

2019

Project Implementation Review (PIR)

**India Mountains Program**

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# Basic Data

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| **Project Information** | |
| UNDP PIMS ID | 4651 |
| GEF ID | 4743 |
| Title | Developing an effective multiple use management framework for conserving biodiversity in the mountain landscapes of the High Ranges, Western Ghats, India. |
| Country(ies) | India, India |
| UNDP-GEF Technical Team | Ecosystems and Biodiversity |
| Project Implementing Partner | IND10 (India) |
| Joint Agencies | *(not set or not applicable)* |
| Project Type | Full Size |

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| **Project Description** |
| The project will conserve globally significant biological diversity in the High Ranges of the Western Ghats. It will put in place a cross-sectoral land use management framework, and compliance monitoring and enforcement system to ensure that development in production sectors such as tea, cardamom and tourism is congruent with biodiversity conservation needs. The project will seek to establish a conservation compatible mosaic of land uses, anchored in a cluster of protected areas, managed to protect wildlife refugia and corridor areas on production lands. It will catalyze a shift from the current sector-focused land use planning system, which is deficient because it does not account for the adverse cumulative direct and indirect impacts of different production activities across economic sectors on biodiversity. Unless tackled, this situation is likely to lead to the loss of globally significant biodiversity in a key biodiversity area. Furthermore, the land management system will seek to avoid, reduce and mitigate the impacts of roads and other physical infrastructure in ecologically sensitive areas. In this regard, it will ensure that the indirect impacts of development are taken into account in decision making. In parallel, the project will seek to engineer a paradigm shift towards sustainable use of wild resources by local communities, where such use is currently unsustainable or is projected to become so as a result of changes in population and consumption.    In taking a landscape approach to conservationÔÇöthe project will work both within and outside of protected areas. It is designed to realize GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Objective One: Improve sustainability of Protected Area (PA) systems by seeking to expand coverage (by 13,400 hectares) and strengthen the management effectiveness of a cluster of PAs (around 26,600 ha) . The project is developing a new paradigm for the management of mountain landscapes, building on PAs. In doing so it will reduce pressures on PAs, and establish a replicable model that will improve the security of other PAs in the PA system in mountain areas. It will also improve conservation and management of forest fragments and other High Value Biodiversity Areas (HVBAs) in around 59,000 ha of adjacent production lands, thus advancing Biodiversity Strategic Objective Two: Mainstream biodiversity, conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes, seascapes and sectors. The foci production activities include tea and cardamom estates, forest plantations, private tree plantations, homestead agro-forestry, tourism, and urban and peri urban development. These production lands provide habitats vital to the survival of threatened wide ranging fauna, including Tiger, Leopard, Wild Dogs, Elephants and Gaur, amongst others.    NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND PLANS OR REPORTS AND ASSESSMENTS UNDER RELEVANT CONVENTIONS.  The project is directly supportive of and consistent with IndiaÔÇÖs national priorities and policies related to global environmental concerns and development. The National Biodiversity Action Plan, 2008 advocates the integration of biodiversity concerns into economic and social development plans and investments. The National Environmental Policy, 2008 prioritizes measures for conserving the mountain ecosystems in the country . The National Forest Policy 1988 stipulates that 60% of the countryÔÇÖs extensive mountainous region need to be under forest and tree cover while the National Wildlife Action Plan, 2008 stipulates expansion of the PA network to incorporate areas of representative biodiversity. Other national policies, legislation and guidelines relevant to this project are: National Water Policy (2002), National Agricultural Policy (2000), National Tourism Policy (1998), Biological Diversity Act (2002), Indian Forest Act (1927), Forest (Conservation) Act (1980), Wildlife (Protection) Act (1972), Environmental (Protection) Act (1986), The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act (2006), National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement on Environment and Development (1992), National Action Plan on Climate Change, (2008), and Joint Forest Management Orders and Guidelines. The project is also in consonance with the decisions adopted by the 10th Conference of Parties to the CBD on Mountain Biological Diversity and fulfillment of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Further, integrated management of mountain landscapes is identified as a priority area by the GEF-UNDP supported National Capacity Self-Assessment - Thematic Assessment Report on Biodiversity (2007). The project was discussed at length and endorsed as a priority in the GEF National Dialogue Initiative (NDI) which was initiated in 2010 and which concluded in September 2011. |

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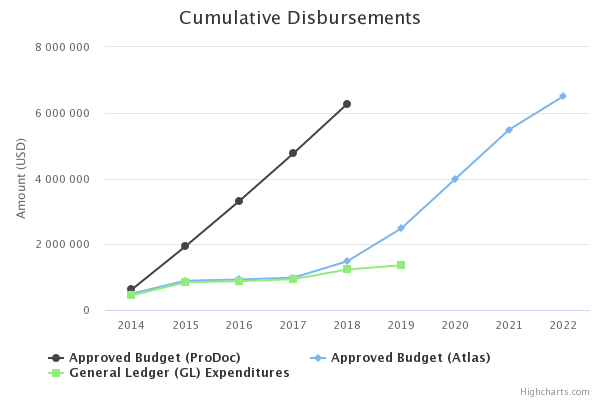
# Overall Ratings

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| Overall DO Rating | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Overall IP Rating | Moderately Unsatisfactory |
| Overall Risk Rating | Moderate |

