

2019

Project Implementation Review (PIR)

**\*Sustainable land and forest management**

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# Basic Data

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| **Project Information** | |
| UNDP PIMS ID | 4416 |
| GEF ID | 5353 |
| Title | Mainstreaming Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Dry Mountain Landscapes |
| Country(ies) | Armenia, Armenia |
| UNDP-GEF Technical Team | Ecosystems and Biodiversity |
| Project Implementing Partner | Government |
| Joint Agencies | *(not set or not applicable)* |
| Project Type | Full Size |

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| **Project Description** |
| The project is designed to engineer a paradigm shift from unsustainable to sustainable forest management in NE Armenia. The target area contains 65% of ArmeniaÔÇÖs forest resources and provides essential ecosystem services including water provision (for urban use and food production), land slide control and carbon storage and sequestration. The forests also provide critical habitats for wildlife and hosts globally important biodiversity. Notwithstanding this significance, the areaÔÇÖs forests suffer from accelerating degradation, which is undermining ecosystem functions and derivative services. This degradation is largely attributed to the ongoing and historic deforestation and overexploitation of forest resources. The project will promote an integrated approach towards fostering sustainable forest management ÔÇô seeking to balance environmental management with development needs. Amongst other things, it will set-up a multi-sector planning platform to balance competing environmental, social and economic objectives in district development plans and associated investments. In doing so, it will reduce conflicting land-uses and improve the sustainability of forest management so as to maintain the flow of vital ecosystem services and sustain the livelihoods of local (and downstream) communities. The platform will be underpinned by a robust decision support system, monitoring framework so as to inform the planning process, and enforcement. Further, the project will demonstrate sustainable forest management practices ÔÇô testing new management measures, as needed to reduce environmental stressors. |

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| Other Partners | *(not set or not applicable)* |

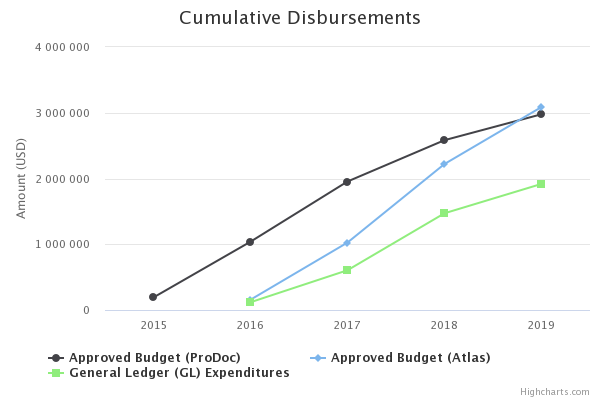
# Overall Ratings

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| Overall DO Rating | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Overall IP Rating | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Overall Risk Rating | Substantial |

