UNESCO supported and guided the Malawi team to develop an effective approach for organizing and facilitating ILK framing workshops under the framework of FPIC. The introductory session of the framing workshops was dedicated to the introduction and discussion of FPIC in the context of an NEA. After the session, the consent form was shared with the knowledge holders to consent/approve their participation and the usage of shared knowledge in the NEA scoping report.
	1.1.3. No. of community-based ILK research results produced and applied in the NEA scoping proc	3 (2024)	In collaboration with the NEA teams and IPLCs co-design, co-implement and co-analyze community-based ILK research and document the results.	Results: N/A (work in progress) UNESCO supported the Malawi team to conduct three ILK sub-regional framing workshops. 43 ILK holders and 14 NEA team members and authors participated. The workshops introduced the assessment to local communities and helped co-identify pertinent ILK issues/research questions to be addressed by the assessment.
1.2. Key IPLC partners empowered to conduct community-led research	1.2.1. No. of IPLCs trained on suitable data collection methods i.e. 3D modelling, walking workshops, MEB	3 (2024)*	In partnership with the NEA teams, organize training sessions for IPLCs on selected data collection methods and tools which might include the MEB approach, three-dimensional	Results: N/A (work in progress) In the third quarter (Q3), the ILK workshop was organized to introduce methods and approaches of working with ILK in the scoping stage (Tranche III) and the evaluation stage (Tranche II). 23 NEA country teams and authors from Tranche II and III participated. The stakeholder workshop was also held in Q3, which was attended by 22

	approach		modelling, walking workshops, etc.	people from the NEA tranche II and III countries. In Q4, in collaboration with SwedBio, the MEB webinar was organized. 27 NEA country team members and authors participated from Tranche II countries, including 5 NEA members and authors from Cambodia. UNESCO also trained and guided the Malawi NEA team on conducting ILK framing workshops.
	1.2.2. Feedback by IPLCs indicating a greater sense of empowerment from training to apply new tools	High positive feedback in each training (2023)*		Results: N/A (work in progress) Only one person responded to the ILK workshop's post-event survey, who rated the workshop five stars in terms of helping to increase understanding and approaches of working with IPLCs in the assessment process. As for the MEB webinar in collaboration with SwedBio, about 89% of the respondents indicated that the event very successfully or somewhat successfully increased their understanding of the application of the MEB approach in their NEA.
	1.2.3. No. of IPLCs and/or IPLC organizations actively engaged in community-led research	30 IPLCs and/or 2 IPLC organizations per research activity (2024)	Promote participation of IPLCs and IPLC organizations in community-led research initiatives.	Results: N/A (work in progress) 43 ILK holders participated in the ILK framing workshops organized in Malawi in December 2021.
1.3. Relevant ILK recognized and applied to different sections of NEA	1.3.1. No. of technical sessions held in the NEA team meetings to incorporate ILK component in the various sections of the assessment where ILK is applied	18 (2024)	Provide technical support to, and maintain constant communication with the NEA teams to ensure ILK components are fairly incorporated.	Results: 7 UNESCO held 5 ILK technical sessions with the Malawi team and 2 ILK technical meetings with the Thailand team. The meeting with the Cambodia team is planned for 2022.
	1.3.2. NEA country team empowered to engage IPLCs and work with ILK	All BES-Net II NEA entities assess ILK technical support as empowering (2023-2024)	Provide technical support and training to NEA country partners to effectively work with ILK in NEA.	Results: N/A (work in progress) UNESCO organized ILK technical meetings with the Malawi and Thailand team to coach and empower the NEA team and authors to effectively plan for ILK inclusion in the scoping process.
	1.3.3 ILK incorporated into the assessment report	Reasonable amount of pertinent ILK, generated by IPLCs during this process adequately reflected in the NEA (2024)		Results: N/A (work in progress) The framing workshops in Malawi identified ILK research questions to be addressed by the assessment. The ILK research questions will feed into the overall assessment policy questions.

