**SGP Country Programme Strategy for OP7**

**NEPAL**

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**Rupa wetland and its watershed in Panchase Landscape**

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**OP7 Financial Resources - SGP Country Programme (estimated US$)[[1]](#footnote-1)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total SGP Grants to date since 1998: | **USD7,908,788** |
| OP7 GEF Core Funds: | USD $500,000 (tbc) |
| OP7 GEF STAR Funds: | **USD520,000** |
| OP6 GEF Core and STAR remaining balance (if applicable) | **USD400,000** |
| Other funds (secured) | **USD** |
| Other funds (expected/to be mobilized) | **USD900,000** |

1. **INTRODUCTION**

As a corporate programme of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), implemented by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) aligns its Operational Phase strategies with those of the GEF and cofinancing partners, and provides a global portfolio of innovative, inclusive, and impactful projects that address global environmental and sustainable development issues.

Action at the local level by civil society and community-based organizations, including women groups, indigenous peoples, youth, and persons with disabilities is recognized essential to form multi-stakeholder alliances to deliver global environmental benefits and contribute to the GEF-7 Programming Directions, UNDP’s Strategic Plan 2018-2021, and national priorities to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals and other international commitments.

This Country Programme Strategy (CPS) is the primary document guiding the development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the GEF SGP Nepal activities during the Seventh Operational Phase (i.e. 2020 - 2023). The CPS, which builds on around 20+ years of SGP work and experience in the country, specifically identifies the goal, strategic objectives and outcomes that GEF SGP Nepal proposes to achieve over this operational phase.

A key element of GEF SGP Nepal's strategy in OP7 will be the landscape approach to implementation of conservation and conservation-friendly development projects with participation of local communities. This is initiated to better focus grant-making and promote strategic programming and clustering of small grant projects with the aim to achieve greater impact and lead to synergies and opportunities for scaling up. Around 70 percent of the available GEF funds (including the core and the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources or STAR funds) will be used to fund projects in the selected landscapes. Enhancing the programme's role as a Grantmaker+ by strategically planning for the provision of services needed for achievement of greater portfolio impact will be another important element of the country programme. The strategy will also follow global approaches of 3 ‘Is’- innovation, impact and inclusion for the successful implementation of SGP projects in Nepal.

1. **SUMMARY BACKGROUND: KEY RESUTLS/ACHIEVEMENTS**

The GEF SGP Nepal Programme, which initiated in 1998, has funded a total of USD 7.9M to implement 232 projects. In addition, the Programme had also implemented seven Satoyama Initiative Projects (amounting USD 254,482) and four Every Drop Matters Projects (amounting USD 287,477) during the OP5 period. SGP Nepal was also successful in generating cofunding of USD9.25M which included 6.24M and 3.01M of cash and in kind cofinacing respectively.

Of the 232 projects, 77 are biodiversity, 68 are climate change, 50 land degradation, 13 are international waters projects, 5 are chemicals and 18 are capacity development and outreach projects. These projects are spread over 52 districts of Nepal representing 19 Terai district, 23 mid hills and 10 Himalyan districts.

The following are some of the **key achievements** made by the GEF SGP Nepal during its first to sixth operational phases.

* Transformation of over 1,200 ha. degraded slash-and-burn land to productive systems by applying agroforestry, particularly the Sloping Agricultural Land Technology (SALT), benefitting benefitted over 2,500 indigenous Chepang and Tamang households and conservation of over 1500 ha of river banks in the Kamala river and managing pastureland benefitting 1200 households
* Introduction of climate smart agriculture in over 40 ha (Tanahu) benefitting 68 families and promotion of organic farming in Dang, Sunsari, Bara, Rautahat, Dhanusaha.
* With the persistent advocacy of SGP supported project, Mercury Free Health Care Services and Mercury Free Dentistry has been formally adopted by Government of Nepal.
* Facilitated conservation of over 20 important wetlands including Rupa, Jagadihspur, Jakhera, Satyawati, Kupinde, Gajedi, Charinge, Betna and Taudaha with a total area of 6,300 ha.
* Promotion of renewable energy technologies such as solar *tukis*, rice husk stoves, Matribhumi stoves, community biogas, waste fed biogas, cardamom dryer, essential oil distillation unit, charcoal making kiln, portable solar water pump, hydraulic ram pump, solar based mushroom pasturisation and smoke hoods stoves.