# Development Progress

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| **Description** | | | | | | |
| **Objective**  **Sustainable land and**  **forest management in the Northeastern Armenia secures continued flow of ecosystem services** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| Number of forest management plans integrating considerations of biodiversity, ecosystem services, climate mitigation and community resource use (integrating sustainable forest management principles) | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 11    5 Community development plans updated | -Two (2) FMPs drafted for Ijevan and Noyemberyan forest enterprises with integrated considerations of biodiversity, ecosystem services, climate mitigation and community resource (integrating sustainable forest management principles) use; through a UNDP official letter shared with MoNP for circulation and feedback. The project expects to receive feedback from MoNP by the end of August or September, 2018. The relevant amendments to the drafted FMPs will be incorporated shortly and final FMPs will be submitted for approval by the end of 2018.    -One (1) FMP for Artsvaberd forest enterprise with integrated considerations of biodiversity, ecosystem services, climate mitigation and community resource (integrating sustainable forest management principles) use was not delivered by a contracted company due to changes in the company’s team. Thus, the contract was terminated and will be re-announced.    -Two (2) FMPs for Gugarq and Yeghegnut forest enterprises with integrated considerations of biodiversity, ecosystem services, climate mitigation and community resource (integrating sustainable forest management principles) use are being completed and will be officially delivered to MoNP for circulation and feedback by mid-August 2018.    -Thus 4 drafted FMPs are drafted and circulated for official approval process.  The number of FMPs at objective level might be changed from 11 to 10 due to certain circumstances (GIZ Armenia failed to prepare model FMP for 1 (namely Sevqar forest enterprise-FE) FE to facilitate the FMPs preparation process, despite prior agreement between GIZ, UNDP and “ArmForest” SNCO) and the fact that Government of Armenia (GoA) allocated own money for certain forest inventory and management planning activities UNDP and “ArmForest” SNCO has decided (and also discussed with midterm evaluator) that SLM/SFM project may change number of FMPs at objective level from 11 to 10 FMP. The procurement for the remaining 7 (6) FMPs is postponed due to forest sector reforms (still we don’t have any clear picture on structural and administrative changes in forest authority), spring 2018 velvet revolution in Armenia and new format of discussions with the Ministry of NP, where “ArmForest” SNCO has moved as reorganized “State Forest Committee”.    -In collaboration with the ongoing UNDP - Russian Federation Trust Fund “Integrated support to rural development: Building resilient communities” project the SLM/SFM PIU participates in updating a consolidated development plan for the Noyemberyan community. According to this plan, Voskepar village, as a part of the consolidated community, received an environmentally friendly production and processing unit for fruits, berries, mushrooms and herbs. Within the SLM/SFM project detailed maps of berries, mushrooms and herbs collection sites were also prepared.    -In collaboration with UNDP “Climate Risk Mitigation: Passive Solar Greenhouse” project, the SLM/SFM project supported creation of “Ardvi” cooperative and handed over a constructed passive solar greenhouse (PSG) to this cooperative, as an opportunity for Ardvi village overall development.    -Inclusion of PSG and tourism development opportunities are also considered for the Odzun consolidated community (Ardvi village is a part of this community) development plan. | -Four (4) FMPs drafted for Ijevan, Noyemberyan (Tavush marz) and Gugarq, Yeghegnut (Lori marz) forest enterprises (FE) with integrated considerations of biodiversity, ecosystem services, climate mitigation and community resource (integrating sustainable forest management principles) use. The contractors amended the 4 FMPs according to official feedbacks sent from the Ministry of Environment (MoE) by August 2018. The feedbacks were received from State Forest Committee, State Forest Monitoring Center and MoE itself. Due to continuous changes in the Government of Armenia (initiated since May 2018 after the velvet revolution) the presentation of amended 4 FMPs were postponed and scheduled to happen in July-August 2019.    -The new tenders for 5 (five) forest enterprises (Lalvar, Dsegh, Stepanavan, Tashir and Jiliza) covering 70,984 ha total forest area will be announced in July 2019.  The corresponding ToR has been agreed with State Forest Committee and MoE.    -The number of completed and approved FMPs at the end of the project is planned to be 9, instead of 11 envisaged at the beginning of the project. The first dropped FMP is due to failed model FMP of Sevqar forest enterprise (Tavush marz) that was supposed to be provided by GIZ Armenia office. The second dropped FMP is Artsvaberd FE. The reason of non-completion is termination of contract with “GeoInfo” LLC due to crucial changes in the contractor’s team and their request on termination. The re-announcement to draft Artsvaberd FE FMP is not realistic due to its size and time constraint.    -The project promoted revision of eight (8) Community Development plans: Voskepar village of Noyemberyan consolidated community, Ardvi village of Odzun consolidated community, Mets Parni, Gugarq, Margahovit, Lusadzor, Yenoqavan and Berd consolidated community.    -Together with the Russian Federation Trust Fund (RF TF) “Integrated support to rural development: Building resilient communities” project, the SLM/SFM team updated the consolidated development plan for the Noyemberyan community, where the Voskepar village runs and benefits from an environmentally friendly production and processing unit for drying, storage, processing and packaging of forest fruits, berries, mushrooms and herbs.    -Together with “Climate Risk Mitigation: Passive Solar Greenhouse” project, the SLM/SFM team promoted the update of Ardvi village development plan (Odzun consolidated community) through the successful run of “Ardvi” cooperative and constructed a passive solar greenhouse (PSG). Almost all inhabitants of this small village are benefiting from the PSG throughout the year.    -Mets Parni community development plan has been updated with the established “Mets Parni community” climate public revolving fund and a model briquetting facility with the production capacity of 400kg/h. This activity significantly promotes the culture of briquetting as a substitute to non-sustainable extraction of firewood.    - Total five (5) communities (2 in Lori marz - Gugarq and Margahovit; and 3 in Tavush marz - Lusadzor, Yenoqavan, and Berd amended their community development plans through targeted improvement of degraded forest and forest-adjacent pasture-lands and reviving horticulture-based fodder production. |
| Total avoided and/or sequestrated carbon benefits over ten-year period due to improved sustainable management of forests. | N/A | *(not set or not applicable)* | 681,990 metric tCO2 | Total carbon benefits are not available yet for 11 targeted FEs    - Total avoided and/or sequestrated carbon benefits over ten-year period for 2 forest enterprises (Ijevan and Noyemberyan) according to final draft FMPs amount to 212,960 metric tCO2.    - Carbon benefit estimates are not yet available for Artsvaberd, Gugarg and Yeghegnut FEs in the reporting period as respective FMPs aren’t finalized. | Total carbon benefits are not available yet for 11 targeted FEs    Most probably the project will end up targeting only 9 FEs by drafting 9 FMPs (already drafted 4+ 5 new ones as described above). The change is due to unclear status of on-going forest sector reforms (reorganization of institutions and their assignments) and inconsistent messages on FMPs from MoE. The issue of changing the targeted 11 FMPs to 9 FMPs will be discussed in the upcoming PMB meeting.    - Total avoided (472,054 metric tCO2) and/or sequestrated (44,700 metric tCO2) carbon benefits over ten-year period for 4 forest enterprises (Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut) according to final draft FMPs and MP for the Dilijan National park amount to 516,754 metric tCO2.    - Carbon benefit estimates are not available for Lalvar, Dsegh, Stepanavan, Tashir and Jiliza forest enterprises yet as respective FMPs are not yet developed. |
| Extent in hectares of forest area managed for multiple sustainable forest management and ecosystem benefits | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 250000 | -In the reporting period, the project recorded 80,461 ha of forest area (in Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut forest enterprises) managed for multiple sustainable forest management and ecosystem benefits. The recorded area was included in the draft FMPs pending government approval. Drafted FMPs were done on the base of former FMPs, include updated detail cartographic information on the base of recent high resolution satellite images, field checking with local forest enterprises staff and several discussions with FEs administration and local communities. Completed activities for the Noyemberyan and Ijevan FEs include: corrected and agreed boundaries between different land-users and forest estate; detailed analyze and description of changes in forest cover for past 10 years; incorporation of biodiversity, carbon and ecosystem protocols into updated FMPs and detailed management plan for coming 10 years. As for the Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs, relevant work will be completed by mid-August 2018.    - 52,202.6 ha in Tavush region (according to final draft FMPs and completed inventory of Ijevan and Noyemberyan FEs) were designated as areas for multiple sustainable forest management and ecosystems benefits. In particular, high conservation value forest (HCVF) areas were delineated and naturalized that strengthen forest ecosystems biodiversity value and provide a solid source of avoided carbon emissions estimation. Non-timber forest products (NTFP) stands were mapped and potential harvest were assessed. These renewable bio-resources (e.g. cornelian cherry, blackberry, walnut, hazelnut, wild pear and apple, edible and medicinal herbs, mushrooms) are interpreted as serious source of income for local population. Some of these assessments were used as a base to establish the Voskepar village fruit-berry-herbs processing production unit. Several ecosystem services (water regulation, soil protection, carbon sequestration, etc.) were calculated and incorporated into FMPs. The restored degraded forests and forest pasture lands will also become a resource of multiple forest use.    - 28,258.4 ha in Lori region (according to draft FMPs of Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs) were designated as areas for multiple sustainable forest management and ecosystem benefits. As an expression of forest landscape level approach in drafted Gugarq FE FMP incorporates also “Margahovit” forest-animal and “Caucasus snow-rose” state reservations. This is unique approach to perceive forest massive (both managed and conserved) as one, consolidated mountain forest landscape. This approach impose “more careful” treatment of managed forests in favor of sustainable management of conserved forest and all forest ecosystem.  Boundaries corrections, HCVF areas in Gougarq and Yeghegnut forest areas were delineated and described with management prescriptions, NTFP areas were mapped and bio-resources were assessed. Water regulation, soil protection, carbon sequestration services for both FEs were studied, calculated and included in the FMPs.    -Forest inventory for Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs (28,258.4 ha) consisting of: external boundaries agreed corrections, internal delineation of forest estate (district, compartment and sub-compartment), assessment of major characteristics of forest estate (tree composition, volumes, regeneration potential, etc.) studied and mapped HCVF areas, NTFP allocation areas, degraded forest and pasture lands recognition on high resolution satellite images and their naturalization was completed. An inventory for the Artsvaberd FE covering 42,007.8 ha has been delayed due to non-performance and subsequent contract termination with the selected company. A new tender will be re-announced shortly. | -The project so far has recorded 80,461 ha of forest area in Tavush (Ijevan and Noyemberyan FEs) and Lori regions (Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs) allocated for multiple sustainable forest management and ecosystem benefits. The four (4) draft FMPs covering the reported forest area were sent to the Ministry of Environment (MoE) for feedback and subsequent discussions. The project received the feedback and comments in September 2018 and passed on to the contractor for corresponding review and amendment. The amended 4 drafted FMPs were re-submitted to MoE by late September 2018 with a request to organize a broad stakeholder discussion and receive government approval. Due to major changes in the Government of Armenia (GoA) following the velvet revolution and continuous forest sector major structural changes--started in April-May 2018 and ongoing, the final discussion and approval process of the four (4) final draft FMPs was postponed.    -A final discussion and approval process has at last been initiated by the government, and a broad stakeholder discussion of the submitted 4 final draft FMPs is scheduled for July-August 2019. The process of final approval of FMPs is crucial as the previous FMPs are outdated and have been removed from use since November 2017.    -The amended 4 FMPs include: detailed sustainable management plans for 52,2002.6 ha of forest area in Tavush region and 28,258.4 ha of forest area in Lori region. FMPs contain corrected and agreed boundaries between different land-users and the forest estate; a detailed analysis and description of changes in the forest cover for the past 10 years; included biodiversity, carbon and ecosystem protocols.    -Multiple SFM and ecosystems benefits, along with high conservation value forests (HCVF) were amended, delineated and naturalized for 80,461 ha forest area in 2 regions. Special attention was given to forest ecosystems biodiversity value, avoided carbon emissions estimations, non-timber forest products (NTFP), renewable bio-resources (e.g. cornelian cherry, blackberry, walnut, hazelnut, wild pear and apple, edible and medicinal herbs, mushrooms).    -Management plans for “Ijevan state sanctuary” (within the boundaries of Ijevan FE) in Tavush region; “Margahovit” state sanctuary within Gugarq FE and ”Caucasus snow-rose” state sanctuary within Yeghegnut FE in Lori region are given as separate chapters or annexes in amended FMPs. Thus, the forest landscape management holistic approach has been applied in drafted 4 FMPs, where both managed and protected forest ecosystems with different management prescriptions are consolidated in one FMP.    -The new tenders to draft FMPs for the 5 (five) new forest enterprises in Lori region (Lalvar, Dsegh, Stepanavan, Tashir and Jiliza FEs) with total 70,984 ha ha of forest area will be announced in July 2019.    The corresponding ToR has been agreed with State Forest Committee and MoE. Content-wise, the new ToR is the same as it was for the already drafted 4 FMPs and will include forest estate boundaries correction, forest estate status and inventory data changes since last FMP, detailed technical description of forest estate with integrated protocols on biodiversity, ecosystem services and carbon sequestration. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 1**  **Integration of sustainable forest and land management objectives into planning and management of forest ecosystems in NE Armenia to reduce degradation and enhance ecosystem services in two marzes covering 0.65 million hectares** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| Number of forest management plan protocols/guidelines for mainstreaming ecosystem, climate risk mitigation and biodiversity considerations into forest management in NE Armenia | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | One set approved by Ministry of Agriculture | - Four (4) FMPs updated using integrated protocols for biodiversity considerations (the HCVF concept), ecosystem services (including non-timber forest products, carbon sequestration, water regulation and other services) and indicator bird and butterfly species to monitor ecosystem changes.    -In particular, the following activities were implemented:  -Exact boundaries between Noyemberyan and Ijevan FEs and local communities were identified using high-resolution satellite images purchased by the Project.    -An inventory of Artsvaberd FE, revision of FMP, and integration of new protocols into the FMP; correction of boundaries between the neighboring PAs and communities, delineation, and coordination with interested parties started on 30 June 2017. The draft FMP was expected to be completed by February 2018, but unfortunately the contractor, “GeoInfo” LLC, was not able to complete the task due to major changes in the staff and inability to timely bring in replacements.    - An inventory of Gougarq and Eghegnut FEs, revision of FMPs (including separate management plans for “Margahovit” and “Caucasian Snow-Rose” state sanctuaries) and integration of new protocols into the FMP; correction of boundaries between the neighboring PAs and the communities, delineation, and coordination with interested parties started in November 2017. The draft FMPs is expected to be completed by mid-August 2018.    -Due to forest sector reforms (started in Autumn 2017 and continuing nowadays) and political changes in the country (Spring 2018), envisioned activities to institutionalize a forest carbon inventory and monitoring guideline, ecosystem services and biodiversity protocols are currently on hold. It is still expected that proposed amendments to forest management will be formalized and the Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture related to A guideline on how to prepare a forest enterprise forest management plan, # 130-N 10 August 2005 will be updated. | - Amended four (4) FMPs (Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut) contain integrated protocols for biodiversity (particularly the HCVFs), ecosystem services (including NTFPs, avoidance of carbon emissions and its sequestration, water regulation and other services) and indicator bird and butterfly species to monitor ecosystem changes.    -Due to political changes in the country (velvet revolution in spring 2018) along with the resulted forest sector reforms and associated major structural changes, the project’s planned activities to institutionalize a forest carbon inventory and monitoring guideline, ecosystem services and biodiversity protocols were postponed. It is expected that the proposed amendments to forest management will be formalized in an amendment to the Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture #130-N dated 10 August 2005 on FMP preparation.    -Anyhow, the “Forest carbon stock measurements guidelines for measuring carbon stocks in the north eastern forests of Armenia” has been agreed to be forwarded to MoE to become an officially accepted protocol for any forest carbon accounting activities (both national and international projects). |