Outcome Indicator 1.2: Willingness among IPLCs to participate in NEA and share their ILK			Target: High willingness (2024)*	Results: N/A	Comments: Achievement of the outcome indicator will be assessed in 2024
1.4 IPLCs-NEA country team relationship enhanced	1.4.1. IPLC's willingness to participate in NEA and share ILK	75% of IPLC partners starting the NEA process remain engaged through to completion (2024)	Provide technical support to NEA country teams to enhance their relationship with IPLCs and build trust.	Results: N/A (work in progress) During the ILK technical meetings, UNESCO coached the NEA country teams (Malawi and Thailand) on building trusting relationships with IPLCs. Furthermore, assisted the NEA country partners to see the value and contributions of ILK in the NEA.	
Outcome 2: Collaboration and interaction among scientists/ knowledge holders, policymakers and practitioners expanded on BES-related topics to promote MEB decision making					
Outcome Indicator 2.1: Percentage of policy, science and practice sector project beneficiaries with positive feedback on the multi-sectoral interaction and contribution to MEB decision-making			Target: 70% (2024)*	Results: N/A	Comments: Achievement of the outcome indicator will be assessed in 2024
Outputs	Output Indicators	Targets	Activities	Achievements in January-December 2020	
2.1. Guiding frameworks for science-policy-practice dialogue and collaborative actions developed/refined, implemented and experiences shared	2.1.1.No. of science-policy-practice dialogue guiding framework documents developed/refined	3 (2023)	Design/refine tailored conceptual frameworks for science-policy-practice dialogue in a participatory manner in response to the unique socio-cultural contexts of the target countries.	Results: 2 Both UNESCO and UNDP contributed to the development of the NEA guidance resources at the scoping stage including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Guide on why engage with IPLCs in NEAs ✓ Practical guidelines for working with ILK in NEAs ✓ Guide on stakeholder engagement and the Trialogues (to be released in 2022) UNDP has also been supporting the development of the NEA stakeholder engagement toolkit	
	2.1.2. No. of dialogue workshops organized	6 (2024)	Organize dialogue workshops between: i) IPLCs and scientists; and ii) IPLCs, scientists, policymakers and practitioners at the national level.	Results: N/A No action was undertaken. Trialogues are scheduled to be implemented from 2022 onward.	
	2.1.3. No. of publicity resources developed on the science-policy-practice dialogue experiences and lessons	6 (2024)	Circulate widely publicly available information on science-policy-practice dialogue experience and lessons through the BES-Net web portal, newsletter, social media, etc.	Results: N/A (work in progress) UNDP developed a promotional video on the Trialogue approach, which is set to be launched in Q1 2022. In addition, the BES-Net website was revamped with a dedicated ILK page. UNESCO promoted each of the ILK framing workshops on all BES-Net social media platforms in Facebook , LinkedIn and Twitter .	

2.2. Representation of IPLCs in policy/scientific dialogues improved	2.2.1. Quality of IPLC representation and diversity in organized forums	Inclusive and diverse participation of IPLCs (including gender, nationality and livelihoods) (2024)	Undertake quality control on IPLC representation and diversity in organized forums	Results: On track NEA country teams are encouraged to mainstream the gender aspect in ILK-related activities. In the Practical Guidelines for working with ILK in NEAs, inclusive and diverse participation across gender and age is highlighted as one of the key principles in the IPLC engagement. During the ILK workshop and MEB webinar, female NEA members and authors accounted for 39% and 56% of the participants, respectively. Female knowledge holders accounted only for 12% of the total participants in ILK framing workshops organized in Malawi. The Malawi team plans to organize future events in IPLC territories to encourage the participation of elders and women.
	2.2.2. No. of IPLC targeted forum organized	3 (2024)	Organize IPLC targeted forum to raise awareness on BES-Net, NEA and contributions IPLC can make to the process	Results: N/A (work in progress) UNESCO published a series of articles on the BES-Net website, leveraging on international days to promote awareness on the role of IPLCs and ILK in biodiversity conservation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ International Day of the World's Indigenous People ✓ International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction ✓ International Mountain Day UNDP featured the African Biodiversity Network (ABN) as the September BES-Net Partner of the month and published an article to highlight how ABN is working with IPLCs to revive ILK to promote conservation of natural resources and indigenous food systems.
	2.2.3. Percentage of IPLC champion(s) identified from the total number of IPLCs engaged in NEA	10 (2024)*	Identify an IPLC focal person(s)/champion(s) in each country to mobilize IPLC participation in NEA process and policy dialogues	Results: N/A (work in progress) UNESCO supported the Tranche III countries to establish an ILK platform to champion ILK inclusion in the NEA. Malawi and Thailand have established ILK working groups. In Thailand for instance, Dr. Arunotai Narumon, a renowned ILK specialist, is part of the NEA team. She is leading the ILK component of the assessment.
	2.2.4. No. of success story/lessons sharing forums organized	1 (2024)	Organize forums for sharing success stories and lessons on IPLC engagement from the target countries	Results: N/A No action was undertaken