# Development Progress

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| **Description** | | | | | | |
| **Objective**  **To protect biodiversity of the High Range Mountain Landscape of the southern Western Ghats in peninsular India from existing and emergent threats through building an effective collaborative governance framework for multiple use management.** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| Extent brought under multiple use management planning framework | 0 ha | *(not set or not applicable)* | 300,000 ha | This project covers an area of 3000 ,000 ha in the landscape. Studies have been commissioned to review the sectoral planning and governance system in the landscape. The data gathered in the first two years of the project will provide the basis for developing a collaborative framework on multiple-use management of this landscape.    All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018. | A Board-endorsed change to reduce this target to 219,878 ha is pending approval, and will be discussed with UNDP-GEF HQ. The project envisages multi-sectoral landscape management and conservation of 219878 ha in Anchunad and adjoining landscape of the Western Ghats. The landscape is home to rich and endemic biodiversity, has strong eco-cultural affinities and supports important production sectors like cardamom, tea and tourism. The prevalent management approach in the project landscape is sector specific and inadequate to address biodiversity conservation from a landscape based approach. The project aims to adopt a cross-sectoral approach, incorporating effective governance framework, multiple-use management and strengthened capacities for community-based sustainable use and management of resources.  Preliminary assessments have been undertaken to review the sectoral planning and governance systems in the project landscape. This would help analyze gaps to be addressed for mainstreaming biodiversity considerations in select sectors following a landscape-based approach. |
| Population status of following critical species remain stable or increases:    Nilgiri tahr    Grizzled giant squirrel    Tiger | 944    195    34 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Remain stable or increases by project end | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . | The project landscape harbors the largest global population of Nilgiri Tahr and a significant population of Grizzled Giant Squirrel, both of which are listed as threatened species in the IUCN Red List. In order to assess the population status of these threatened species in the project landscape, mapping exercise has been initiated by the technical agencies. A Board-endorsed change to remove tiger is pending approval, and will be discussed with UNDP-GEF HQ.    The census of the population of the Nilgiri in the project landscape is being undertaken by the Kerala Forest and Wildlife Department and will be completed by September 2019. Accordingly, the baselines will be validated. The population status of Nilgiri Tahr and Grizzled Giant Squirrel will be assessed again in 2020.  Population status of Tiger has been removed from the indicator as per the revised implementation strategy.    Assessment of the status of invasive species and its management in Tahr habitat has also been initiated. This would be highly beneficial in devising strategies for sustenance of prey resources, and thereby the Tahr population.  As a co-financing initiative, the forest department has constructed tree ladders to reduce road kills of Grizzled Giant Squirrel, Nilgiri Langur etc. This approach will be evaluated and replicated in the project landscape based on its success potential. |
| Percentage increase in habitats categorized as high conservation value over the baseline. | PA: 207.5 km2    Non-PAs: 846 km2 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 10% increase by mid-term and 20 % by project end.    10 % increase by mid-term and 15% by project end | There were certain concerns raised by a group of stakeholders regarding this indicator. In order to address this concern, consultations were done with a range of stakeholders, especially the local communities, based on which the project implementation strategy was revised. This indicator has now been modified.    The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018. | A Board-endorsed change to change this indicator is pending approval, and will be discussed with UNDP-GEF HQ. The project initially envisaged the expansion of Protected Areas for increased percentage of high conservation value habitats. However, based on stakeholder consultations held at state and local level and the revised implementation strategy of the project, the expansion of PAs indicated in the project document has been excluded.  The revised indicator adopted by the Board is “ Percentage of degraded habitats within the 6 Protected Areas rehabilitated”.  Specific interventions have been designed for restoration of degraded areas inside the Protected Areas  Towards the realization of this objective, 1500 Ha of degraded high conservation value area inside the PAs has been identified. Consultations with state departments and line agencies and key technical experts are being organized to finalize the restoration strategy. |
| Improvements in water quality in the water bodies of the landscape | BOD -1.5 mg/l at Neriamangalamand 1.4 mg/l at Bhoothathankett | *(not set or not applicable)* | 10% improvement by project end. | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . | Water bodies are highly relevant for maintaining the fertility and diversity of the landscape. In view of this, the water resource inventory was created for the project landscape based on field surveys. Water samples from 597 source points in the landscape were collected and quality assessment was carried out based on 17 parameters. Further analysis of the samples is being undertaken for determining water quality in terms of BOD content. Measures would be devised in consultation with state departments and technical agencies for mitigating pollution and improving water quality. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 1**  **Effective governance framework for multiple-use mountain landscape management in place** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| Landscape Level Land use Plan (LLLUP) developed adhering to multiple use management decisions | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 1 | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . | This project aims to develop a multi-sectoral governance framework for sustainable utilization of resources and conservation of biodiversity in the project landscape, covering an area of 219878 ha. Studies have been commissioned to review the existing sectoral planning and governance system in the landscape. Further gaps would be identified in each sector w.r.t mainstreaming biodiversity considerations. This would help develop an integrated multi-use management strategy for the landscape, while building convergence and synergies with relevant government agencies and line departments.    . Key steps involved for developing the mult-use management strategy:  1. Develop state of sector documents for production sectors in the landscape i.e. tea, coffee, cardamom, tourism, forestry and agriculture  2. Identify gaps to be addressed for mainstreaming biodiversity considerations  3. Devise strategies and action plans for mainstreaming biodiversity considerations across all production sectors through a participatory approach  4.Finalisation of landscape based multi-use management strategy based on the above through a consultative and participatory approach |
| Sector-specific biodiversity-plans compatible with LLLUP developed leading to effective integration of biodiversity considerations into production practices | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | At least six Sector Plans (Forestry, Tourism, Tea, Cardamom, Agriculture and Tribal Development) and Biodiversity Conservation Plans (5) in place | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . | Preliminary assessments were undertaken, and interventions are being identified for mainstreaming biodiversity considerations in 6 sectors through stakeholder and expert consultations. Draft framework has been developed for select sectors for further consultations. Some of the key strategies emanating from the consultations are given below:    Forestry: Formulation and implementation of policies and action plan for management and control of exotic species will be undertaken by the Department of Forest and Wildlife, State Government of Kerala. The same will be replicated to other landscapes on successful completion of pilot under the project.    Cardamom: Promotion of organic cultivation of shade-loving varieties of cardamom would be advocated for conservation of rainforests. Also, energy efficient technologies would be demonstrated for processing of cardamom for reducing fuel wood consumption.    Agriculture – Revision of packaging practices for fruits and vegetables would be initiated for mainstreaming biodiversity considerations at each stage from sowing to post-harvest.    Tribal Development – A Livelihood strategy document has been developed for Edamalakudy Panchayat. |
| Effective and functioning cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder institution (including conservation, livelihood and production) established. | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 1 | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018. | With revised implementation strategy in place, the project is being anchored with the Haritha Keralam Mission, Department of Planning, Government of Kerala.  The mission is an umbrella programme focusing on water conservation, agriculture, waste management and sanitation and hygiene. The Mission works closely with other missions of the government, state departments and line agencies to implement actions for sustainable development. A cross-sectoral, multi stakeholder committee will be set up under the Haritha Keralam Mission for sustainability and up-scaling of interventions under the project. |
| Number of key policy and management framework/ decisions adopted at local and state level related to sustainable mountain landscape management | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 7 (Wildlife Protection Act, Forest Conservation Act, Environment Protection Act, Forest Rights Act, Cardamom Rules, KDH Act, Land Assignment Act, Commodities Act), National Working Plan Code and other Management decisions | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . | An analysis of the various policies and management frameworks adopted by the government in the landscape is being undertaken to develop synergies and to identify gaps. The project aims to strengthen the implementation of existing policies and would formulate strategies for the identified gaps for sustainable utilization of resources and biodiversity conservation across the various production sectors in the landscape. |