| Number of sets of forest inventory and maps in support of sustainable forest management for forest enterprise branches | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 11 | - Two (2) sets of forest inventory and maps of sustainable forest management for 2 FEs (Ijevan and Noyemberyan) were finalized and delivered to the MoNP for feedback and approval;    - Two (2) sets of forest inventory and maps of sustainable forest management for 2 FEs (Gugarq and Yeghegnut) are drafted and will be delivered to the MoNP by mid-August 2018. | - Four (4) sets of forest inventory and maps of sustainable forest management for 4 FEs (Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut) were amended and delivered to the MoE to organize a final broad discussion and approval among governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. This broad stakeholder discussion is planned for July-August 2019 and final approval is expected by the end of 2019. |
| Number of forest enterprise branches effectively applying consideration of the needs for biodiversity, climate mitigation, forest ecosystem services and community sustainable use | 0 (partial application in FMPs) | *(not set or not applicable)* | 11 | -Four (4) FEs (Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut)—with Project’s technical assistance-- walked every step in doing a forest inventory, mapping and planning management activities. Such learning-by-doing exercise worked as a catalyzer, and now these 4 FEs started to effectively apply biodiversity, climate mitigation, forest ecosystem services approaches as shown in their respective updated FMPs. | - Four (4) sets of amended sustainable forest management plans for the Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut) FEs are being used to effectively apply biodiversity, climate mitigation, forest ecosystem services and community sustainable use on provisional bases. |
| Number of forest monitoring protocols to assess effectiveness of adoption for SFM in forestlands | 0 (Existing practice, monitoring protocols used for recording forest violations and fires, not for consideration of ecosystem values and functions) | *(not set or not applicable)* | One set of protocols approved and adopted by Ministry of Agriculture | -Due to forest sector reforms (starting in autumn 2017 and continuing nowadays) and political changes in the country (spring, 2018), envisioned activities to institutionalize monitoring protocols that consider ecosystem services were postponed. | -During October-December 2018 specialists of the Forest monitoring center were involved in the project’s activity on “Restoration of degraded forest ecosystems activities on 2120 ha area (in 6 FEs and in the Dilijan NP area)”.The forest monitoring specialists identified and mapped as well as monitored the “correct” allocations of degraded forests. In the identified degraded forest patches “Hayantar” SNCO and “Dilijan NP” SNCO implemented the needed restoration activities.    -This and similar activities conducted by the forest monitoring center as well as the final drafts of 4 FMPs were to be transformed to a forest monitoring protocol, but due to continuous structural and administrative changes (the reform also touched “State forest monitoring center”, which was removed from the Ministry of Agriculture and relocated to MoE), the preparation of such protocol was postponed. Hopefully outstanding issue with the protocol will be worked out in autumn-winter 2019. |
| Number of marz and enterprise branch forest staff trained in the use of ecosystem based planning tools | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 60 | -35 persons in total from the beginning of project (5 persons at the end of 2017 and in 15 persons in 2018) in Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Artsvaberd, Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs were trained in the use of ecosystem based planning tools. The trainings were performed by the forest inventory and mapping team staff. The target groups of trainings included forest rangers and district heads, head of brunches, chief foresters , as well as members of consolidated local self governments. Almost all participants were men, as women traditionally were and are not part of forest management in Armenia. These field trainings were beneficial both to the inventory team (e.g. to correct methodological approaches for the assessment of NTFP amount and cost) and the local staff to learn about concentrated locations of NTFP, the methods of sustainable harvest and opportunities for further processing (e.g. agricultural crops processing units in Voskepar, Koghb, Berdavan and other sites). | -In 2017-2018, 35 people in total in Tavush (Ijevan, Noyemberyan and Artsvaberd FEs) and Lori (Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs) regions were trained in ecosystem-based planning tools.    -In 2019-2020, additional 25 people in total in Lori region ((Lalvar, Dsegh, Stepanavan, Tashir and Jiliza FEs) will be trained in forest management ecosystem-based tool. As in previous cases, the trainings will be performed by forest inventory, mapping and management planning teams. |
| Number of pasture stakeholders undergone technical and skills training and development in sustainable pasture management | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 100 (of which at least 30 are women) | -50 pasture stakeholders in total from the beginning of project (of which 15 were women; in 2018 - 30 pasture stakeholders of which 10 were women) have undergone technical and skills training and development in sustainable pasture management in Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq an Yeghegnut FEs.    -Specific topics of trainings, which were conducted initially by the inventory team and later by the project pasture and grassland management expert included:  - economic and ecological efficiency of pasture use;  - pasture vegetation information (beneficial, toxic, harmful plants)  -the reasons of pasture and land degradations due to mostly human factor and as a result malnutrition of milking animals;  -the rules to use pasture lands ecological provisionary services (e.g. the forms, dates and methods of wild collection);  -the importance of proper pasture management and effective conservation means (e.g. in many cases red colored milk and/or meat, low milking are wrongly interpreted as a cow being ill, instead of analyzing the character of pasture land and features of its vegetation). | -For the period of summer-autumn, 2019, 70 pasture stakeholders (of which 40 were women) were trained in sustainable pasture management in 6 communities of Lori and Tavush marzes. Three (3) field trainings were organized in Margahovit (Lori marz) and in Ijevan and Berd communities (Tavush) regions in 2018.    -Thus, since the beginning of the project, 120 pasture stakeholders (of which 55 were women) were trained in several aspects of pasture management, silvopastoral systems, land degradation neutrality, sustainable management of natural resources, and related topics. |
| Number of forest dependents trained in technical skills for sustainable forest resource use | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 500 (of which at least 150 are women) | -190 (of which 70 were women; 60 persons in 2018, of which 60 were women) forest dependents trained in technical skills for sustainable forest resource use in Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs.    -Forest enterprise staff and local community members were informed and trained in sustainable use of different type of forest ecosystems meaning and use: including water regulation, soil protection, climate regulation in-direct ecosystem values; NTFP sustainable use for current and future generations; opportunities for eco-tourism development and alternatives to fuel wood consumption, | -For the 2017-2018 period, 260 people in total (of which 100 were women) were trained in technical skills for sustainable forest resource use in Tavush (Ijevan, Noyemberyan and Artsvaberd FEs) and Lori (Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs) regions where forest-dependents communities reside.    -For the 2019-2020 period, additional 240 persons in total (of which 50 women will participate) will be trained in technical skills for sustainable forest resource use in Lori region (Lalvar, Dsegh, Stepanavan, Tashir and Jiliza FEs).    -In 2019-2020, as in 2017-2018, local forest administration staff, rangers, as well as local community members will be trained in forest ecosystem products sustainable use, including NTFP, eco-tourism, water regulation, etc. |
| Number of recommendations on accounting for ecosystem services valuation and community resource use | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | One set of recommendations | -Due to ongoing forest sector reforms (started in autumn 2017) and political changes in the country (spring 2018) development of recommendations on accounting for ecosystem services valuation and community resource use and their subsequent discussion were postponed. | -Carbon sequestration, water regulation forest ecosystem services were assessed in the amended provisional (four) 4 FMPs (for Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs). The expected broad discussion and approval of the final draft FMPs (now scheduled for autumn-winter 2019) will produce a solid basis for and will contribute to the elaboration of recommendations on accounting for certain ecosystems services. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 2**  **Sustainable Forest Management practices effectively demonstrating reduced pressure on high conservation forests and maintaining flow of ecosystem services** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| Hectares of high biodiversity conservation value forests designated identified and effectively managed for biodiversity and climate mitigation | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | At least 85,000 | - According to the drafted FMPs for Ijevan,Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut forest enterprises of Tavush and Lori regions, High conservation value forests (HCVF) have been identified covering 38,000 ha, of which 16,572 ha in Ijevan FE (13,912 ha located in the newly established Ijevan State Reservation and 2,660 ha identified in the remaining area of managed part of the Ijevan FE), 8,506 ha in the Noyemberyan FE, 8,382 ha in Gugarq FE of which 3,126 ha in Margahovit state sanctuary and 4,540 ha in Yeghegnut FE.    - Remaining 47,000 ha of HCVF as indicated in the Prodoc will be identified during revisions of forest management plans of FEs in Lori and Tavush regions and in protected areas. | -In total, 71,765 ha High conservation value forests (HCVF) have been delineated in Lori and Tavush region so far. This area includes: Ijevan state sanctuary-13,912 ha; Ijevan FE-2,660 ha; Noyemberyan FE-8,506 ha; Gugarq FE- 5,256, Margahovit state sanctuary-3,126 ha; Yeghegnut FE-4,540 ha and Dilijan NP with Yew Grove sanctuary-33,765 ha.    -The remaining 13,235 ha of HCVF will be delineated in Gyulagarak “Sochut” sanctuary (2,576 ha) and in 5 FEs of Lori region - Lalvar, Dsegh, Stepanavan, Tashir and Jiliza FEs (10,659 ha). |
| Change in population trends for five indicator bird species | [Modified baseline as per expert recommendations]: The coefficient of x value in the ten-year linear trend equation (which refers to y=ax+b) is -0.0359; -0.0256; -0.0209; -0.0771 and -0.0253 for Coal Tit, Eurasian Nuthatch, Semi-collared flycatcher, Green Warbler and Song Thrush respectively    [Original baseline]: The coefficient of x value in the ten-year linear trend equation (which refers to y=ax+b) is --0.0965; -0.0455; --0.0338; -0.1156 and -0.0346 for Coal Tit, Eurasian Nuthatch, Semi-collared flycatcher, Green Warbler and Song Thrush respectively. | *(not set or not applicable)* | Population of indicator bird species stable or increase over baseline values | -In the baseline ten-year linear trend equation (which refers to y=ax+b), the coefficient “a” of x value was changed to -0.0359; -0.0256; -0.0209; -0.0771 and -0.0253 for Coal Tit, Eurasian Nuthatch, Semi-collared flycatcher, Green Warbler and Song Thrush respectively following results and findings of field studies covering 23 monitoring sites performed by a national expert in 2016. Positive changes in “a” coefficients for five indicator species demonstrate stabilized population trends.    - During May 2018, a national expert on zoology conducted field studies in the project area for counting newly selected indicator species at 11 monitoring sites in five forestry enterprises of Lori region and in the Dilijan National Park.    - During May-June 2018, a national expert on zoology organized two field trainings for forestry staff in Vanadzor regional center (for Gougarq, Yeghegnut, Stepanavan, Tashir, Dsegh, Lalvar and Jiliza forest enterprises) of Lori region and in the Dilijan National Park (for Ijevan, Noyemberyan and Artsvaberd forest enterprises staff) of Tavush region. Trainings were aimed at firming of already (in 2017) conducted training results on identification of newly selected indicator species and at practicing data collection on site. | - Stemming from field observations and monitoring data inputted to the amended ten-year linear trend equation (y=ax+b) (2018 PIR) stable population trends are being observed for the Coal Tit, Eurasian Nuthatch, Semi-collared flycatcher, Green Warbler and Song Thrush. |
| Change in population trends for five indicator bird species | [Modified baseline as per expert recommendations]: Average number of individuals per 1km transect for the 4 species are 13.05-14.05; 10.19-11.62; 16.92-18.22 and 21.68-23.43 for Argynnis paphia, Brintesia circe, Coenonympha arcania and Leptidea sinapis respectively    [Original baseline]: Average number of individuals per 1km transect for the 4 species are 10.3-16.5; 8.6-12.9; 15.3-21.7 and 18.9-27.2 for Argynnis paphia, Brintesia circe, Coenonympha arcania and Leptidea sinapis respectively. | *(not set or not applicable)* | Population changes of indicator butterfly species stable and/or do not decrease | Average number of individuals per 1km transect for the 4 species was changed into 13.05-14.05; 10.19-11.62; 16.92-18.22 and 21.68-23.43 for Argynnis paphia, Brintesia circe, Coenonympha arcania and Leptidea sinapis respectively.    -Registered population trend for Argynnis paphia indicates a decline of the decreasing slope while stabilization of population trends is observed for Brintesia circe, Coenonympha arcania and Leptidea sinapis.  - During May 2018, a national expert on zoology conducted field studies in the project area for counting newly selected indicator species at 11 monitoring sites in five forestry enterprises of Lori region and in the Dilijan National Park.    - During May 2018, a national expert on zoology organized two field trainings for forestry staff in Vanadzor regional center (for Gougarq, Yeghegnut, Stepanavan, Tashir, Dsegh, Lalvar and Jiliza forest enterprises) of Lori region and in the Dilijan National Park (for Ijevan, Noyemberyan and Artsvaberd forest enterprises staff ) of Tavush region. Trainings were aimed at firming of already (in 2017) conducted training results on identification of newly selected indicator species and at practicing data collection on sites..  data collection on site. | -Field observations and monitoring using the amended average number of individuals per 1 km transect for the 4 butterfly species (Argynnis paphia, Brintesia circe, Coenonympha arcania and Leptidea sinapis) have recorded a stabilized population trend of indicator species. |
| Number of hectares of degraded forests regenerated through assisted natural regeneration | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 4932 | 93 ha of degraded forests was regenerated in Lalvar FE of Haynatar SNCO in autumn 2017. The generated 300 m3 of firewood was distributed among the needy population in surrounding Odzun, Ardvi and other communities.    Request for proposals (RFPs) for rehabilitation of degraded forest for over 2000 ha area were prepared, agreed and tenders advertised for 2018.Most of them are in contracting stage. However, the tendering process is postponed as per the Government request due to ongoing forest sector reforms (started in autumn 2017) and political changes in the country (spring 2018). Project staff with support of UNDP senior management keeps permanent consultations with the management of MoNP and State forest committee to support with forest reforms at the extent possible and accelerate the overall implementation process. | The cumulative total area of restored degraded forest ecosystems is 1,795 ha.    In the reporting period, “Hayantar” SNCO restored additional 1,682 ha of degraded forest ecosystems in 6 forest enterprises through support to natural regeneration and coppicing. Around 600 people (forest enterprises staff and local community members) participated in these activities. The major activities took place in October-December 2018 and continued over to March-April and autumn 2019. The total value of the first “Responsible party agreement” signed with “Hayantar” SNCO amounts to $292,000, of which $230,000 will be disbursed by April 2019. Out of the planned 2,000 ha for restoration, natural regeneration and coppicing activities have already been completed on 1,682 ha. Restoration of the remaining 318 ha will be completed in autumn 2019.    -In the reporting period, “Dilijan NP” SNCO restored 20 ha of degraded beech stands out of the planned 120 ha within the low-value grant agreement. The restoration of the remaining 100 ha will be performed in autumn 2019. |