*These outcome/output indicators will be collected and analyzed in a gender/geography/sector desegregated

II. OVERALL PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

This section summarizes the results achieved throughout 2021 within the project's two inter-linked output areas to: 1) enhance the IPLC capacity to apply their knowledge and participate in the BES related decision-making process; and 2) expand science-policy-practice collaboration and interaction on BES-related topics to promote MEB decision making.

Output 1. Enhance the IPLC capacity to apply their knowledge and participate in the BES related decision-making process

ILK/Stakeholder Engagement Technical Advisory Support

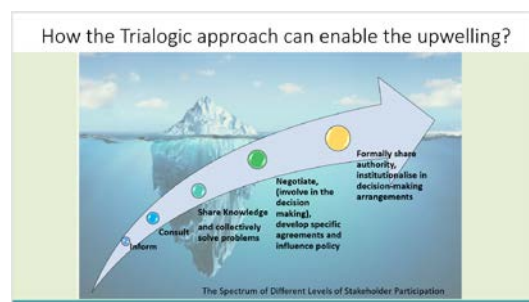
In 2021, the UNESCO team focused on building trust relationships with the NEA country teams and coaching them to appreciate the benefits, opportunities and approaches of working with different knowledge systems. This was primarily done through the ILK technical meetings. The ILK technical meetings were organized twice with the Thailand NEA team and five times with the Malawi team. As a result of this continuous coaching, coupled with the ILK capacity building events, the ILK working groups were established within the Thailand and Malawi country teams. In Q4 2021, UNESCO and the Thailand NEA team co-drafted a Thailand 2022 ILK workplan that outlined potential activities to be implemented in 2022. Meanwhile, the Malawi team organized a series of framing workshops in Q4 2021, as elaborated in the ILK dialogue workshop sub-section below. The first ILK technical meeting with the Cambodia NEA team is planned for early 2022.

Capacity Building

In the second half of 2021, three capacity building events were organized virtually in collaboration with UNEP-WCMC under the framework of the NEA Initiative, targeting the NEA Tranche II and III countries. These events shared the common objectives to enhance the awareness of the country teams on the importance of engaging IPLCs and broader stakeholders in the assessment process to showcase some of the key principles and approaches to be considered.

a) Stakeholder Engagement Workshop (Target: Tranche II & III)

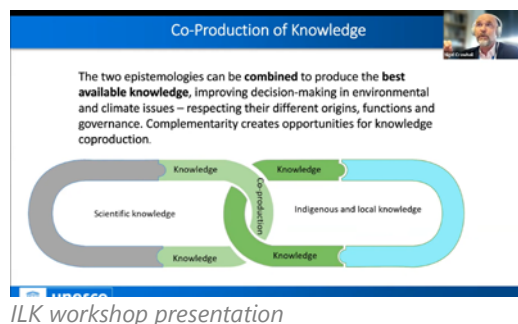
On 8 September, UNDP facilitated the organization of the stakeholder engagement workshop to introduce different methods and tools available to support the country teams to address observed barriers and challenges of keeping the key stakeholders across policy, science and practice sectors engaged throughout the assessment process. The event touched upon the engagement of IPLCs as an introduction to the subsequent ILK workshop. It also addressed the key thematic issues such as the gender balance in the stakeholder engagement process and the monitoring of the engagement. The workshop was divided into two sessions, with the first half tailored for Tranche III countries at the scoping stage and the second half tailored for Tranche II countries at the evaluation stage. The event was attended by a total of 33 participants, of whom 52% were female, encompassing the representatives from Tranche II and III countries (including the three project target countries) and the BES-Net consortium partners.