| Improvement in Systemic Level Indicators of Capacity Development Scorecard (Annex 19) | 1. Capacity to conceptualize and formulate policies, legislations, strategies, programme 40%    2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes 33%    3. Capacity to engage and build consensus among all stakeholders 15%    4. Capacity to mobilize information and knowledge 35%    5. Capacity to monitor, evaluate and report and learn at the sector and project levels. 30% | *(not set or not applicable)* | 1. Capacity to conceptualize and formulate policies, legislations, strategies, programme 80%    2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes 80%    3. Capacity to engage and build consensus among all stakeholders 15% 80%    4. Capacity to mobilize information and knowledge 35% 80%    5. Capacity to monitor, evaluate and report and learn at the sector and project levels. 30% 80% | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . | The project envisages multisectoral landscape level management, involving a multitude of stakeholders. Towards improvement in systemic level indicators of Capacity Development Scorecard, capacity gap assessment is being undertaken will be undertaken for sectors and relevant stakeholders at state and landscape level. Based on the above, w.r.t indicators of UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard to identify gaps across select parameters will be identified and customized training modules will be developed by the end of 2019 for enhancing the capacities of stakeholders towards mainstreaming biodiversity considerations. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 2**  **Multiple use mountain landscape management is applied securing the ecological integrity of HRML** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| Improved management effectiveness PAs as measured and recorded by Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) (Note: endorsed change to reduce number of PA sites) | 168 out of 300 (Baselines need to be re-established as PA sites are shifting) | *(not set or not applicable)* | Increase in METT scores by 10 percent by year 3    By 20 percent by year 5 | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . | As per the revised implementation strategy of the project, 6 PAs are present in the project landscape. This change has been endorsed to this indicator. The METT scores for these PAs have been established through MEE exercise being conducted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. The revised baselines for METT for 6 Protected Areas under the project landscape will be available by end of 2019.      Based on the consultations held with State Forest and Wildlife Department, interventions have been designed to improve the management effectiveness of Protected Areas. These include the following:  1. Exotic and invasive species removal in 1500 ha area under PAs in next 3 years  2. Eco-restoration of degraded shola patches, degraded swamps and other fallow lands outside PAs.  3. Updation and implementation of specie-specific plans  4. Technical support to the State Forest Department to curb illegal wildlife trade on virtual markets |
| Proportion of degraded habitats rehabilitated within the PA system  (NEW Indicator approved; it was 'Increase in area under PA system') | To be established - baseline degraded areas to be measured for revised indicator (NEW baseline for revised indicator) | *(not set or not applicable)* | 30% increase (NEW target for revised indicator, TBC once baseline established) | Certain concerns were raised by a group of stakeholders regarding this indicator.  In order to address this concern, consultations were done with a range of stakeholders, especially the local communities, based on which the project implementation strategy was revised. This indicator has now been modified.    The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . | Indicator change endorsed by Board and RTA. The initial project document advocated to increase the extent of PAs in the project landscape. However, certain concerns were raised by a group of stakeholders regarding this indicator. In order to address this concern, consultations were held with a range of stakeholders, especially the local communities, based on which the project implementation strategy was revised. This indicator has now been revised removed, and the focus is on revival of degraded areas within the PAs. The indicator has been revised as “ Percentage of degraded habitats within the Protected Area system”. |
| Number of new demonstration programmes/ featuring biodiversity friendly production practices (e.g. curing units/ energy efficiency options/ farming practices) adopted | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 20 | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . | The project landscape supports a wide range of production sectors such as tea, cardamom, coffee etc.  Energy-efficient interventions in these sectors would pave way for improved livelihood status and sustainable utilization of resources. Discussions with Central Institute for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CIMAP) has been initiated for energy efficient distillation process for lemon grass.  The assessment and demonstration will commence by the last quarter of 2019 in select project areas. |
| Areas of forest fragments/ HVBAs in tea gardens inventorised and secured (Note: this indicator was missing from results framework and has been re-added in 2019 based on ProDoc) | 0 | - | 4,000 ha | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . . | Mapping of high value biodiversity areas and forest fragments in tea gardens is being undertaken by technical agencies and will be completed by March 2020. Consultations and discussions with the State Forest Department and other relevant stakeholders have been conducted to devise strategies and action plan for securing select areas in tea gardens. For eg: Green Corridors |
| % reduction in fuel wood consumption for processing in tea and cardamom using energy efficient technology and improved design (indicator, baselines and targets will have to be re-visited once the Sector Plans are prepared by mid-term) (Note: this indicator was missing from results framework and has been re-added in 2019 based on ProDoc) | Baseline to be established in the first year | -- | 10% decline over baseline usage | *(not set or not applicable)* | Based on the learnings from the earlier UNDP project on Energy Conservation in Small Sector Tea Processing Units in Southern India, several interventions have been selected to be up scaled using improved technology for reducing fuel wood consumption in tea and cardamom sector. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 3**  **Strengthened community capacities for community based sustainable use and management of wild resources** | | | | | | |
| **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 community representatives/ PRIs trained in biodiversity mainstreaming activities | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 500 | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . | Mainstreaming of biodiversity will be effective only with participation from local communities, since they have socio-cutural and economic association with the landscape. In view of this, focus group discussions were held with 11 Gram Panchayats and gaps identified for building capacities on mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in Annual Plans. Further, the project team has initiated demonstration model at one Gram Panchayat through existing government schemes for showcasing mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in sanitation.  the capacities of local communities is also being being built on waste management, water conservation and marketing of Non-timber Forest Produce.  Training and capacity building programmes will for the local communities and elected representatives will commence in October 2019. |
| Number of new micro-enterprises at individual/SHG/ CBO/ and other local institution levels based sustainable resource use | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Target to be defined after design of the micro-plans | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . | The project landscape has abundant natural resources, and therefore scope for development of livelihood options through micro-enterprises. In this regard, a Comprehensive Draft Livelihood strategy for the landscape has been developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders, based on which micro enterprise development would be planned. The micro-enterprise development would be finalized by March 2020.      Further, community resource persons were trained in enterprise development in the project landscape in partnership with Kudumbashree Under this initiative, branding of NTFP (Honey) was carried out and handholding of ethnic community members for participation in a national level sales event of Community based organisations (CBOs) was demonstrated. |
| % reduction in biomass consumption in lemon grass enterprises through adoption of improved technology. | 494,361 kg/ year | *(not set or not applicable)* | 10 percent reduction by 3rd year and 20 percent by project end. | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . | As per the consultations with Centre for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, new and improved technologies will be demonstrated by March 2020 to reduce the consumption of biomass in lemon grass enterprises. Assessment of % reduction will take place prior to Mid-term review. |
| Appropriate model agreement between different agencies on the effective implementation of FRA as evidence through sustainable use and protection of biodiversity in Edamalakudy Panchayat | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 1 | All project activities have been officially put on hold by the State Government of Kerala since February 2015 due to a grievance raised by a group of stakeholders. However, adequate measures have been taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, State Government of Kerala and UNDP to address the concerns of stakeholders. UNDP on the request of State Government of Kerala has revised the implementation strategy of the project which has further been approved by the Project Steering Committee at national and state level. The state is now in process of finalizing the implementation and fund flow arrangements. The field level activities under the project will resume by September 2018.    . | Edamalakudy Grama Panchayat has unique socio-cultural traits and endemic means of livelihood. The project envisages sustainable utilization of resources and biodiversity conservation in the GP by reinstating the traditional practices of agriculture and other traditional knowledge inherent in the community. In view of this, preliminary investigations were undertaken in the landscape to assess the present socio-cultural and economic fabric of Edamalakudy GP. Based on the baseline obtained, further initiatives and implementation strategies would be formulated for synergy with the concerned agencies. |
| Number of development plans of PRIs/ CBOs that incorporate bio-diversity friendly practices (Note: was missing from Results Framework in error and added in 2019) | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 11 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Focus group discussions were held with 11 Gram Panchayats (PRIs) and gaps identified for building capacities on mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in Annual Plans. Select areas have been identified such as agroforestry, horticulture and floriculture, ecotourism, organic farming etc. for demonstration of pilots.  Training and capacity building programmes for the local communities and elected representatives will commence in October 2019. |
| **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): | 21.7% |
| Cumulative GL delivery against expected delivery as of this year: | 21.7% |
| Cumulative disbursement as of 30 June (note: amount to be updated in late August): | 1,361,539 |