| Number of hectares degraded pasture and hay fields rehabilitated under sustainable management practices to reduce pressure on forest lands | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 1000 | - The area of degraded pastures and hayfields for potential intervention according to the drafted FMPs (Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs) is 1,225 ha. The area of degraded pastures and hay-fields according to the acting FMPs in Artsvaberd and Tashir FEs is 149 ha.    - A pasture management expert was selected to study the identified degraded pastures and hay-fields and work-out rehabilitation measures. The plan is to rehabilitate ca 500 ha of degraded pastures and hay fields by end of 2018.    - Fifty (50) local farmers (including 15 women) took part in trainings on sustainable pasture management conducted by the forest inventory and mapping teams during preparation of revised FMPs. | - The national expert hired by the project conducted a study, delineation, prepared rehabilitation measures, and held consultations with members of the local communities on degraded forest and forest-adjacent community pastures in Armenia's Lori and Tavush marzes (in total for 1,000 ha area).    -The national expert conducted 3 field trainings: in Margahovit (for Margahovit and Gugarq community members); in Ijevan (for Yenoqavan, Lusadzor and Noyemberyan consolidated community members) and in Berd (for Berd consolidated community members) to present the basics of sustainable pasture management favoring forest ecosystems and silvopastoral systems.    -In the reporting period, restoration of degraded pastures in forest and forest-adjacent communities’ degraded pastures took place in Lori (2 communities) and in Tavush (4 communities) regions. Agricultural machinery and mechanisms, fodder mixed seeds, fertilizer, and diesel fuel were procured and delivered to 6 communities to grow fodder crops on 140 ha of land that was not cultivated for 20-25 years and to improve 87 ha of degraded community pastures. The communities provided co-financing that will be further invested in alternative livelihood programs and/or further development of briquetting culture.  -The organization of fodder production on 140 ha and improvement of 87 ha of degraded pastures that fully compensate for the recovery of 1,000 ha degraded forest and forest-adjacent degraded pastures are completed and are now being monitored. |
| Number of hectares of forest land under multiple use regimes (sustainable NTFP production and agro-forestry) with participation of forest dependent communities | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 3000 | -2,000 ha of forest land has been identified and mapped for the purpose of multiple use regimes (NTFP, agro-forestry system, bee-keeping, etc.) for Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut forest enterprises.enterprises. | -In total 2,000 ha of forest land was identified and mapped for the multiple-use regimes during 2017-2019, including NTFP exploitation, development of agro-forest system, etc. in Tavush and Lori region.    - The remaining 1,000 ha of multiple forest use areas will be inventoried and mapped in 5 FEs of Lori region (Lalvar, Dsegh, Stepanavan, Tashir and Jiliza FEs) during 2019-2020. |
| Percentage decrease in number of livestock using natural forests for unsustainable grazing practices in targeted forest branches | Baseline to be developed after forest inventory and mapping completed and locations identified for grazing management | *(not set or not applicable)* | 0.15 | Not available  -Forest inventory and mapping completed activities for Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gougarq and Yeghegnut FEs shows that almost 40% of livestock in forest adjacent communities are grazed in forest lands.    -The exact baseline will be identified within on-going forest and community degraded pasture lands study to be completed by the end of 2018.    -The results of the study will be transferred into activities and incorporated into community development plans. Monitoring system will be establish to review implementation process and record changes in the number of livestock using natural forests for grazing practices in Ijevan, Noyemberyan and Gugarq, Yeghegnut FEs. | -According to the four (4) amended draft forest management plans, the resulted cartographic materials and a report of the project’s pasture expert (“Recommendations on Lori and Tavush regions forest and forest-adjacent degraded pastures study, results assessment and restoration means”) it is estimated that the number of livestock using natural forests for unsustainable grazing practices in targeted forest enterprises and communities will decrease by ca.15-20% by December 2019. Thus monitoring, field-based observation (for the assumed 15-20%) results will be available by December 2019.    - The project completed restoration activities in the target communities and FEs in Q1, Q2 and partially in Q3 of 2019.The on-going monitoring activities in target forest enterprises’ and communities’ degraded pasture lands will be available by summer, 2020 to confirm the pre-assessed decrease in percentage. |
| Percentage reduction in forest firewood collection areas in targeted forest branches Reduced areas of felling in target state forests | Baseline to be developed after forest inventory and mapping completed | *(not set or not applicable)* | 0.15 | Not available    - A percentage reduction in forest firewood collection areas (reduced areas of felling) was preliminary identified in revised draft FMPs for Ijevan and Noyemberyan FEs that currently await approval.    -On the base of drafted FMPs, particularly identified areas and assessed volumes for firewood collections, preliminary calculations of efficiency of the introduced energy-efficiency ovens and solar panels/water heaters in Tavush region it may be assessed that reduction in forest firewood collection areas constitute 20-25%. In order to have averaged value of reduced firewood collection areas FMPs for other FEs should be completed, as there are many regional differences. | - The reduction in forest firewood consumption for the targeted households constitute 25-30%. According to the study “Results of monitoring on efficiency assessment of energy-efficient (EE) ovens implementation” commissioned by the project for the period of autumn 2018 - spring 2019, 238 households in 13 settlements of Tavush marz, where energy efficient ovens were introduced in winter 2018, were interviewed. In total, for the 2018-2019 winter season 394 m3 wood (equivalent to 1,5-2,0 ha forest standing volume) or 4,728 mln AMD (Armenian currency) was saved in 238 households.    -In order to have the overall picture of firewood consumption reduction percentage in the project target communities, a new study will be conducted for the overall assessment of the project’s interventions aiming at reducing firewood collection area. These include: passive solar green house, anti-hail nets, solar panels and solar heaters, briquetting facility in Mets Parni community, etc. |
| Number of recommendations for management of dependencies in firewood use from forests | No integrated strategy exists to deal with the complex nature of firewood dependencies | *(not set or not applicable)* | One set of recommendation developed by Ministry of Agriculture | - The project analyzed firewood consumption in Armenia, studied fuelwood and briquette markets with a view of developing a strategy for management of firewood in 2019. Project will start drafting a firewood strategy in the beginning of 2019 when overall analyses of feasibility for application of alternative energy sources, namely briquetting production unit, solar panels/water heaters, as well as energy-efficient ovens, fuelwood import potential will be analyzed.    Procurement of a briquetting facility and agricultural machinery and mechanisms to establish demonstrative agricultural waste-based briquette production unit in Mets Parni community of Lori region was done as a possible alternative to substitute fuel-wood consumption. The briquette production facility in Mets Parni community will be fully operational by end of August 2018.    The briquetting facility will provide additional source of income and , job opportunities for local population and reduce community’s dependence and negative pressure on forest ecosystem. | -In Koti village (Tavush region) a small dairy production unit was equipped by solar panels and water heaters to escape annually ca 60m3 firewood consumption and promote environmentally friendly technologies.  -In spring-summer 2019, the project, through the SGP mechanism and methodological support, chose the “Lori student union” NGO to implement an energy-efficient program in Dzoragyugh community of Lori region. The kindergarten and the school that now fully depend on firewood will switch to solar energy -solar panels and water heater. The community will be also provided with EE ovens/furnaces on co-financing bases. This is very important for the small village which does not have gas supply.    -“Bridge of Hope” NGO (based in Ijevan, Tavush marz) installed solar panels and heaters in 3 more communities thanks to its savings from a GEF SGP project completed in 2017-2018.    -Through the SGP mechanism, “Children fund of Armenia” (COAF) started implementing a backyard berry farming project in Debet community of Lori region to increase local households’ income.    - “Lore rescue team” NGO through UNDP-SGP mechanism constructed a forest recreation amusement park to promote youth support engagement, rescue trainings, and to conserve forests.    -Based on the results of these and other similar activities (from SLM/SFM and UNDP, as well as other projects) the project will carry out a study to develop recommendations for management of dependencies on firewood use from forests. The project collaborates with the GIZ-Armenia office on the matter. |
| Percentage of households reporting increased incomes from forest and non-forest resources in target communities, including percentage of beneficiaries among women | Baseline incomes would be assessed once forest inventory and mapping completed and locations for community forest use identified | *(not set or not applicable)* | 20%, of which at least 30% of beneficiaries are women | A study (“Impact assessment and cost benefit analyses of hail-nets”) on application of hail nets by 4 target communities in Tavush region covering 9 ha of vineyards and orchards were conducted in collaboration with UNDP Disaster risk reduction (DRR) project. The key findings of this study include:  - The farmers burning wood for heating the house report to be using from 8 to 20 m3 wood monthly during winter seasons;  - Out of 23 farmers interviewed only 3 reported having income from the forest, two of which stated that 20% of their income comes from the wood as they do wild collection of berries and collect wood for heating the house;  - In case of increased income farmers would prefer to use gas or electricity as these are more convenient and “sanitary” way of heating the house;  - Out of 23 interviewed farmers 7 stated that are interested to energy saving heaters (solar energy).  -The farmers stating that will shift to gas or electricity heating systems expect having 5-7.5 mio AMD yearly income. Some stated that even if the income will increase during winter months by 600K AMD (or 100KAMD per family member) they will consider shifting.    In addition to the hail-nets study the following practical studies were done:    -An innovative Passive Solar Greenhouse was constructed in mid-December 2017 in Ardvi community, Lori region, in collaboration with UNDP “Climate Risk Mitigation: Passive Solar Greenhouse” project.    - A solar fruit drying facility was constructed in Voskepar village (Noyemberyan community), to complement the refrigerator and packaging facilities installed by the latter. The dryer was commissioned in December 2017.    -In fall 2017 a Letter of Intent was signed with UNDP-GEF Small Grants Programme to support CSOs engagement in the implementation of alternative income generation projects in target regions through the SGP modality. In 2017 two projects were started in Tavush marz: (a) Testing and manufacturing energy-saving heating and cooking stoves in Noyemberyan sub-region and (b) Installation of photovoltaic systems and solar water heaters in four kindergartens in Ijevan community. Two more projects will start in Lori marz in 2018.    Impact measurement and monitoring system will be in place to track income dynamic of the selected households.  facility. | -A number of project interventions have already produced a positive impact on incomes of stakeholders in the targeted communities and households. These Project’s interventions include: (1) introduction of anti-hail nets in Tavush region; (2) introduction of solar panels and solar heaters in 7 kindergartens, schools and 2 production units; (3) a passive solar green house in Ardvi village of Odzun consolidated community; (4) introduction of EE ovens/furnaces; (5) forest recreation and amusement park in Stepanavan; (6) back-yard berry cultivation in Debet community; (7) Mets Parni briquetting facility, (8) a micro-grant program for Haghartsin and Teghut communities.    -The project produced a number of studies that are currently being reviewed that provide a clear picture of the income increase within households in targeted communities and areas. These studies include: “Impact assessment and cost benefit analyses of anti-hail nets;” “Results of monitoring on efficiency assessment of energy efficient (EE) ovens implementation;” “Recommendations on Lori and Tavush regions forest and forest adjacent degraded pastures study, results assessment and restoration means”.    -Based on the results of project interventions and conducted studies, in autumn 2019 the project will elaborate a ToR to assess the percentage of households that have increased their income from forest and non-forest resources. |
| Number of carbon stock assessment completed for key forest types in NE Armenia | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | One set of baseline assessment completed and monitoring | - An international forest carbon expert developed Guidelines for measuring carbon stocks in the north eastern forests of Armenia. The content of draft guideline was discussed with key stakeholders and updated following completed pilot forest carbon inventory in the Noyemberyan FE in 2017.    -According to the developed guidelines, in November - December 2017, a pilot carbon inventory, sampling, and lab processing was implemented in the Noyemberyan Forest Enterprise jointly with “Hayantar” SNCO and MoNP. National coefficients of forest carbon for major forest types of Noyemberyan FE pilot area were estimated and results will be shortly reported to web-based Carbon benefit project (CBP).    - Stemming from this study, a forest carbon expert designed a forest carbon inventory covering 305 sample plots. Lab analyses and estimation of national forest carbon coefficients for the entire north and north-eastern Armenia will be completed by end of 2018. Results will be reported in the next year PIR. | -The project succeeded in completing a forest carbon inventory for forest ecosystems of the north and north-eastern Armenia, covering ca.250,000 ha both in managed and protected forest areas. The forest carbon inventory, sampling and laboratory analyses were done according to the “Forest carbon stock measurements guidelines for measuring carbon stocks in the north eastern forests of Armenia” developed by an international expert and tested in Noyemberyan FE in November-December 2017.    -The carbon inventory took place on 360 sample plots covering all major forest ecosystems in northern and north-eastern Armenia. The sampling and following laboratory analyses took place in July-November 2018 and the results were reported to project advisory and management boards. Project expert conducted a 3-day intensive technical workshop for the sector stakeholders during which the design, implementation and analyses of forest carbon inventory and monitoring system establishment were presented. |
| Emissions of metric tCO2 avoided from conservation set-asides over a10-year period | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 559,110 metric tCO2 | - 212,960 metric tCO2 of total avoided carbon emissions over ten-year period were estimated for two (2) forest enterprises (Ijevan and Noyemberyan) according to updated FMPs.    -The calculations of avoided carbon emissions for Gugarq and Yeghegnut forest enterprises will be completed by mid-August 2018. Results will be reported in the next year PIR. | - 472,054 metric tCO2 of total avoided carbon emissions over ten-year period were estimated for four (4) forest enterprises (Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq, Yeghegnut) according to the updated FMPs and the MP for the Dilijan National Park.    -Estimation of avoided carbon emissions for Lalvar, Dsegh, Stepanavan, Tashir and Jiliza forest enterprises will be completed by mid-August-September 2020 and reported in the final PIR. |
| Improvement in carbon sequestration capacity in metric tCO2 of restored forests over a 10-year period | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 122,880 metric tCO2 | -Natural regeneration activities are planned for implementation in 6 FEs --Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq, Yeghegnut, Artsvaberd and Lalvar-- covering 1,640 ha of degraded forest areas.    - Resulting estimates of carbon sequestration capacity will be reported in the next PIR after completion of these activities. | -Natural regeneration activities have been done for 6 FEs - Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq, Yeghegnut, Artsvaberd and Lalvar, as well as the Dilijan National park, covering 1,795 ha of degraded forest areas.    The total sequestration capacity in metric tCO2 of restored forests over a 10-year period comprises 44,700 metric tCO2.    - The remaining amounts of sequestrated metric tCO2 will be reported in the text PIR when restoration of degraded forests takes place on 3,137 ha. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |

# Implementation Progress



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| Cumulative GL delivery against total approved amount (in prodoc): | 64.41% |
| Cumulative GL delivery against expected delivery as of this year: | 64.41% |
| Cumulative disbursement as of 30 June (note: amount to be updated in late August): | 1,917,630 |

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| **Key Financing Amounts** | |
| PPG Amount | 91,324 |
| GEF Grant Amount | 2,977,169 |
| Co-financing | 13,989,935 |

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| **Key Project Dates** | |
| PIF Approval Date | Nov 4, 2013 |
| CEO Endorsement Date | Jun 18, 2015 |
| Project Document Signature Date (project start date): | Dec 24, 2015 |
| Date of Inception Workshop | Jun 17, 2016 |
| Expected Date of Mid-term Review | Jun 15, 2018 |
| Actual Date of Mid-term Review | Jun 2, 2018 |
| Expected Date of Terminal Evaluation | Jul 31, 2020 |
| Original Planned Closing Date | Dec 24, 2019 |
| Revised Planned Closing Date | Dec 31, 2020 |

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| **Dates of Project Steering Committee/Board Meetings during reporting period (30 June 2018 to 1 July 2019)** |
| 2018-12-20 |

# Critical Risk Management

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| Current Types of Critical Risks | Critical risk management measures undertaken this reporting period |
| Political | Due to political situation in Armenia in April - May 2018, some operational aspects of the project are expected to be delayed: development of legislative packages (due to delays in forest sector reforms), revision of FMPs, and forest rehabilitation.    Risk management measures: The project is working with the appropriate beneficiaries on a day-to-day basis, reacting to changes in the political climate and forest sectoral challenges, and adapting the workplan accordingly. |
| Political | The internal political crisis which led to significant changes in Government may cause delays in project implementation and delivery.    Risk management measures: The risk is continuously monitored by project. Following the MTE recommendations, TE and Project’s closure dates were revised to compensate for the lost time due to major changes in the government and the country. The MTR findings, conclusions and recommendations are being extensively used by PMU to mitigate the impact of delayed activities on the project’s final performance results. |

# Adjustments

**Comments on delays in key project milestones**

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| **Project Manager: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| The forest sector structural and administrative changes that started in late autumn 2017 are not completed and finalized yet. The newly established “State forest committee” included “Hayantar” SNCO in its structure but failed to establish the “State Forest Service”, which would finalize the major institutionalization process of national forest governance. Optimization of “Hayantar” SNCO and its forest enterprises stopped as well. This incomplete reform coupled with the velvet revolution that occurred in April-May 2018 and subsequent Extraordinary parliamentary elections in December 2018 followed by restructuring of the government of Armenia including on-going reforms of institutional system managing forest sector caused certain delays in achieving project key milestones (including, but not limited to FMPs, restoration of degraded forest ecosystems). Following the MTE recommendations, TE and Project’s closure dates were revised to compensate for the lost time due to major changes in the government and the country. The MTR findings, conclusions and recommendations are being extensively used by PMU to mitigate the impact of delayed activities on the project’s final performance results. |

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| **Country Office: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| The forest sector incomplete and not-cleared reforms, along with the on-going restructuring within Government of Armenia starting since velvet revolution (April-May 2018), Extraordinary parliamentary elections (December, 2018) cased certain delay in provision of mid-term final report and recommendations. The final MTR was received by PMU at the end of October 2018 and was communicated to RTA immediately. The recommendations drowned by MTE are cleared and are in implementation phase. |

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| **UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| The project was granted a 1 year no-cost extension to end in December 2020. MTR recommendations are being implemented. |