Stakeholder engagement workshop presentation

b) ILK Workshop (Target: Tranche II & III)

On 22 September 2021, UNESCO facilitated an ILK training workshop for Tranche II and III countries. The workshop was conducted in two sessions. The first session introduced approaches of working with ILK in the scoping stage, while the second session explored approaches and methods of mobilizing and braiding ILK in the evaluation stage of the assessment. Twenty-three NEA team members and authors participated from both Tranche II and III countries, of which 39% were female. The workshop was delivered by a team of five speakers/facilitators from UNESCO, supported by country focal points from UNEP-WCMC. The UNDP team also joined the workshop as observers as the topic of the workshop relates closely to the broader stakeholder engagement issue.



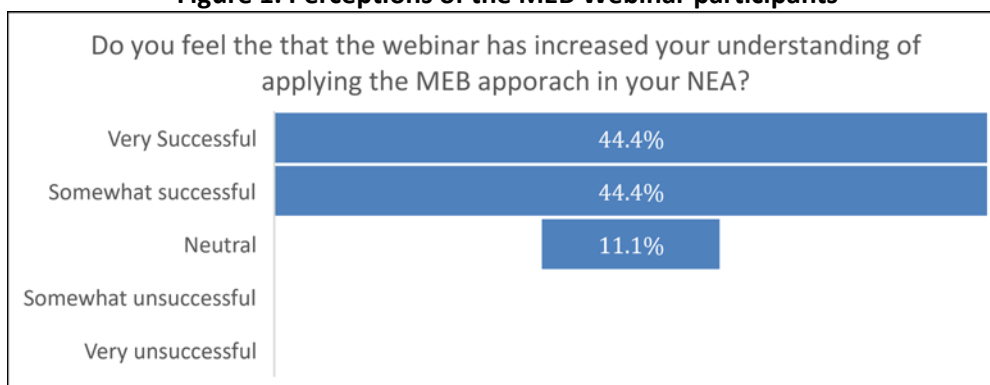
c) MEB Webinar (Target: Tranche II)

On 15 November 2021, UNESCO, in partnership with SwedBio, led an MEB webinar for Tranche II countries. The webinar explored the benefits and potential applications of the MEB approach in the NEA process. Twenty-seven NEA country team members and authors participated, 56% of whom were female. Although the event was tailored for Tranche II countries, Tranche III countries were invited as observers. About 81% of the country participants were from Tranche II countries and the rest were from Tranche III, Tranche I and BES-Net Trialogue countries. Cambodia (Tranche II) had five participants, while Malawi and Thailand (Tranche III) had one representative each. The webinar was delivered by three speakers, two from SwedBio and one from UNESCO. The workshop was also attended by eight members from UNEP-WCMC, five from UNESCO, two from UNDP, and two observers from SwedBio.



About 89% of the country respondents cited the MEB webinar as either very or somewhat successful in increasing their understanding of the application of the MEB approach in their NEA (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Perceptions of the MEB Webinar participants



ILK Dialogue Workshops

In Q4 2021, the Malawi NEA team organized three ILK sub-regional framing workshops covering all the three administrative regions, Northern, Central and Southern. Prior to the framing workshops, the

team conducted a series of NEA awareness meetings with the district officials in the eight target districts to lobby for their support in the implementation of the NEAs and identify potential knowledge holders. The district officials assisted in mobilizing identified participants. In total, 43 knowledge holders from the eight target districts participated in all three framing workshops (Table 2). Only 12% of the knowledge holders were women. The team plans to organize future events in IPLC territories to encourage the participation of elders and women. Also, 14 NEA team members and authors attended the workshops.

In the introductory session of the workshops, the FPIC principle was discussed, and participants were issued a consent form to assent their participation before the actual workshop commenced. The workshops introduced NEA to the knowledge holders and discussed ILK pertinent issues to be addressed by the assessment. Some of the ILK issues that emerged include erosion of ILK, successful case studies in the application of ILK particularly in the Northern Region, the need to mainstream ILK into BES policies, and the connection between culture, beliefs and ILK. Based on the comments and input, the team identified ILK research questions that should be addressed by the assessment.