* Supported local communities in conservation of important forest ecosystems, such as Gwalek, Panchase, Kankrebihar, Thada, and Patna, located in Baitadi, Kaski, Surkhet, Arghakhachi, and Kapilvastu districts respectively.

* Substantial contribution to conservation of endangered species, such as vultures (*Gyps bengalensis* and *Gyps tenuirostris) in Nawalparasi,*  Gaint hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*) in Kanchapur and Rupandehi, greater slaty woodpecker (*Mulleripicus pulverulentus*) in Kanchanpur, sarus crane (*Grus antigone*) in Lumbini and Gangetic dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*) in Kailali.

* Promotion of gender equality and social inclusion in natural resources management. For example implementation of 38 GEF SGP projects were led by women team leaders and eight projects were implemented by indigenous peoples’ organizations. Besides more than 60% of GEF SGP projects had recorded as indigenous peoples as primary beneficiaries. The GEF SGP projects on forest conservation and renewable energy technology promotion are being considered to ease women’s drudgery by reducing the time spent on firewood collection, cooking and cleaning utensils.

* GEF SGP grantees won 42 prestigious national and global awards, which includes 9 global awards- the Ryutaro Hashimoto Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development (APFED) Award (2008), UNEP Sasakawa Prize (2010-11), Stockholm Convention’s Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) Elimination Network (PEN) Awards (2011), UNEP Supporting Entrepreneurs for Environment and Development (SEED) Gender Equality Award (2011), Equator Initiative Award (2014), Infymaker’s award for developing 3-D mold (2017), Farming for biodiversity Judges’ Choice Award (2018) and Birdlife Nature’s hero Award in 2018.

With the successful implementation of the project, many projects are replicated and upscaled. Likewise, a couple of projects were also replicated in other countries with south-south cooperation.

**Replication within Nepal**

* Over 14500 Solar Tuki installed and Karnali Ujjylo initiated to promote Solar Tukis (2007)
* Home Employment Lighting Package and Solar Sisters initiatives to promote solar home system replicated in India and Srilanka (2007)
* Community managed vulture restaurant replicated in 5 other places in Nepal (2011)
* Slopping Agriculture Land Technology replicated in different hill districts in Nepal (2010)
* Making of Biobriquette and installation of improved distillation units were replicated by many community forest users groups.
* Rice husk stove manufacturing initiated; manufacturer has sold over 50,000 stoves
* Matribhumi efficient stove- 20000 installed/sold
* Carp-SIS polyculture replicated in 5 districts of Nepal
* Healthcare waste management practice replicated in 20 Health post and 2 hospitals
* Establishment of social enterprise- Honey, broomgrass and fishes, which aided in replication of bee-keeping, broom grass farming and Carp-SIS polyculture among the farmers in remote villages of Makawanpur.

**Upscale**

* On the basis of SGP projects in Panchase, EbA in Panchase was designed and implemented by UNDP
* Likewise, with the successful implementation of conserving slash and burn and Slopping Agriculture Land Technology, President’s Save Churia Programme is being implemented.

Likewise, a couple of projects were also replicated in other countries.

**Replication beyond borders (South-South Co-operation)**

* Home Employment Lighting Package and Solar Sisters replicated in India and Srilanka
* SALT technology replicated in Timor Letse
* Community managed vulture restaurant replicated in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh
* Charcoal based brick kiln firing is replicated in Rwanda
* Rice husk stove replicated in India

Besides, SGP Nepal also introduced Carp-SIS polyculture- an initiatives tested in Banladesh.

1. **COUNTRY PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT** 
   1. **Alignment with National Priorities**

Nepal has ratified a number of conventions which included CBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD and SC on POPs. Likewise, Nepal is also signatory to Minmata Convention on Mercury and Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit sharing (ABS). As such, Nepal’s plan and related Acts/ Policies including Forest Acts and regulation, Wetland Policy, National Park and wildlife conservation act, environment protection act, soil and watershed conservation act are in line with these conventions. Nepal’s 15th five year plan, commencing from 2020, envisions ‘prosperous Nepal and Happy Nepali’ and emphasized on high and sustainable production and productivity and Healthy and balanced environment. Table 1 and 2 briefly describe list and relevant conventions and national plans and country priorities in line with GEF SGP OP7 strategic priorities.