# Ratings and Overall Assessments

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| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Project Manager/Coordinator** | Moderately Satisfactory | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | Within outcome 1 (component 1) of the project dedicated to enabling environment in Lori and Tavush regions to plan, monitor and adapt sustainable forest and land management practices, the amended FMPs for “Hayantar” SNCO-managed 4 forest enterprises covering 80,461 ha in total were prepared.  The amended FMPs of Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut forest enterprises (FEs) were ready for the extended final discussion and approval process by October 2018, but due to political changes in the country and governmental restructuring processes. This discussion and approval process were postponed until July-August 2019.    So far, within output 1.2, due to amended FMPs for Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs, 80,461 ha forest area has sustainable forest management plan with multi-purpose forest use strategy. In total, 71,765 ha High conservation value forest (HCVF) has ben delineated in Lori and Tavush region so far. This area includes: Ijevan state sanctuary-13,912 ha; Ijevan FE-2,660 ha; Noyemberyan FE-8,506 ha; Gugarq FE- 5,256, Margahovit state sanctuary-3,126 ha; Yeghegnut FE-4,540 ha and Dilijan NP with Yew Grove sanctuary-33,765 ha.  The new tenders for 5 (five) forest enterprises (Lalvar, Dsegh, Stepanavan, Tashir and Jiliza) with 69003 ha total forest area will be announced in July 2019. The corresponding ToR has been agreed with State Forest Committee and MoE.    Within output 1.3, forest biodiversity, carbon, ecosystem services, multi-purpose use protocols were included in the amended 4 FEs FMPs.    As for output 1.4 the project communicated with “Airbus” to purchase new high-resolution satellite images to assist in the forest inventory and mapping activities in 5 forest enterprises in Lori region (Lalvar, Dsegh, Stepanavan, Tashir and Jiliza). “Global GIS” LLC was contracted to obtain necessary supporting monitoring equipment (GPS receivers, Field computers) for beneficiaries (“Hayantar” SNCO, Ministry of Nature Protection).    Within output 1.5, the project has succeeded with its application to Russian Federation-UNDP “Russian forest expert on demand to support forest sector reforms in Armenia” initiative and is currently negotiate with the MoE on the urgent and exact topic(s) that should be covered by expert. Also, on the basis of tested and scaled up application of “Forest carbon stock measurements guidelines for measuring carbon stocks in the north eastern forests of Armenia” developed by project international expert, the PMU has agreed with the MoE to institutionalize it.    Within output 1.6, the project is doing the following: a) The content of collaboration with Forestry and Agro-ecology department of Armenian National Agrarian University has been set up; b) One-week (4-8 February 2019) GIS and GPS application theoretical and practical training was organized for the employees of Inspectorate of Nature Protection and mineral resources to improve their technical skills to integrate different geoinformation data in GIS environment and perform analyses to visualize the problems; c) Gender action plan and engendered SMART indicators have been worked out by International gender advisor to improve women’s participation in the project.    Outcome 2 (project component 2) is dedicated to demonstration of improved sustainable forest and land management practices to reduce pressure on high conservation forests and maintain the flow of ecosystem services.    The major result of output 2.1 is delineation and mapping of 71,765 ha High conservation value forest (HCVF) in Lori and Tavush region, that includes: 50,803 ha HCVF in protected areas including Dilijan NP and 20,962 ha in managed forests (Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs). It is planned to delineate the remaining 13,235 ha HCVF in Gyulagarak “Sochut” sanctuary (2576 ha) and in 5 FEs of Lori region - Lalvar, Dsegh, Stepanavan, Tashir and Jiliza FEs (10,659 ha).    The major results of output 2.2 - forest rehabilitation are: a) restored 1682 ha degraded forest ecosystems by “Hayantar” SNCO in 6 forest enterprises through support to natural regeneration and coppicing. Around 600 people (forest enterprises staff and local community members) participated in these activities. The major activities took place in October-December 2018 and continued over to March-April and autumn 2019. The value of the first “Responsible party agreement” is $292,000, from which $230,000 was spent/cleared by April 2019. 1682 ha has already been restored out of planned 2000 ha. The remaining 318 ha will be done in autumn 2019; b) For the reporting, period “Dilijan NP” SNCO restored 20 ha of degraded beech stands out of planned 120 ha within the low-value grant agreement. The restoration of the remaining 100 ha will be done in autumn 2019; c) - The hired national expert conducted study, delineation, preparation of rehabilitation measures, consultation for local community members on degraded forest and forest-adjacent community pastures in Armenia's Lori and Tavush marzes (in total for 1000 ha area); For the reporting period, restoration of degraded pastures in forest and forest-adjacent communities’ degraded pastures took place in Lori (2 communities) and in Tavush (4 communities) regions. Agricultural machinery and mechanisms, fodder mixed seeds, fertilizer, and diesel fuel were procured and delivered to 6 communities to conduct fodder production on 140 ha lands, which had not been cultivated for 20-25 years, and improve 87ha degraded community pastures. The communities provided co-financing, which will be further invested in alternative livelihood programs and/or further development of briquetting culture; The organization of fodder production on 140 ha and improvement of 87 ha degraded pastures that fully compensate the recovery of 1000 ha degraded forest and forest-adjacent degraded pastures are completed and now are in monitoring phase.    For the performance of output 2.3 the following actions were conducted: a) In Koti village (Tavush region) a small dairy production unit was equipped by solar panels and water heaters to escape annually ca 60m3 firewood consumption and promote environmentally friendly technologies; b) the project, through the SGP mechanism and methodological support, chose “Lori student union” NGO to implement an energy-efficient program in Dzoragyugh community of Lori region. The kindergarten and the school which completely depend on firewood will be switched to solar energy -solar panels and water heater; and c) Study on Energy-efficient ovens application in Tavush region was completed in March 2019. Study draft results are available: 238 households in 13 settlements of Tavush marz were interviewed, as a result of introduced EE ovens 394 m3 wood (equivalent to 1,5-2,0 ha forest standing volume) or 4,728 mln AMD was saved, d) Through the SGP mechanism, “Children fund of Armenia” (COAF) started implementing a backyard berry farming project in Debet community of Lori region to increase local households’ income, e) “Lore rescue team” NGO through UNDP-SGP mechanism constructed a forest recreation amusement park to promote youth support engagement, rescue trainings, and to conserve forests.    As for output 2.4, the design of the behavioral experiment (started in Q4 2018 and completed in Q1 2019) aiming at reducing deforestation in Haghartsin and Teghut communities (Tavush region) is completed and has entered the implementation stage.    For output 2.5, the following activities were completed: forest inventory, soil sampling and laboratory processing of forest carbon for 300 sample plots, (including ca.270 forest inventory and 30 soil, litter and herbaceous sample plots) was completed by December 2018. The national coefficients for major forest types of northern and north-eastern major forest types were developed by Q2 2019. The technical workshop will be organized in September 2019 to demonstrate the Carbon Benefit Platform and to transfer SLM/SFM project data onto that platform.    The overall assessment is still “Moderate Satisfactory” due to mostly postponed deliveries of the project, explained by forest sector reforms, velvet revolution, but also may be a result of insufficient adaptive management efforts.    To increase the effectiveness of adaptive management efforts the PIU meticulously addresses the MTR recommendations through the design and implementation of its activities. Most of the MTE recommendations are already covered or are being implemented. | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **UNDP Country Office Programme Officer** | Moderately Satisfactory | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | Since the start of SLM/SFM project, 4 forest enterprises (FEs) - Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut have amended forest management plans covering 80,491 ha total area with integrated biodiversity, ecosystem services and carbon studies protocols.    Velvet revolution of May 2018 has brought drastic changes in the political and governing set up of the country including major changes in the personal, policies and implementation modalities. The reforms are still ongoing. Despite several UNDP requests for extended discussion and approval of FMPs, approval of amended FMPs is previewed for summer-autumn 2019. Recently the government came up with the new TOR for forest management plans (which includes 3 additional protocols developed by UNDP on biodiversity, ecosystem services and carbon) and requested UNDP to support piloting it. By the end of the project (extended till end of 2020) UNDP will update FMP for additional 5 forest enterprises. The project registered the following major achievements so far towards Objective and Outcome level indicators and targets:  • 71,765 ha High conservation value forests (HCVF) have been delineated in Lori and Tavush regions, including 50,803 ha HCVF in protected areas including Dilijan NP and 20,962 ha in managed forests (Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs)  • 1,682 ha degraded forests have already been restored in 6 FEs of “Hayantar” SNCO out of the 2000 planned for 2018.  • 318 ha will be done in autumn 2019. Fodder production on 140 ha and improvement of 87 ha degraded pastures that will fully compensate for recovery of 1,000 ha of degraded forest and forest-adjacent degraded pastures are completed and now are in monitoring phase.  • Briquetting facility of the “Mets Parni community public climate revolving fund” (Lori region) was established. The production of ca.300 t straw-hay-dust and other bio-residual-based briquettes is equivalent to ca.1000 m3 firewood or around 7-8 ha saved forest area.  • The forest inventory, soil sampling and laboratory processing of forest carbon for ca.250,000 ha forest area was completed in December 2018.  The project already received approval of a 1-year no-cost extension (the project will be completed in December 2020 instead of the planned date of completion in December 2019).    The 1-year extension was conditioned by political processes in the country and forest sector on-going reforms. It was also well-recommended by MTE. In order to complete the remaining actions in time, the project needs to apply adaptive management practices and innovative approaches and ensure better integration and ownership of surrounding communities in proposed forest management practices.    Given the above circumstances, the overall rating for project’s overall and implementation progress is “Moderately Satisfactory”. | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **GEF Operational Focal point** | Moderately Satisfactory | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | Project overall activities are on track with certain delays related to ongoing forest sector structural and administrative reforms and political changes in the country through 2018-2019. We expect more efficiency in joint actions and institutionalized support to forest sector reforms. As an example of efficient collaboration with the project for 2018 I would like to mention the jointly implemented micro-grant program for socio-environmental entrepreneurship in Haghartsin and Teghut villages of Dilijan consolidated community located in Dilijan national park. | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Project Implementing Partner** | Satisfactory | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | As representative of the Project Implementing Partner and member of Project Management Board, I state that despite some delay in achieving Project targets, particularly for the support to forest sector reforms, drafting and approval of forest management plans and restoration of degraded forest ecosystems, I rate the overall Project progress as “Satisfactory”. | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Other Partners** | *(not set or not applicable)* | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | *(not set or not applicable)* | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser** | Moderately Unsatisfactory | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | The project has passed its midpoint and entered a critical concluding phase in implementation. While progress has been noted towards most of the Objective and outcome level indicators, the project is likely to fully achieve 13 indicator targets and is uncertain to meet the remaining 11 targets, as confirmed by the MTR. With the current pace of implementation, reported level of progress and existing policy level challenges faced by the project, there still exists the risk of underachievement and the project expects to arrive by project closure with major shortcomings. As such, at this point in project implementation, project achievement of overall Objective is rated by RTA as Moderately Unsatisfactory. The next reporting period will be crucial for understanding the overall project progress and may result in MS rating if most of the MTR and RTA recommendations will be fulfilled.    - Regarding the progress made towards achieving the Project Objective on sustainable land and forest management, out of the 3 indicators that will manifest the achievement of this objective, the one that is notable is the number of forest management plans (FMPs) integrating considerations of biodiversity, ecosystem services, climate mitigation and community resource use. As stated in the PIR, it is highly unlikely that the project will produce 11 FMPs by project end. It expects to draft 9 FMPs (already drafted 4 plus 5 new plans covering 70,984 ha of forest area will be developed in the remaining time) unless the tender process is delayed. This unfortunate result is largely due to unclear status of the ongoing forest sector reforms (reorganization of institutions and their assignments) in the country as well as inconsistent messages from the Ministry of Environment on FMPs. The issue of changing the target of 11 FMPs to 9 FMPs will be discussed by the project in the upcoming PMB meeting but as of today achievement of this indicator remains uncertain.    - In terms of community development plans, the project supported revision of eight (8) community development plans in Lori and Tavush marz and provided targeted assistance to communities for improvement of degraded forest and forest-adjacent pasture-lands and reviving horticulture-based fodder production.    - The RTA notes the fact that the carbon benefits for the forestries with complete FMPs have been measured (though still needs to be validated) and constitute about 70% of the target, making achievement of this indicator as likely.    - With respect to the total area under sustainable forest management (target of 250,000), the reported figures amount to 80,461 ha or 32% of EoP target. The RTA notes that the team is doing its best in the current circumstances and understands that consequences of the 2018 political change in the country and ongoing institutional reforms constitute the major impediment to formal approval of FMPs by the government. And here the RTA agrees with the midterm evaluator that the project should promote draft “provisional” forest management plans that can be implemented prior to official government approval thus lifting the major obstacle to FMPs implementation and consequently to attainment of the EoP target.    Given the above, the overall progress towards achieving the project objective is rated MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory).    Under Outcome 1 on integration of sustainable forest and land management objectives into planning and management of forest ecosystems, out of 8 EoP targets, the project expects to attain only half considering the current level of progress across all indicators:  - As already noted, the project drafted 4 FMPs (out of 11 expected) yet to be formally approved by the government with 5 FMPs still sitting in the pipeline. The RTA understands the successful attainment of this indicator largely depends on the work to be done by partners with the project to contribute incrementally to the baseline forest management plans, focusing on adding value related to biodiversity, ecosystem services, and climate change aspects. Since the baseline situation has not materialized as envisioned (i.e. GIZ was not able to make the contributions that had been initially planned), the project now considers reducing the target to 9 FPMs, perceived as feasible. As reported, this issue will be discussed, and approval sought in the upcoming Project Board meeting.    - Forest carbon stock measurements guidelines for measuring carbon stocks in the north eastern forests of Armenia” (developed by the project) has been forwarded to the Ministry of Environment to become an officially accepted protocol for any forest carbon accounting activities (both national and international projects).    - Given that a National Forest Policy, and a National Forest Inventory (NFI), which are two of the foundational elements to effective and sustainable forest management, are lacking at the national level, the project must do whatever possible in the remaining timeframe to contribute to progress on these fronts in a meaningful way. There is also an outstanding issue with the forest monitoring protocols that consider ecosystem services. The ongoing forest sector reforms and political changes in the country (largely out of control of UNDP) constitute a major roadblock at the moment but the project hopes the issue be resolved and protocols developed by end of this year.    - Progress is noted on capacity building activities of the project targeting forest staff, pasture stakeholders and forest dependents; the reported cumulative numbers of trained stakeholders are either at the EoP target level or close to envisaged end results.    Given the above, the overall progress towards achieving the expected outcome is rated MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory).    Under Outcome 2 that focuses on demonstration of sustainable land and forest management practices, out of 13 envisaged end results, the project is likely to achieve 8:  - As validated by the MTR, according to the drafted FMPs for Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut forest enterprises of Tavush and Lori regions, HCVF have been identified covering 71,765 ha or 84% of EoP target, of which 13,912 ha in Ijevan state sanctuary, 2,660 ha in Ijevan FE, 8,506 ha in the Noyemberyan FE, 5,256 ha in Gugarq FE of which 3,126 ha in Margahovit state sanctuary, 4,540 ha in Yeghegnut FE and 33,765 ha in Dilijan National Parik with Yew Grove sanctuary. The remaining balance of 13,235 ha are to be identified in the Gyulagarak “Sochut” sanctuary (2,576 ha) and when the forest management plans for the remaining 5 forest enterprises are completed, with appropriate management measures planned for the HCVF areas. Full attainment of this target remains uncertain considering the observed delays with FMPs development.    - This reporting period the project reports stable population trends and no negative changes in population of five indicator bird species.    - Out of 4,932 ha of degraded forests, the project reports 1,795 ha (or 36% of EoP target) of forests as being regenerated. In the reporting period, “Hayantar” SNCO restored additional 1,682 ha of degraded forest ecosystems in 6 forest enterprises through support to natural regeneration and coppicing. This constitutes the major progress since last year, but the project still has a long way to go to deliver the remaining balance of 3,250 ha, making the attainment of this target uncertain.    - Regarding degraded pasture and hay fields the project has been quite productive in the reporting period. The project hired a national expert on pasture management who identified measures to rehabilitate degraded pastures in the two communities. Following recommendations of the national pasture expert, a fodder production on 140 ha was set up and improvement of 87 ha of degraded pastures fully completed, which fully compensate for the recovery of 1,000 ha degraded forest and forest-adjacent degraded pastures, as envisaged by the project end result.    - Likely achievement is noted for the indicator on forest lands under multiple use regimes. 2,000 ha (vs the EoP target of 3,000 ha) of forest land has been identified and mapped for the purpose of multiple use regimes, including NTFP exploitation, development of agro-forest system, etc. in Tavush and Lori region. The remaining 1,000 ha of multiple forest use areas will be inventoried and mapped in 5 FEs of Lori region (Lalvar, Dsegh, Stepanavan, Tashir and Jiliza FEs) during 2019-2020.    - On the percentage decrease in number of livestock using natural forests for grazing and reduction in forest firewood collection areas in targeted forest, the project completed restoration activities in the target communities and FEs and monitoring activities in target forest enterprises’ and communities’ are ongoing and will be available by summer 2020 to confirm the pre-assessed decrease in percentage, which is 15-20% (corresponding to the end of project target).    - The project reports a reduction in forest firewood consumption for the targeted households of 25-30% (which is above the EoP target of 15%) as confirmed by a study on effectiveness of energy efficient stoves. The reported firewood consumption reduction percentage in the project target communities is yet to be validated, and for this purpose, a new study will be conducted to assess the effectiveness and resulting impacts of all project’s interventions aiming at reducing firewood collection area. Results of the study are expected to be available by TE.    Considering the above, the overall progress under this Outcome is rated MS (Moderately Satisfactory).    The project held its mid-term review in 2018 that assessed the achievement of project objective and overall outcomes as Moderately Unsatisfactory while the overall project effectiveness as Moderately Satisfactory. Overall, the MTR noted that the project strategy is technically sound but has some challenges in terms of the practical implementation. Following the MTE recommendations, TE and Project’s closure dates were revised (December 2020 now) to compensate for the lost time due to major changes in the government and the country. The MTR findings, conclusions and recommendations (19 total) are being used by PMU to mitigate the impact of delayed activities on the project’s final performance results.    The project held one Project Board meeting in December 2018. The project team and UNDP CO uses this high-level vehicle to accelerate implementation of key project outputs but there is obviously a limit on how much influence the team could exert given the ongoing major reshuffling in the government and forestry sector in particular. To the mid-term, UNDP has provided adequate project support and guidance, but the current level of implementation implies that the project may have benefited from stronger support to identify adaptive measures for more rapid implementation. Considering the challenging national context, going forward, more intensive engagement and support from UNDP may be required to keep the project moving ahead at an adequate pace.    Adaptive management (execution), communication, local stakeholder engagement, and reporting strong constitute the project’s strong points. The project team is professional and technically well-qualified.    In this reporting period, the project’s cumulative delivery against total approved amount in the prodoc and against the expected delivery of this year constitute 64.41%. As of 30 June 2019, 1,917,630 USD out of 2,977,169 USD were spent. The project team managed to pick up the financial delivery and has enough funding resources to run the project in the remaining timeframe. The project’s financial management procedures are in-line with international norms and conform to UNDP policies and procedures.    Summing up, a Moderately Satisfactory rating is given for project implementation.    Final recommendations:  - Diligently implement recommendations of the MTR as reflected in the Management Response Matrix to ensure the achievement of envisaged project’s indicators as well as sustainability of generated results after project closure.  - In the remaining timeframe, plan and act strategically to attain or come closer to attainment of envisaged EoP indicators.  - While there are government delays, the team needs to focus as much as possible on practical on-the-ground works to keep moving implementation ahead (for example, informal implementation of FMPs).  - Important too, the training work of the project should be carefully completed to support the future implementation of the newly developed forest management plans, which apply new and innovative concepts for sustainable forest management.  - Ensure better integration and ownership of surrounding communities in proposed forest management practices. | |