Table 2. Sampled districts for ILK framing workshops

Region	No.	District	Dominant Ecosystems	No. of Participants
Northern Region	1	Rumphi	Nyika National Park (Terrestrial ecosystem)	7
	2	Nkhata Bay	Lake Malawi (Aquatic, terrestrial & wetland ecosystems)	7
	3	Mzimba	Vwaza (Marsh-wetland ecosystems)	8
	Total			22
Central Region	4	Salima	Lake Malawi (Aquatic and wetland ecosystems)	7
	5	Lilongwe	Dzalanyama (Terrestrial ecosystem)	7
	Total			14
Southern Region	6	Zomba	Lake Chilwa (Wetland ecosystem)	7
	7	Mulanje	Mulanje Mountain (Terrestrial ecosystem)	7
	8	Nsanje	Elephant Marsh (Wetland ecosystem)	7
	Total			21
Grand Total				43

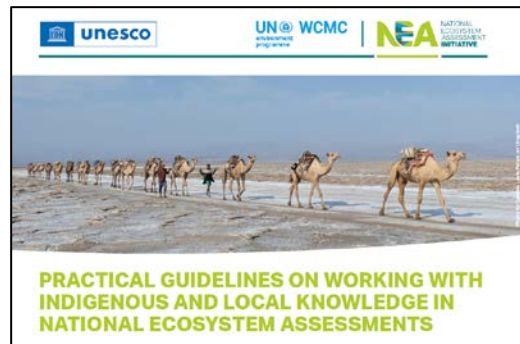
Output 2. Expand science-policy-practice collaboration and interaction on BES-related topics to promote MEB decision making

Establishing ILK Working Platforms

The UNESCO team coached Tranche III countries, which are in the scoping process, on how to develop ILK platforms to ensure the successful engagement of IPLCs and ILK holders throughout the assessment. As a result of continuous guidance and support, Malawi and Thailand established ILK working groups. In Malawi, the ILK working group will work closely with ecosystem-based working groups, supporting their activities across terrestrial, aquatic and wetland ecosystems. On the other hand, the Thailand NEA team nominated Dr. Arunotai Narumon, a distinguished ILK specialist, to lead the ILK component. She has previously partnered with UNESCO in conducting ILK research in Thailand.

Creation of the Stakeholder/IPLCs Dialogue Guiding Framework

UNESCO developed two ILK material guides, “*Why Engage with IPLCs in NEAs*” and “*Practical Guidelines on Working with ILK in NEAs*”. The former highlights the importance and advantages of engaging IPLCs in NEAs, while the latter provides practical steps on how ILK can be incorporated throughout the assessment process. The SwedBio colleagues, Maria Tengo and Pernilla Malmer, experts of the MEB approach, reviewed the Practical Guide. With the support from UNEP-WCMC, the two ILK guides were translated into French and Spanish. UNESCO reviewed the translated versions to ensure they are consistent with ILK technical terms based on the IPBES terminologies. The two material guides are envisioned to be launched in Q1 2022. UNESCO also drafted the ILK Methods guide. The guide is still under development and it is expected to be ready in Q2 2022.



Draft design of the guidelines (Forthcoming)

In the meantime, UNDP has been drafting guidance on the Trialogue approach. It highlights how the facilitated dialogue among science-policy-practice sectors, including ILK holders, through the Trialogues helps foster synergies across diverse knowledge systems and increase the flow of information in multiple directions, addressing often invisible socio-political patterns and structures surrounding the stakeholders. Drawing from the experiences with the NEA Tranche I countries, the guidance illustrates the strategic moments, where the methodology can be applied across the scoping, evaluation and approval stages of the assessments. The guidance is currently under review and is expected to be published in early 2022. In parallel to the guidance development, UNDP also contributed to the development of the NEA stakeholder engagement toolkit, which is led by UNEP-WCMC.

Enhancement of ILK Awareness and Visibility on the BES-Net’s Online Platforms

BES-Net is committed to increasing awareness of the contributions of ILK and IPLCs to BES conservation. As part of the project rebranding, an upgraded [BES-Net website](#) was launched in December 2021, with a new content management system, enhanced page design/visuals and revamped content to better reflect the strengthened partnership within the consortium and the broadened project scope of BES-Net’s work. The new website prioritizes a clean and cohesive look, easy navigation, more interactive content and adequate representation of the consortium partners. This includes dedicated pages for ILK, the NEA process and country-specific achievements.