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| **Key Financing Amounts** | |
| PPG Amount | 88,600 |
| GEF Grant Amount | 6,275,000 |
| Co-financing | 30,000,000 |

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| **Key Project Dates** | |
| PIF Approval Date | Mar 22, 2012 |
| CEO Endorsement Date | Dec 3, 2013 |
| Project Document Signature Date (project start date): | May 15, 2014 |
| Date of Inception Workshop | *(not set or not applicable)* |
| Expected Date of Mid-term Review | Dec 1, 2020 |
| Actual Date of Mid-term Review | *(not set or not applicable)* |
| Expected Date of Terminal Evaluation | Jan 14, 2022 |
| Original Planned Closing Date | May 14, 2019 |
| Revised Planned Closing Date | Mar 14, 2022 |

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| **Dates of Project Steering Committee/Board Meetings during reporting period (30 June 2018 to 1 July 2019)** |
| 2019-06-04 |
| 2018-07-24 |
| 2018-10-09 |

# Critical Risk Management

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| Current Types of Critical Risks | Critical risk management measures undertaken this reporting period |
| Financial | As per a Government Order of the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, the project funds are being routed through the budget of Government of India. This is leading to delays in transfer of funds from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India to the implementing agency, Haritha Kerala Mission in the Government of Kerala. |

# 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 field activities under this project were on hold from February 2015- August 2018 by the Government of Kerala due to some concerns raised by a group of stakeholders. As a result the project milestones haven't been achieved on time. However, efforts were made at the highest level by the Government of India and UNDP to revise and finalize the implementation arrangements of the project in order to address the concerns raised. The revised implementation arrangements under the project were approved by the National Project Steering Committee and the Government of Kerala in August 2019. As per the revised implementation strategy of the project, the project is now anchored with the Haritha Kerala Mission.  Owing to the sensitivities in the implementation of the project, the implementing partner - Haritha Kerala Mission, Government of Kerala, has decided to hold the Inception workshop of the project in November 2019 after on-ground implementation of select activities. This would help mobilize support of the local communities in favour of the project and mitigate further risks involved. |

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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 CO endorses the comments from Project Manager on delays in achieving key milestones under the project. The duration of the project was from 2014-18. However, the activities were put on hold by the State Government of Kerala, due to some concerns raised by a group of stakeholders. With the revised implementation strategy in place, the project re-started in 2018. The project has also received one-time extension till March 2022. As decided by the State Government, the Inception workshop of the project will be held after implementation of certain activities. The mid-term review is scheduled in December 2020. The Terminal Evaluation of the project will take place in March 2022. |