Table 1. List of relevant conventions and national/regional plans or programmes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Conventions + national planning frameworks** | **Date of ratification / completion** |
| Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) | Ratified on 23 Nov. 1993; Entered into force on 29 Dec. 1993 |
| CBD National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) | Approved by the Cabinet and came into implementation on 20 Jul. 2014 |
| Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) | Opened for signature on10 Oct. 2010  (Nepal is yet to sign the Protocol) |
| UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) | Ratified on 2 Jun. 1994; Entered into force on 31 Jul. 1994 |
| UNFCCC National Communications (1st, 2nd, 3rd) | Second communication in Dec.2014 |
| UNFCCC National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPA) | Prepared and came into implementation in Nov. 2010 |
| UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) | Signed on12 Oct. 1995 ; Ratified on 15 Oct. 1996 ; Entered into force on 13 Jan. 1997 |
| UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAP) | Prepared in Apr. 2004 |
| Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) | Signed on 05 Apr. 2002;  Ratified on 06 Mar. 2007. |
| SC National Implementation Plan (NIP) | Prepared in August 2017 |
| Minamata Convention (MC) on Mercury | Signed on 10 Oct. 2013 |
| UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) | Since 2015 |
| Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the UN SDGs | Report submitted in June 2017 |
| Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (The Tenth Plan 2002-2007) | Prepared and approved on 16 Oct. 2003 |
| GEF National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) | Assessment completed and reports prepared in 2008 |
| National Wetlands Policy | Revised the 2003 policy in 2012 |
| World Heritage Convention | Adopted in Paris on 16 Nov. 1972; Entered into force on 20 Sep. 1978 |
| CITES | Adopted on 03 Mar. 1973; Acceded by Nepal on 18 Jun. 1975; Entered into force on 16 Sep. 1975 |
| Convention on Wetlands on International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar) | Entered into force on 17 Apr.1988 |
| Nature Conservation National Strategic Framework for Sustainable Development | Approved by Cabinet in Jul. 2015 |
| 15th Five year plan | 2020-2024 |

* 1. **Gaps and Opportunities**

With the successful implementation of various projects, SGP Nepal has developed successful models, tested different innovative projects on biodiversity, wetland management, land degradation and climate change. Yet, with emerging new socio environmental challenges, few gaps have also been identified. Engagement of IP organisations in conservation initiatives, weak CSO capacities especially to tackle hazardous chemicals and addressing the issues of land degradation are ever increasing challenges. The issues and concerns of different abled people and their organization still need to be linked with our conservation projects. Likewise, Nepal being a landlocked country, except for few significant wetlands, there are limited scope for protection of international waters.

During consultation with IPs, it was observed that although they had implemented quite a number of advocacy projects, they have limited capacity to develop conservation projects and implement them. In order to understand their capacity, task was initiated to prepare database of IP orrganizations and few information on handful IP organizations were prepared.

The COVID-19 pandemic is now a global challenge and expected to last until a vaccine is developed. This has also increased the plastic consumption and thus increased the need for sound plastic management. With lockdown for months to combat COVID-19, it has seriously affected the smooth implementation of SGP projects. But, despite the increasing pandemic, project on organic farming, wetland management, renewable energy technology and water management are ongoing and these projects although not related to combat COVID-19, but complement to the healthy life to overcome the disease.

During OP6 project implementation, despite the call, SGP Nepal received very few proposals from two of the five landscapes selected and only a couple of projects were implemented in the targeted two landscapes. This indicated weak CSO capacities within the targeted landscapes.

**3.3 OP7 Strategic Priorities of the SGP Country Programme**

Based on national priority, UNDP CPD, SDG and global OP7 strategic priority, OP7 priority for Nepal is aligned. Table 2 summarises this alignment along with related project/ programme and action plans.

Table 2. SGP Country Programme’s alignment with SGP OP7 Strategic Initiatives and Country priorities/Projects/ Programmes