Online campaign of the new BES-Net website

The BES-Net global ILK working group led by UNESCO has leveraged international celebrations to create awareness of the role of IPLCs and ILK in BES management. In the second half of 2021, the team published a series of inspirational thematic articles on the BES-Net website and/or bi-monthly newsletters, which were also disseminated widely through the project’s social media channels:

- [A new social contract to combat marginalization of ILK systems](#) on International Day of World’s Indigenous Peoples;
- [The contribution of IPLCs to the disaster risk reduction initiatives](#) on International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction;

- [The role of indigenous and local mountain communities to ensure healthy mountain ecosystems](#) on International Mountain Day.

As an integral part of the renewed communication and stakeholder engagement strategies under BES-Net II, the “Partner of the Month” initiative was launched in 2021. This article series features the activities, achievements and latest updates of one among more than 100 BES-Net partners each month. The African Biodiversity Network was selected as the Partner of the Month for September 2021, and an interview-based article “[Reviving seeds for thriving communities: The importance of ILK systems to preserve biodiversity in Africa](#)” was published through the BES-Net newsletter and website, featuring the network’s role in ILK restoration.

Several BES-Net ILK activities were prominently highlighted on the BES-Net communication platforms, such as the ILK workshop organized in September 2021. In addition, a social media campaign was conducted to highlight the sub-regional ILK framing workshops organized in December 2021 in Malawi through various channels ([Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#)).

III. DONOR VISIBILITY ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

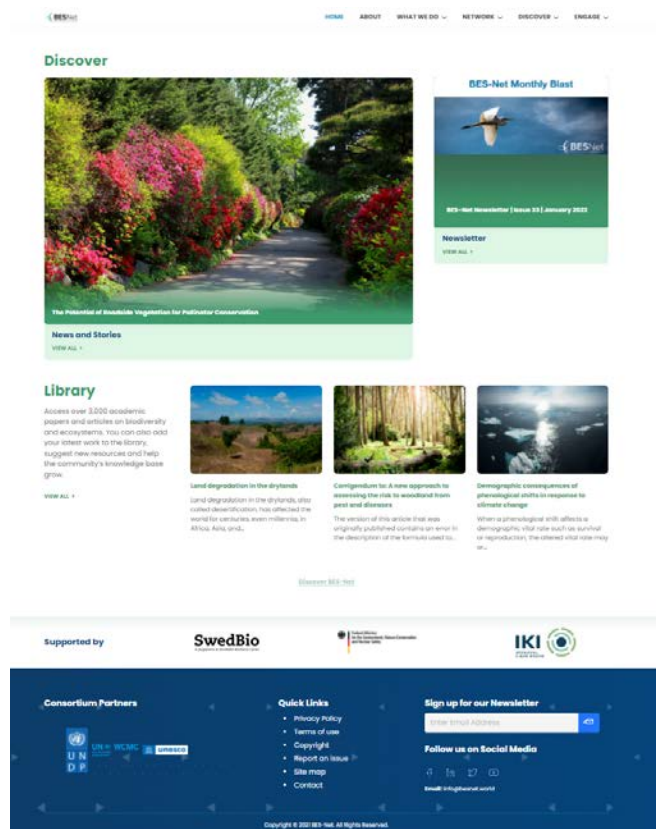
Donor visibility is deemed the highest priority throughout the lifespan of the project. As per the renewed Communications and Knowledge Management Strategy for BES-Net II, an updated BES-Net visibility guideline was developed (**Annex III**) to ensure that the project activities at the global, regional and national levels strictly adhere to donor visibility requirements. It helps the Consortium partners and the national implementation partners to apply a consistent and uniform approach to the project’s public communication activities, both online and offline, at different levels.