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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 implementation has been on hold and a project extension was granted this year, extending the operational closure from May 2019 to March 2022. This resets the scheduling for the key milestones listed above: i) The inception workshop will take place in November 2019, ii) The mid-term review is proposed for late 2020, iii) The terminal evaluation is scheduled for early 2022. |

# 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 | The progress of the India High Range Mountain Landscape project is moderately satisfactory. \. The project was signed between UNDP, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, and Government of Kerala in May 2014. The project activities were put on hold for a period of 4 years due to some concerns raised by a group of stakeholders. The concerns were addressed by the Government of India and UNDP at the highest level. A revised implementation strategy was developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders especially the local communities which was approved by the Government of India in 2018. The implementation arrangements of the project have been finalized. As per the revised implementation arrangements, the project is now being anchored with the Haritha Kerala Mission (Planning Dept.), Government of Kerala.  The project is on-track to achieve the desired results. The progress against different outcomes has been highlighted below:  Outcome 1:  Review of existing sectoral planning and governance system in the landscape is being undertaken to identify gaps and devise strategies for mainstreaming biodiversity considerations across production sectors. As per the initial consultations and focus group discussions with relevant stakeholders, several interventions have been identified in the Forestry, Cardamom, Agriculture and Tribal Development sector for mainstreaming BD and sustainable NRM practices. This will be done through a landscape-based approach for synergized actions. Haritha Kerala Mission has been identified as a Special Purpose Vehicle by the Government of India to anchor the project. The Mission is an umbrella programme directly aligned to the objectives envisaged under the project and would also serve as an effective and functioning cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder institution for sustainability of the efforts and up-scaling of initiatives under the project. Capacity gap assessment are being undertaken by Kerala Institute of Local Administration for relevant stakeholders across various parameters. Customized training and capacity building programmes will be developed for enhancing the capacities of select stakeholders on landscape- based approach and mainstreaming BD and sustainable NRM practices  Outcome 2:  As per the revised implementation strategy, the Protected Areas under the project landscape have been reduced from 8 to 6. The scores for Management Effectiveness Evaluation for these PAs will be validated by the end of 2019 by the Wildlife Institute of India. Based on the initial discussions with the State Forest Department, several interventions have been identified for improving the management effectiveness of the protected areas such as Removal of exotic and invasive alien species in 1500 hectares area, eco-restoration of degraded shola patches and degraded swamps, updation and implementation of specie-specific plans, technical support to the front-line staff to curb illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife crime. Interventions have been identified to reduce the dependency of communities on natural resources. Energy efficient interventions have been identified in select sectors to reduce the biomass consumption in consultations. Discussions were held institutes of national repute like Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants and other government agencies and line departments.  Outcome 3:  In order to strengthen the capacities of communities for community based sustainable use and management of wild resources, focus group discussions have been held with 11 local level bodies (Gram Panchayats) to identify priorities, issues, concerns, capacity gaps for sustainable resource management and conservation. Based on these consultations, a draft strategy and action plan has been developed to reduce diversify the livelihoods of local communities, reduce resource dependency and mainstream biodiversity considerations. The areas identified for demonstration of pilots as per the initial discussions held are Agroforestry, horticulture and floriculture, eco-tourism, waste management, value addition of select products and services. Special measures are being devised for one of the Gram Panchayat – Edamalakudy which has 100% tribal population, to reinstate the traditional knowledge and practices of agriculture inherent in the community.  The project management units have been established at national, state and landscape level to support the Government in smooth implementation of the project. The Annual workplan for the 2019 and 2020 has been developed and approved by the National Project Steering Committee. The PMU with support from implementing partners has mobilized the support of local communities and also mapped synergies with schemes, programmes, missions and plans of the Government at national and state level. The project has also received one time extension from GEF till March 2022Potential risks have been identified and measures have been designed in consultation with the government to mitigate the same. The PMU has prepared a comprehensive stakeholder management plan to ensure participation of all relevant stakeholders for smooth implementation of the project. The project will be able to deliver the expected outcomes within the stipulated time | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **UNDP Country Office Programme Officer** | Moderately Satisfactory | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | The overall progress of the India High Range Mountain Landscape project has been 'moderately satisfactory' over the reporting period, and the implementation progress (IP) rating is given accordingly. The project is on track to achieve the desired outcomes, giving a development objective (DO) progress rating of 'moderately satisfactory'.    For progress towards development objective and outcomes much work is underway. Draft framework has been developed for devising a landscape level strategy and action plan through a participatory approach. Sectoral plans for Forestry, Agriculture, Tea, Coffee, Cardamom, Tourism and Tribal Development are being reviewed. This would help in developing Sector Specific action plans for mainstreaming biodiversity considerations in select productions sectors following a landscape-based approach. Initial consultations with key government departments and agencies and local level institutions have helped prioritizing several interventions for incorporating sustainable natural resource management practices in production sectors in the landscape. Pilots on the same will be demonstrated at select clusters in the project landscape. A cross sectoral and multi stakeholder platform – Haritha Kerala Mission has been identified as an institutional mechanism to sustain and upscale the initiatives under the project.  In order to improve the management effectiveness of the Protected Areas under the project landscape, gaps have been identified across several parameters such as technical capacities, financial capacities, enforcement etc. Interventions have been designed in select areas as per the priorities at national and state level. These include removal of exotic and invasive alien species, eco-restoration of degraded shola patches and degraded swamps, updation and implementation of specie-specific plans, technical support to the front-line staff to curb illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife crime. For reducing the dependency of communities on natural resources, the project has identified diverse and innovative solutions such as use of energy efficient technologies and creating alternate and sustainable livelihoods. Technical partners with subject expertise are being engaged; convergence and synergies with on-going programmes and schemes of the government at the centre and state level are being mapped for collaborative action.  