# Gender

**Progress in Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

This information is used in the UNDP-GEF Annual Performance Report, UNDP-GEF Annual Gender Report, reporting to the UNDP Gender Steering and Implementation Committee and for other internal and external communications and learning.  The Project Manager and/or Project Gender Officer should complete this section with support from the UNDP Country Office.

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| **Gender Analysis and Action Plan:** [ARMENIA\_Forest\_Gender\_draft\_analyses.docx](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4416/213295/1718287/1725259/ARMENIA_Forest_Gender_draft_analyses.docx) |
| **Please review the project's Gender Analysis and Action Plan. If the document is not attached or an updated Gender Analysis and/or Gender Action Plan is available please upload the document below or send to the Regional Programme Associate to upload in PIMS+. Please note that all projects approved since 1 July 2014 are required to carry out a gender analysis and all projects approved since 1 July 2018 are required to have a gender analysis and action plan.** |
| [Gender Analyses and Action Plan\_Arm2019.docx](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4416/213295/1727337/1741008/Gender%20Analyses%20and%20Action%20Plan_Arm2019.docx)  [Gender\_indicators\_forest2019.docx](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4416/213295/1727337/1741008/Gender_indicators_forest2019.docx) |

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| **Please indicate in which results areas the project is contributing to gender equality (you may select more than one results area, or select not applicable):** |
| Contributing to closing gender gaps in access to and control over resources: Yes |
| Improving the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance: Yes |
| Targeting socio-economic benefits and services for women: Yes |
| Not applicable: No |

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| **Atlas Gender Marker Rating** |
| **GEN2:** gender equality as significant objective |

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| **Please describe any experiences or linkages (direct or indirect) between project activities and gender-based violence (GBV). This information is for UNDP use only and will not be shared with GEF Secretariat.** |
| For the reporting period between project activities and gender-based violence (direct or indirect) were not observed. |

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| **Please specify results achieved this reporting period that focus on increasing gender equality and the empowerment of women.**    **Please explain how the results reported addressed the different needs of men or women, changed norms, values, and power structures, and/or contributed to transforming or challenging gender inequalities and discrimination.** |
| The project developed a draft gender analysis in early 2018. Traditionally, Armenian women were not considered important players in forest management, protection and other related activities, though they were always well-accepted as active users of many forest products (NTFP, pasture, hay lands, grazing, etc.). The project has been using this specific behavior pattern to enlarge the involvement of women in various activities of the project.    In particular:    1. From the start of the project 100 pasture stakeholders (of which 50 were women) (in 2018, 70 pasture stakeholders of which 40 were women) have undergone technical and skills training and development in sustainable pasture management in Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs. The topics of the trainings conducted initially by the inventory team and later by the project’s pasture and grassland management expert cover: forms, dates and methods of wild plants collection; recognition of useful and poisonous plants; the possible reasons of low milking, weight loss, strange colored milk and/or meat; rotational grazing for sustainable management of pasture lands; types and prevention means of pastures degradation.    2. Since the start of the project, 260 (of which 100 were women) forest dependents (200 persons in 2018, of which 85 were women) trained in technical skills for sustainable forest resource use in Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Gugarq and Yeghegnut FEs. Forest enterprise staff and local community members were informed and trained in sustainable use of different type of forest ecosystems, including water regulation, soil protection, climate regulation in-direct ecosystem values; NTFP sustainable for current and future generations; opportunities for eco-tourism development and alternatives to fuel wood consumption.    3. In 2018 the project organized two (2) trainings on indicator bird and butterfly species in project area in Vanadzor (Lori region) and in Zikatar (Tavush region). In both cases women are registered as participants in these trainings. The project organized a two-day seminar on remote sensing for forest monitoring for 5-6 July 2018 where 30% of participants were women representing Ministry of Environment, “Hayantar” state service, American University of Armenia, and State forest monitoring center. Also, the team for scaling up forest carbon inventory and lab analyses in 2018 was led by a woman. In the workshop on forest carbon calculations that took place on 4-7 December 2018, 40% of participants were women.    4. Forty (40) percent of the Project Advisory Board constitute women, an important achievement of the project for a more balanced discussion and decision-making. Many active public organizations and NGOs in Tavush and Lori region are headed by women and play an important role for the project, e.g. Bridge of Hope, an NGO headed by a woman, was awarded a grant for the installation of solar panels and solar heaters in 4 kindergartens. This NGO succeeded in completing the work effectively and on saved resources installed 3 more solar panel stations than planned in two kindergartens and one art-school. |

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| **Please describe how work to advance gender equality and women's empowerment enhanced the project's environmental and/or resilience outcomes.** |
| In the reporting period several cases were observed when work considerably advanced gender equality and women’s empowerment:  a) Project International gender adviser provided two solid documents (“Report on gender analysis within the framework of the project SLM/SFM” and “List of engendered indicators for the forest sector”) to strengthen the gender role in country’s forest sector and worked out engendered indicators for the forest sector activities․  b) Women actively participated in both theoretical and practical activities of the trainings on restoration and sustainable management of forest and forest-adjacent degraded pastures. On average their participation in the trainings was above 40%.  c) Women actively participated in restoration of degraded forest ecosystems conducted in 6 forest enterprises of “Hayantar” SNCO and in “Dilijan NP”. The total number of local forest staff and community members in degraded forest ecosystem restoration activities was more than 630, out of which 60% were women.  d) “Bridge of Hope” NGO which is based in Ijevan (Tavush marz) and was winner of SLM/SFM and UNDP SGP joint grant program to install solar panels and heaters in 4 communities kindergartens and schools, succeeded in saving funds and in 2018 installed extra panels and heaters in 3 new sites (2 kindergarten and 1 art school).  e) Women always compose not less than 30% of participants in all technical or policy trainings organized within SLM/SFM.  f) Women composed 30% of Haghartsin and Teghut villages (Dilijan consolidated community) microgrant program winners (15 women winners out of 52 microgrants) to start small entrepreneurship in forest-adjacent communities. |

# Social and Environmental Standards

**Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)**

The Project Manager and/or the project’s Safeguards Officer should complete this section of the PIR with support from the UNDP Country Office. The UNDP-GEF RTA should review to ensure it is complete and accurate.