Upon the signing of the agreement between SwedBio and UNDP, a [web article](#) was published on the BES-Net website to formally announce the project. SwedBio’s support to BES-Net II was stipulated in all the relevant project publicly resources through texts and logos. Acknowledgement to the SwedBio support has also been made verbally in all the BES-Net related speeches and presentations and in writing in the project documents, including those submitted formally to IPBES (e.g. [IPBES8 Information Document](#)). SwedBio support will also be reflected on a series of the NEA scoping stage guidance resources, which are currently undergoing the final graphic design. Once the graphic design is finalized, the materials will be shared with SwedBio.

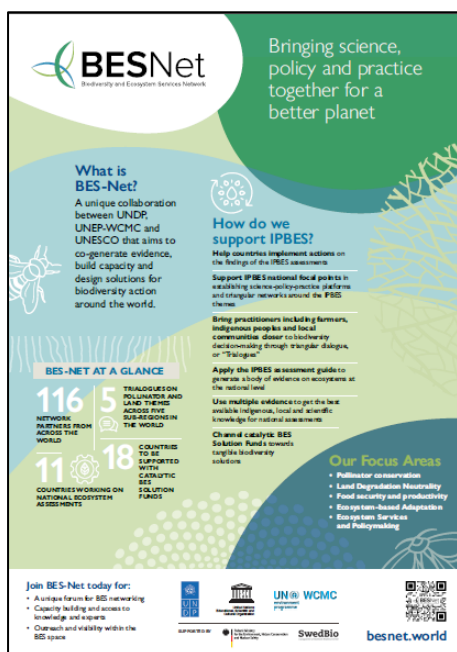
BES-Net Presentation Template



Revamped BES-Net Web Portal



BES-Net Poster at IPBES-8



IV. PROJECT RISK LOG

Table 3: SwedBio Support to BES-Net II Project Risk Log as of 31 December 2021

No.	Risk Event	Impact ² / Likelihood ³	Risk Identified in	Risk Minimization Strategy	2021 Report Period Update	
					Status ⁴	Note
1	Political, economic and social instability in the target countries	High/ Moderate likely	31-May-21	Undertake the national situation analyses and monitor the changes regularly; Liaise closely with the national assessment teams in the respective countries to obtain the latest country information and develop contingency plans, as needed.	No change to risk score	Prevention/mitigation measures continuously undertaken
2	Shifting political commitments and reduced political engagement due to competing priorities, both short-term (e.g. disasters) and long-term (e.g. change in administration)	High/ Low likely	31-May-21	Establish the national policy-science-practice BES platforms to build the sense of joint ownership of the NEA process; Maintain close and regular communication with the political counterparts and other key beneficiaries throughout the project lifespan to gain their buy-in based on the project's communication and partnership/stakeholder engagement strategies; Integrate the national activities into broader medium-term UN Development Assistance Frameworks and UNDP Country Programmes in the target countries	No change to risk score	Prevention/mitigation measures continuously undertaken
3	Insufficient/limited resources available to respond to emerging needs, interfering with the continuity of the BES-Net activities	Moderate/ Low likely	31-May-21	Align the implementation of the SwedBio-funded and IKI-funded project components effectively to maximize the project's reach and impacts; Develop and implement the exit strategy to ensure sustainability; Identify and pursue resource mobilization opportunities	No change to risk score	Prevention/mitigation measures continuously undertaken
4	High turnover of key project counterparts/focal points at national levels leading to knowledge and capacity loss and	Moderate/ High likely	31-May-21	Institutionalize the national level activities, their outputs/outcomes deliveries and knowledge management efforts to ensure the smooth and timely transition of key duties and responsibilities, in case of personnel turn over, and minimize the	No change to risk score	Prevention/mitigation measures continuously undertaken

² Impact scales: Limited, low, moderate, high or extreme

³ Likelihood scales: Not likely, low likely, moderate likely, high likely, expected