Gaining the support of the local communities and institutions has been one of the challenges for smooth implementation of the project. The project has successfully mobilized community support for sustainable use and management of resources. All the 11 local level bodies (Gram Panchayats) have been clustered as per their priorities, issues, concerns, capacity gaps for sustainable resource management and conservation. The initial consultations with relevant stakeholders highlight Agroforestry, horticulture and floriculture, eco-tourism, waste management, value addition of select products and services, as the areas for short term interventions under the project, which would be up-scaled and replicated by the government as a part of co-finance.    For implementation progress, the delivery of the project is 23% and is moderately satisfactory considering the time taken to begin the implementation phase. The project has received a one-time extension till March 2022. In order to expedite the implementation of the project, the flow of funds from the centre to the state should be smooth. This is a critical risk to the project as noted in adjustments section. This would require interventions both at centre and state level and discussions are underway to streamline the funds transfer.    Role of government departments and agencies, technical agencies, subject matter experts and field staff would be highly critical to achieve the desired outcomes within the project period. The SESP of the project will be updated by the end of 2019 in consultation with all relevant stakeholders including the government at centre and state level. Despite the challenges, the project has benefited from strong government ownership and other project governance including timely meetings of the project board to assess and consider progress towards resolving the opposition to the project. | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **GEF Operational Focal point** | *(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** |
| **Project Implementing Partner** | *(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** |
| **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 Satisfactory | Moderately Unsatisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | Over the reporting period the project was granted an exceptional 34-month extension by UNDP-GEF. The project began in 2014, however was put on hold by the State Government of Kerala in 2015 due to some concerns raised by the elected representatives from the project area regarding probable impacts of the project that was eventually escalated to SECU. Following the SECU process, changes to the project implementation strategy have been agreed, documented and implemented, and implementation recommenced in accordance with the new implementation strategy including a new implementing partner, removal of the contentious project sites (cardamom growing areas) and amendment to the results framework to remove expansion of protected areas. The project has done well to recommence activities following the long cessation putting the project more clearly on track to achieve targets. Progress towards development objective (DO) is ‘moderately satisfactory’ and implementation progress (IP) ‘moderately unsatisfactory’. This is the same DO rating as that given by other assessors in this PIR. I have given a lower IP rating than the UNDP CO on the basis of the delivery challenges and slippages, although I acknowledge that this is still an excellent turnaround for this project over the past year. This is evident in the improvement in ratings since last year’s DO and IP ratings of ‘highly unsatisfactory’.    PROGRESS TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES (DO)  The project has only re-commenced implementation over the reporting period, however the long extension granted has provided an additional almost three years to reach the project targets. In parallel, in the last reporting period, results framework changes were endorsed by the Project Board and the prior RTA that will support the achievability of targets. These have not been adopted fully in this PIR as some changes are proposed at the objective level (see below) and need the concurrence of UNDP-GEF HQ as they lie outside of UNDP-GEF policy. Nevertheless, based on the extension and the project’s efforts to re-establish foundational activities, progress towards targets is ‘moderately satisfactory’ and at this stage targets can be achieved within only minor shortfalls if implementation proceeds well. It is somewhat difficult to assess progress towards targets this year since the project has essentially been ‘reset’ to its inception phase. I have therefore based my assessment on the fact that baselines are being established, indicators and targets clarified, and foundational efforts underway that will support progress against each indicator.  The achievement of the project objective will be measured by establishment of a multiple-use management planning framework, stable populations of indicator species, improvements in water quality and an increase in habitats categorized as high conservation value. Reviews of the sector-based planning and governance in the project landscape are underway to inform the development of the multi-sector landscape management that will be progressed by the project. Fuller reporting on the development of this new framework should be possible in the next PIR. Baselines for responses in species numbers and water quality are being re-validated and progress will only become clear later in the project. The Project Steering Committee has endorsed changes in the overall size of the project landscape (reduction to remove contentious site), indicator species (removal of tiger that is only found at the removed site) and requested a change in the high conservation value target (to focus on degraded areas). As these changes lie outside of UNDP-GEF guidelines on indicator framework changes, the RTA is consulting with UNDP-GEF HQ on whether they can be adopted. If not, the project will need to reinterpret these indicators to see how they can be best achieved and maximize global environmental benefits. A notation has been made alongside relevant indicators in the DO progress tab.  Outcome 1 will put in place the multiple-use governance framework. Gap assessments and sectoral studies are underway to inform this landscape framework, the development of sector-specific biodiversity plans and the identification of policies to be strengthened to support the target of at least seven policy and management frameworks/decisions adopted. These can still be achieved by project close if the clear processes for their development (listed in the DO progress tab) are followed in a timely manner. The project has a revised approach towards the target of establishing a cross-sector, multi-stakeholder institution. This is now proposed to be established initially as a committee under the Haritha Kerala Mission. It should be possible to agree upon the TOR and mandate for this prior to the next PIR. Finally, capacity gap assessments are being completed to inform the detailed design of capacity development activities. This should be completed by the end of 2019 and meanwhile the PMU should confirm the original capacity development baselines remain current. The ordering of Outcomes 1 and 3 is proposed to change, along with shifts in indicators between outcomes.  Outcome 2 centres on implementation of multiple-use mountain landscape management. Baseline scores (METT) are being revalidated to support assessment of protected area management improvement. A reduction in the number of PA sites has been endorsed. Priority interventions at the remaining sites have been agreed, including IAS removal, restoration, and combating IWT. These activities will also support restoration of degraded habitats within the PA system, which has been adopted in place of the PA expansion target. The baseline for this revised indicator is being established and the target confirmed. A key target is the adoption of 20 demonstrations of biodiversity-friendly production practices. Initial discussions are already underway for some demonstrations and these are expected to commence by the last quarter of 2019. Establishing 20 by project close could be difficult but at this stage is still feasible with good implementation progress. The indicator on securing forest fragments in tea gardens and reduction in fuel wood consumption for processing had been inadvertently dropped from the ProDoc results framework and has been added to the PIMS+ database. Initial steps such as mapping and consultations are underway to support progress towards these targets.  