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| **1) Have any new social and/or environmental risks been identified during project implementation?** |
| No |

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| **If any new social and/or environmental risks have been identified during project implementation please describe the new risk(s) and the response to it.** |
| N/A |

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| **2) Have any existing social and/or environmental risks been escalated during the reporting period? For example, when a low risk increased to moderate, or a moderate risk increased to high.** |
| No |

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| **If any existing social and/or environmental risks have been escalated during implementation please describe the change(s) and the response to it.** |
| N/A |

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| **SESP:** [ANNEX 4.SESP\_final\_docx.docx](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4416/213295/1659707/1659988/ANNEX%204.SESP_final_docx.docx)  **Environmental and Social Management Plan/Framework:** *not available* |
| **For reference, please find below the project's safeguards screening (Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) or the old ESSP tool); management plans (if any); and its SESP categorization above. Please note that the SESP categorization might have been corrected during a centralized review.** |
| *(not set or not applicable)* |

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| **3) Have any required social and environmental assessments and/or management plans been prepared in the reporting period? For example, an updated Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) or Indigenous Peoples Plan.** |
| No |

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| **If yes, please upload the document(s) above. If no, please explain when the required documents will be prepared.** |
| N/A |

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| **4) Has the project received complaints related to social and/or environmental impacts (actual or potential )?** |
| No |

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| **If yes, please describe the complaint(s) or grievance(s) in detail including the status, significance, who was involved and what action was taken.** |
| N/A |

# Communicating Impact

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| **Tell us the story of the project focusing on how the project has helped to improve people’s lives.**  **(This text will be used for UNDP corporate communications, the UNDP-GEF website, and/or other internal and external knowledge and learning efforts.)** |
| In collaboration with WWF-Armenia and with support from the Ministry of Environment of Armenia and Tavush marz regional administration, in summer-autumn 2018 the project implemented micro grant programs in Haghartsin and Teghut villages of Dilijan consolidated community. Being located in the center of Dilijan NP and having no alternatives for survival, the majority of local households put extensive pressure on park forest ecosystems through extraction of firewood and generation of unsustainable income. Following the RA Prime Minister’s speech and being guided by MoE of Armenia, the project and WWF-Armenia jointly announced a micro grant program for two villages with the simple objective: switch off the chain saws and switch on the brains, i.e. instead of unsustainable firewood extraction try to develop small-scale entrepreneurship. Out of around 200 applications, 49 were supported to develop various types of entrepreneurship: renovation of house to rent out guest rooms, processing of semi-precious stones, bakery, small textile enterprise, poultry, production of local traditional smoked cheese, wood carving, fruit and berries drying, sunflower seed processing, etc. The below video describes a few of this small-scale social entrepreneurship results. The monitoring visit was conducted jointly by MoE and Tavush regional administration.    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUTjEsfOz0k&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0d95\_MbB9eY5Rq7AEYTShpHwV5yD8tCWOl9qt8dCHSYqZfGOfsIaZC99 |

**Knowledge Management, Project Links and Social Media**

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| --- |
| **Please describe knowledge activities / products as outlined in knowledge management approved at CEO Endorsement /Approval.**    **Please also include: project's website, project page on the UNDP website, blogs, photos stories (e.g. Exposure), Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, as well as hyperlinks to any media coverage of the project, for example, stories written by an outside source. Please upload any supporting files, including photos, videos, stories, and other documents using the 'file lirbary' button in the top right of the PIR.** |
| Facebook: Mainstreaming Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Mountain Landscapes of North-Eastern Armenia    http://www.am.undp.org/content/armenia/en/home/projects/mainstreaming-sustainable-land-and-forest-management-in-mountain.htmlhttps://www.facebook.com/UNDPproject/    https://www.facebook.com/UNDPproject/    https://armeniasputnik.am/video/20190215/17281583/hovik-sayadyan-tsarahatum.html?fbclid=IwAR1w3DRI\_sCs5pDw\_28PfT3tbHsg8wiSNxSNFuREczP4FxU4ouAZoefSyu4    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUTjEsfOz0k&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0d95\_MbB9eY5Rq7AEYTShpHwV5yD8tCWOl9qt8dCHSYqZfGOfsIaZC99w    https://anau.am/hy/about-us/2695-2019-01-14-13-28-08?fbclid=IwAR0Gwm0DNP9znp5zqXj44D3NJGvCwfTVC1uO6k3sBllhNZFsou1L3MbotUw    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rywzysspixw&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR3dnDjbnsW5LekxYAq1nULqZLbOqpGwHk7XtYtVnctirkhpHwD3CfumCyY  http://www.mlyn.by/2019/01/armyanskie-spetsialisty-perenimayut-belorusskij-opyt-vedeniya-lesnogo-hozyajstva/?fbclid=IwAR1IrRDzZsVLHvh9YV3Jjr\_JT6j7cCT-y-tn3rFtuaFbu8o2NKhjGLSmMZQ    http://forestcommittee.am/2019/02/11/անտառային-կոմիտեի-և-հայանտառ-ի-մի-քա-2/?fbclid=IwAR2IHvwAuLsJpykWgTTTQalnkIAMI6MRmKYLTe-dOBMz2N9PDXbLez2PNc8 |

# Partnerships

**Partnerships & Stakeholder Engagment**

Please select yes or no whether the project is working with any of the following partners. Please also provide an update on stakeholder engagement. This information is used by the GEF and UNDP for reporting and is therefore very important!  All sections must be completed by the Project Manager and reviewed by the CO and RTA.

|  |
| --- |
| **Does the project work with any Civil Society Organisations and/or NGOs?** |
| Yes |

|  |
| --- |
| **Does the project work with any Indigenous Peoples?** |
| No |

|  |
| --- |
| **Does the project work with the Private Sector?** |
| Yes |
| Yes |

|  |
| --- |
| **Does the project work with the GEF Small Grants Programme?** |
| Yes |
| Yes |

|  |
| --- |
| **Does the project work with UN Volunteers?** |
| No |
| No |

|  |
| --- |
| **Did the project support South-South Cooperation and/or Triangular Cooperation efforts in the reporting year?** |
| No |

|  |
| --- |
| **CEO Endorsement Request:** [UNDP\_GEF\_Armenia\_4416\_CEO\_Document\_Final\_May\_25.doc](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4416/213295/1713499/1716664/UNDP_GEF_Armenia_4416_CEO_Document_Final_May_25.doc) |
| **Provide an update on progress, challenges and outcomes related to stakeholder engagement based on the description of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan as documented at CEO endorsement/approval (see document below). If any surveys have been conducted please upload all survey documents to the PIR file library.** |
| For the reporting period the progress with different stakeholder engagements was deepened and enriched:  1. Public organizations (“Bridge of Hope” NGO, “Mets Parni” climate public revolving fund, “Lore rescue team” NGO, “Children of Armenia” (COAF), “Lori student union” NGO) continued their fruitful collaboration with the PMU in their respective areas of interest: installment of solar panels and water heaters to substitute firewood consumption, production, delivery of straw-hay based briquettes and firewood substitution culture, establishment of forest recreation and amusement park to conserve forests, development of backyard berry production to generate income and substitute income from firewood extraction and sale, etc.  2. “Hayantar” SNCO signed a unique “Responsible party agreement” with UNDP to restore 2,000 ha of degraded forest ecosystems in 6 forest enterprises in Lori and Tavush regions. All forest staff and local community members (more than 600 people) were involved in forest restoration activities that started in October 2018 and continued over to April 2019. In the same way “Dilijan NP” SNCO signed a microgrant agreement to restore 120 ha of degraded beech forest ecosystems. More than 30 people (park staff and local community members) were involved in restoration activities.  3. More than 200 livestock breeders from 6 local communities (Gugarq and Margahovit from Lori regions and Lusadzor, Yenoqavan, Koghb and Berd consolidated communities from Tavush region) participated in the restoration of degraded pastures. 140 ha of degraded cultivated lands were returned to fodder production and 87 ha degraded pastures were directly improved for demonstration purpose. |

# Annex - Ratings Definitions

**Development Objective Progress Ratings Definitions**

(HS) Highly Satisfactory: Project is on track to exceed its end-of-project targets, and is likely to achieve transformational change by project closure. The project can be presented as 'outstanding practice'.

(S) Satisfactory: Project is on track to fully achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure. The project can be presented as 'good practice'.

(MS) Moderately Satisfactory: Project is on track to achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure with minor shortcomings only.

(MU) Moderately Unsatisfactory: Project is off track and is expected to partially achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure with significant shortcomings. Project results might be fully achieved by project closure if adaptive management is undertaken immediately.

(U) Unsatisfactory: Project is off track and is not expected to achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure. Project results might be partially achieved by project closure if major adaptive management is undertaken immediately.

(HU) Highly Unsatisfactory: Project is off track and is not expected to achieve its end-of-project targets without major restructuring.

**Implementation Progress Ratings Definitions**

(HS) Highly Satisfactory: Implementation is exceeding expectations. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and risk management are fully on track. The project is managed extremely efficiently and effectively. The implementation of the project can be presented as 'outstanding practice'.

(S) Satisfactory: Implementation is proceeding as planned. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and risk management are on track. The project is managed efficiently and effectively. The implementation of the project can be presented as 'good practice'.

(MS) Moderately Satisfactory: Implementation is proceeding as planned with minor deviations. Cumulative financial delivery and management of risks are mostly on track, with minor delays. The project is managed well.

(MU) Moderately Unsatisfactory: Implementation is not proceeding as planned and faces significant implementation issues. Implementation progress could be improved if adaptive management is undertaken immediately. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and/or management of critical risks are significantly off track. The project is not fully or well supported.

(U) Unsatisfactory: Implementation is not proceeding as planned and faces major implementation issues and restructuring may be necessary. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and/or management of critical risks are off track with major issues and/or concerns. The project is not fully or well supported.

(HU) Highly Unsatisfactory: Implementation is seriously under performing and major restructuring is required. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones (e.g. start of activities), and management of critical risks are severely off track with severe issues and/or concerns. The project is not effectively or efficiently supported.