⁴ Status scales: New risk/Not assessed, No change to risk score, Eliminated, Risk score decreased, Risk score increased, Risk triggered - Contingency work in progress

	disrupting project progress/changing the direction of activities			gap in the project implementation process; Undertake the capacity needs assessment for the target countries and monitor the changes regularly.		
5	Unavailability of key project personnel or postponement of pivotal project activities (i.e. events and those requiring travels) due to worldwide spread of Coronavirus. For instance, a travel mission to Malawi to support ILK framing workshops was cancelled due to the outbreak of the Omicron variant.	High/Expected	31-May-21	Review and update annual work plans regularly; flexibly reschedule project activities in close communication with partners and donors; Develop the methodologies for virtual and hybrid stakeholder engagement, dialogue facilitation, etc.	Risk score increased	The spread of the Omicron variant in Southern Africa led to the cancellation of the mission to Malawi to support framing workshops to be held in December 2021. Prevention/mitigation measures continuously undertaken with close online/virtual support
6	Slow financial delivery due to: (a) slow formation of ILK working group/lead authors; and (b) substantial time was required to build trust relationships with NEA country partners and coach them on how to work with ILK in NEA before commission ILK activities	Moderate/Moderate likely	1-Dec-21	Regularly review and revise annual workplans and budget plans. For instance, in a recently approved budget amendment by SwedBio, the 2021 travel funds were reallocated to cover field activities; organize meetings with NEA country partners to build relationships and trust and showcase the advantages and opportunities of working with ILK in NEA.	No change to risk score	Prevention/mitigation measures continuously undertaken
7	Limited facilities for IPLCs to participate in critical meetings and workshops virtually & need to adjust and redesign the IPLC-targeted physical activities in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic	High/Expected	31-Dec-21	Regularly review and adjust annual workplans to ensure flexibility in implementing the project. The overall NEA team is monitoring COVID-19 situations in target countries and adjusting plans accordingly.	New risk/Not assessed	N/A

V. FINANCIAL REPORT

Based on the Financing Agreement, UNDP received the first tranche of contribution in 2021 amounting US\$ 65,589.83, of which US\$ 2,600.47 was deducted as the UN levy contribution. Please note that there was an exchange loss of US\$ 71.89 in the actual budget in comparison to the original budget in the proposal.

Table 4 outlines the expenditures of the SwedBio contribution in 2021. Table 5 shows the fund status summary, a report of the overall funding position against the total contribution received for the project to date.

Table 4: Expenditure of SwedBio Contribution in 2021 (USD)

Expenditure Item	Planned Expenditure*	UNDP expenditures	UNESCO expenditures**	Actual Expenditure
Output 1.1 Key IPLC partners identified and their BES related ILK applied to the NEA process	21,000.00	7,521.52	18,000.00	25,521.52
Output 1.2 Key IPLC partners empowered to conduct community-led research	8,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00
Output 1.3 Relevant ILK recognized and applied to different sections of NEA	4,662.00	0	4,649.53	4,649.53
Output 1.4. IPLCs-NEA country team relationship enhanced	0	0	0	0
Output 2.1 Guiding frameworks for science-policy-practice dialogue and collaborative actions developed/refined, implemented and experiences shared	21,525.81	8,310.00	0	8,310.00
Output 2.2 Representation of IPLCs in policy/scientific dialogues improved	0	0	4,483.18	4,483.18
Project management, monitoring and oversight	3,600.00	0	3,600.00	3,600.00
Programmable Sub-Total	58,787.81	15,831.52	32,732.71	48,564.23
Support Cost***	4,273.46	1,266.52	2,291.29	3,557.81
Total	63,061.27	17,098.04	35,024.00	52,122.04

* Revision of the project budget from the original plan at the proposal stage was approved on 1 October 2021 through email by Ms. Ashanapuri Hertz.

** While an expenditure of USD 35,024 was incurred in Q4 2021, there was a delay in the posting of the actual project delivery reports. As a result, this expenditure will appear in Q1 2022 and will not be included in the 2021 certified financial report.

*** Support cost entails the General Management Cost (8%) for the UNDP budget and the Programme Support Cost (7%) for the UNESCO budget

Table 5: Fund Status Summary (USD)

Year	Contributions (A)	Expenditures in UNDP Books**	Actual Expenditures (B)**
2021	*62,989.36	17,098.04	52,122.04
2022	-	-	-
2023	-	-	-
2024	-	-	-
Total	62,989.36		52,122.04
Balance (A-B)			10,867.32

* UN Levy contribution equivalent to USD 2,600.47 is excluded.

** While an expenditure of USD 35,024 was incurred by UNESCO in Q4 2021, there was a delay in the posting of the actual project delivery reports. As a result, this expenditure does not appear in UNDP books.