Outcome 3 will strengthen community capacity for sustainable use and management of wild resources. Consultations are underway with local communities to confirm their capacity needs and interest in project activities. Training activities will commence in late 2019. A draft livelihood strategy has been developed, which will inform the development of new micro-enterprises. The target for this indicator still needs to be established and this should be confirmed by the PMU prior to the next PIR. Baseline assessments and detailed consultations are also underway for reduction in biomass consumption in lemon grass enterprises, development of model agreements, and incorporation of biodiversity-friendly practices within development plans (another indicator that was detected as missing from the PIMS+ results framework in error and has been corrected in this PIR). These remain plausibly within reach by project close at this stage, and progress is expected to be much clearer in the next PIR.  Additional work to establish/revalidate baselines is required due to the long delay since the initial baseline and based on indicator revisions. This work is currently underway by the PMU. The RTA will engage with UNDP-GEF HQ to confirm the extent to which objective-level indicators can be changed.    IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS (IP)  The project is now actively under implementation again after the grievance. The SECU process is very well documented in the last PIR and will not be repeated here. A key adaptive management action over the reporting period was to request and obtain a 34-month extension from the UNDP-GEF Executive Coordinator, giving the new operational closure date of 14 March 2022. Due to the exceptional length of the extension requested, the letter was signed by the GEF Operational Focal Point confirming her support to continue project implementation. The project work plans have been since reset to reflect the adapted project approaches and implementation strategy, and span across the new implementation timeframe. The project has been well-managed over the reporting period with a weak point being low delivery and an unresolved critical risk impeding funds flow. For this reason my IP rating is ‘moderately unsatisfactory’.  Over the reporting period a new PMU has been established at national and sub-national levels. This includes a decentralized PMU within the Haritha Kerala Mission, who is the new implementing partner for the project – a change that will help ensure stronger connection and engagement with local stakeholders. An inception workshop is planned for November 2019 to ensure stakeholders are aware of and engaged in the project’s recommenced implementation. The PMU should finalize the inception report as soon as possible after the workshop making sure stakeholder viewpoints and attendance are clearly documented. It is good to see a lot of attention being placed on local stakeholder engagement, as documented in the UNDP CO assessment.  The Project Steering Committee has been re-established, under the leadership of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change and with the engagement of Haritha Kerala Mission as new implementing partner, and has met and endorsed the project work plan for the extension period and agreed on associated shifts in project activities. More regular Project Steering Committee meetings might be needed as the project recommences implementation, and the PMU and UNDP CO should consider the need for additional meetings as needed to ensure good progress is made over the coming reporting period, as this will be a critical year for the project.  Despite the good progress made over the past year, the complex funds flow mechanism of the Government of India has impeded delivery results. For 2018, delivery was a somewhat low 59% but this is an okay result given that it represents the project’s ‘inception’ year and new PMU and implementation arrangements needed to be established. To mid-point of 2019 delivery is at a disappointing 13%, impacted by bottlenecks with transferring funds to the Haritha Kerala Mission. This is a critical risk for the project as listed in the adjustments tab. The UNDP CO is in regular discussion with relevant Ministries and supporting direct procurement and payments as possible to mitigate this risk and strengthen funds flow to the IP so that on-ground activities can commence. Even with the project extension, it will require strong attention to delivery and practical and efficient work planning to disburse the remaining 78% of the GEF grant (almost $5 million) by May 2022. Consequently, the PMU and UNDP CO should place enhanced attention on reviewing annual work plans and procurement plans, bringing in additional procurement support and advice from the CO and Bangkok Regional Hub as needed.  By necessity, the project has had to exhibit considerable adaptive management. For example, the implementation arrangements, project approaches and results framework have been adaptively reviewed following the SECU report and changes made to reflect this and mitigate the concerns of the grievance made against the project. These are now captured within revised and endorsed annual work plans. The project is urged to continue this attention on being adaptive to ensure strong implementation over the extension period. This includes the exact scheduling of the mid-term review, which could be commenced from as early as Q2 of 2020. The timing of this should be agreed based on the progress reported over the next year.  Attention to safeguards and stakeholder engagement is very good, and the PMU and UNDP CO are making sure that the project fully adheres to UNDP-GEF safeguards policy and well-anticipates any social and environmental risks. The project’s SESP is being revised following a detailed assessment and articulation of risks at each project landscape. These will be collated in an overall SESP that should be provided for RTA review ahead of UNDP India signature. If justified based on the revised SESP, additional management plans will be prepared and assessments completed. This can be reported in the next PIR.  The project has a GEN-2 gender marker rating and should have good opportunities to mainstream gender into project activities. A gender analysis was not completed during project development phase, and the PMU should consider the completion of a targeted gender analysis and gender mainstreaming plan to strengthen gender-mainstreaming potential.  The project has developed a communication strategy and action plan. This will help the project to reestablish positive outreach on proposed project activities and support stakeholder engagement and awareness about revised project approaches and implementation strategy. This will be important over the coming reporting period as on-ground activities commence.    RECOMMENDATIONS  I have the following recommendations to further improve performance:  1) Pay attention to M&E to support the re-validation of the results framework and new baselines/targets. The RTA will consult with UNDP-GEF HQ on the potential to adopt the Board-endorsed changes to the results framework; 2) Finalize an inception report following completion of the inception workshop, documenting stakeholder attendance and inputs; 3) Continue to pay enhanced attention to delivery, including risk mitigation measures to work around the challenging government funds flow arrangements. Engage additional procurement support from UNDP CO and advice form Bangkok Regional Hub as needed; 4) Complete the revision of the project SESP at landscape level and submit collated, revised SESP for RTA clearance ahead of signature by the UNDP CO. Thereafter revisit the Stakeholder Engagement Plan to confirm engagement mechanisms account for and help mitigate risks; 5) Consider the completion of a targeted gender analysis and gender mainstreaming plan; 6) Prepare for the mid-term review from early 2020 and make a decision on scheduling of the MTR based on progress made. | |

# 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:** *not available* |
| **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.** |
| *(not set or not applicable)* |

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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: No |
| 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.** |
| There are no direct linkages of the project activities with Gender based violence. However, the project intends to mainstream gender equality and women empowerment through implementation of select activities. |

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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 implementation strategy has been revised with a special focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women.  The project partnered with Kudumbashree - a community organization of Neighborhood Groups (NHGs) of women in Kerala, which has been recognized as an effective strategy for the empowerment of women in rural as well as urban areas: bringing women together from all spheres of life to fight for their rights or for empowerment. The overall empowerment of women is closely linked to economic empowerment.  This collaboration has helped built capacities of women on Entrepreneurship development and has also motivated them for starting micro enterprises.    The Annual Workplan of the project has been screened by the UNDP CO Gender Focal Point and specific activities have been made gender sensitive.  The Project Management Units established at state and landscape level have equal representation of women. There is more than 50% representation of women in the Project Steering Committees at national and state level.  A Gender Action Plan and Strategy will be developed and finalised in consultation with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India and Government of Kerala.  The Pro |

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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.** |
| The project has just entered the implementation phase and it is too early to report any progress on enhanced resilience through women's empowerment. |

# 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?** |
| Yes |

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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.** |
| New risks were identified through the grievance against the project by a local stakeholder (refer to detailed grievance documentation for response mechanisms including revised project implementation strategy). The project was put on hold since 2015 by the State Government of Kerala due to some concerns raised by a group of stakeholders. The concerns were addressed by the Government and UNDP at the highest level. A revised implementation strategy for the project was designed in consultation with a range of stakeholders especially the local communities. The strategy was approved by the Government and the project was given green signal for implementation in the year 2018. As per the revised implementation arrangements, the project is now being anchored with the Haritha Kerala Mission (Planning department), Government of Kerala.  In addition, heavy rains, flash floods and landslides impact on-ground implementation of activities in the project landscape. The Project Management Unit works closely with the Government departments and line agencies, especially the State Disaster Management Authority to mitigate such risks involved.  Other initiatives of UNDP led by Climate Change and Resilience Unit are also supporting the State Government of Kerala in assessing the impact of disaster in the state and devising action plan for recovery and risk mitigation. |

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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.** |
| Note that the SESP is currently being revisited to assess in detail if any risks have escalated. |

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| **SESP:** [4651\_Annex 10\_Environment and Social Screening Summary.docx](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4651/213467/1718217/1725127/4651_Annex%2010_Environment%20and%20Social%20Screening%20Summary.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.** |
| Yes |

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| **If yes, please upload the document(s) above. If no, please explain when the required documents will be prepared.** |
| A revised implementation strategy has been developed for the implementation phase of the project to address the concerns of stakeholders especially the local communities. The SESP is being revised. |

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| **4) Has the project received complaints related to social and/or environmental impacts (actual or potential )?** |
| Yes |

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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.** |
| The project was put on hold since 2015 by the State Government of Kerala due to some concerns raised by a group of stakeholders on the expansion of Protected Areas in the project landscape. The concerns were addressed by the Government and UNDP at the highest level. A revised implementation strategy for the project was designed in consultation with a range of stakeholders especially the local communities. The strategy was approved by the Government and the project was given green signal for implementation in the year 2018. As per the revised implementation arrangements, the project is now being anchored with the Haritha Kerala Mission (Planning department), Government of Kerala. |

# 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.)** |
| The project aims at mainstreaming biodiversity considerations across production sectors while sustaining the lives and livelihoods of people. The project would support a three-pronged strategy to enhance existing livelihoods, promote new and alternate options of livelihoods and support skill- based employment opportunities and sustainable natural resource management. The promotion of value-chains and market driven solutions will allow local communities to benefit from the economic systems that facilitates local entrepreneurship.  The project will also focus on strengthening the capacities of local level institutions and communities for sustainable natural resource use and conservation. Ensuring food security through improved cropping systems and better quality of water are one of the major components of the project which will have a positive impact on the lives of people,The project will also contribute to restoring the degraded ecosystems considering the post flood scenario in the state which will in turn help the local communities.  A communication strategy and action plan will be developed and implemented at national and state level to raise awareness, share project’s experiences and learnings and disseminate information or effective knowledge management. |

**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.** |
| Owing to the sensitivities involved in the project, the Implementing partner had insisted to put communication and outreach activities under the project on hold for a limited period of time to avoid negative publicity. A comprehensive communication strategy and action plan has been developed in consultation with the State govt. which will be implemented from the current year. This is going to revise the knowledge management and communication activities from what was originally detailed in the ProDoc in accordance with the revised implementation strategy.    More detail will be provided in the next PIR. |

# 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 |

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

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

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| **Does the project work with the GEF Small Grants Programme?** |
| No |

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| --- |
| **Does the project work with UN Volunteers?** |
| Yes |
| Yes |

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

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| --- |
| **CEO Endorsement Request:** [PIMS 4651 BD India Mountains FSP CEO Endorsement 28-8-13-revised.doc](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4651/213467/1667620/1667917/PIMS%204651%20BD%20India%20Mountains%20FSP%20CEO%20Endorsement%2028-8-13-revised.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.** |
| Stakeholder Engagement Plan  The project will build multi-stakeholder alliances and will engage with all relevant stakeholders for smooth implementation and synergised actions. The Stakeholder engagement can be looked at 4 levels.    1. At the local level    A pre-inception meeting will be held with the elected representatives at the Panchayats to discuss interventions at local level.Based on the same, rapport building activities will be taken up on an immediate basis. After the successful completion of these activities, an inception workshop will be conducted at the landscape level.    2. State Government Departments/ Missions    One to one discussions will be held with relevant government departments and line agencies at state and national level. Based on these discussions, areas of engagement of convergence will be identified. Under the leadership of the government at landscape level (District Collector), the areas of engagement with select stakeholders will be finalized for further action.    3. Civil Society Organisations  The project will engage with local civil society organizations for implementation of select activities, These organisations will provide required technical and field level support and will also help mobilise the support of local communities.    4. From private sector    A key private stakeholder especially in ecologically sensitive regions especially in mountain areas is the plantations owners. Kannan Devan Hills Producers company, UPASI, Cardamom Planters Association, Plantation Corporation of Kerala etc are one of the key stakeholders especially for mainstreaming biodiversity considerations in the tea sector. The project will work closely with these stakeholders to devise and pilot models for mainstreaming biodiversity in these production sectors. |

# 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.