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1** | **2** | **3** |
| **SGP OP7 Strategic Initiatives - Global** | **SGP Country Programme’s OP7 Priorities** | **SGP Country Programme’s complementarity with GEF, UNDP (CPD and SDG), and other projects and programmes** |
| ***Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species***  Key objectives/focus:   1. Improve management effectiveness of protected areas through ICCAs and shared governance with private sector and government. 2. Improve community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches, including promoting blue economy (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, infrastructure, etc.) 3. Enhance community led actions for protection of threatened species | **Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species**   1. Improve community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches, 2. Enhance community led actions for protection of threatened species | Nepal Biodiversity action plan 2014-2020  Management of Forest Biodiversity outside Protected Area  Management of wetland, rangeland, mountain and agrobiodiversity;  SDG 14,15 |
| ***Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security***   1. Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in vulnerable ecosystems (mountains, SIDS, etc). 2. Increase diversification and livelihood improvement 3. Remove deforestation from supply chain and expanded restoration of degraded lands. | **Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security**   1. Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in vulnerable ecosystems of mountains. 2. Increase diversification and livelihood improvement 3. Remove deforestation from supply chain and expanded restoration of degraded lands. | CPD: Output 3: By 2022, environmental management, sustainable recovery and reconstruction, and resilience to climate change and natural disaster are strengthened at all level  Output 3.2. Policy and institutional mechanisms strengthened for integrating gender responsive CCA/DRR and environment management in national and key sector's development planning.  SDG 1, 2, 12  President’s Chure-Terai-Madhesh Progamme  Kaligandaki Corridor Programme  Forest for Prosperity Programme  Priminister Advanced Agriculture Progrmme  Regular annual Govt programme of Agriculture |
| ***Low-carbon energy access co-benefits***  Support implementation of Paris Agreement and the NDCs   1. Promote renewable and energy efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods. 2. Promote off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas. | ***Low-carbon energy access co-benefits***   1. Promote renewable and energy efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods. 2. Promote off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas. | RED+ Climate Adaptation programme  Rural Energy for Livelihood programme, Alternative Energy Promotion Centre,  SDG 7, 13 |
| ***Local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management***   1. Reduce and promote alternative to mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining 2. Promote plastics/solid waste management and circular economy 3. Reduce/remove use of chemicals in agriculture 4. Enhance local to global coalitions on chemicals, waste and mercury management | ***Local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management***   1. Promote plastics/solid waste management and circular economy 2. Reduce/remove use of chemicals in agriculture 3. Enhance local to global coalitions on chemicals, waste and mercury management | Waste management programme of municipality,  Organic Farming and climate smart agriculture farming initiatives |
| ***CSO-Government-Private Sector Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms***   1. Promote/enhance community voices and participation in global and national policy, strategy development related to global environment and sustainable development issues | ***CSO-Government-Private Sector Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms***   1. Promote/enhance community voices and participation in global and national policy, strategy development related to global environment and sustainable development issues | CPD Output 3.3. Mechanisms in place to enable the Government and private sector to increase investment in CCA/DRR, recovery and environment management; SDG 17 |
| ***Enhancing social inclusion (mandatory)***   1. Promote targeted initiatives 2. Mainstream social inclusion in all projects   (e.g. women/girls, indigenous peoples, youth, and persons with disabilities) | ***Enhancing social inclusion***   1. Promote targeted initiatives 2. Mainstream social inclusion in all projects | President’s women empowerment Programme,  Disability Friendly Initiatives, SDG 5 |
| ***Knowledge Management (mandatory)***   1. *Capture knowledge and lessons from projects and activities* 2. *Improve capacities of CSOs/CBOs* 3. *Conduct South-South Exchanges to promote technology transfer and replication of good practices* | ***Knowledge Management***   1. *Capture knowledge and lessons from projects and activities* 2. *Improve capacities of CSOs/CBOs* 3. *Conduct South-South Exchanges to promote technology transfer and replication of good practices* | UNDP |
| ***Results Management, Monitoring & Evaluation (mandatory)***   1. *Administer new M&E strategy in country programme and project design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms* | ***Results Management, Monitoring & Evaluation*** | UNDP |

1. **OP7 PRIORITY LANDSCAPES/SEASCAPES & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**
   1. **Grantmaking Within the Priority Landscape[[2]](#footnote-2)**
2. **Process for selecting priority landscapes and seascapes**

During OP6 CPS formulation, extensive exercise on landscape identification and baseline assessment were carried out. The OP6 CPS identified 5 landscapes. But for OP7, 3 landscapes (out of 5 from OP6), namely Lumbini, Chitwan-Makawanpur and Panchase are selected. The selection was also discussed during IPs consultation meetings where more than 40 participants from IPs organization and government officials also participated. Because of COVID-19 pandemics, no further consultation meetings could be organized but NSC members, NGO partners and donors were consulted to prioritise landscape through one to one conversation. While selecting the landscape, careful review of the OP6 grant making process, number of projects selected in the landscape, proposal received from the selected landscapes and results of the OP6 projects were also carried out. It was revealed that, no proposals were selected from one landscape (Bardiya-Kailali) and only two projects were selected from other landscape (Morang-Ilam). From both of these landscapes, very limited proposals were obtained. Thus, these two landscapes were not considered for further selection.

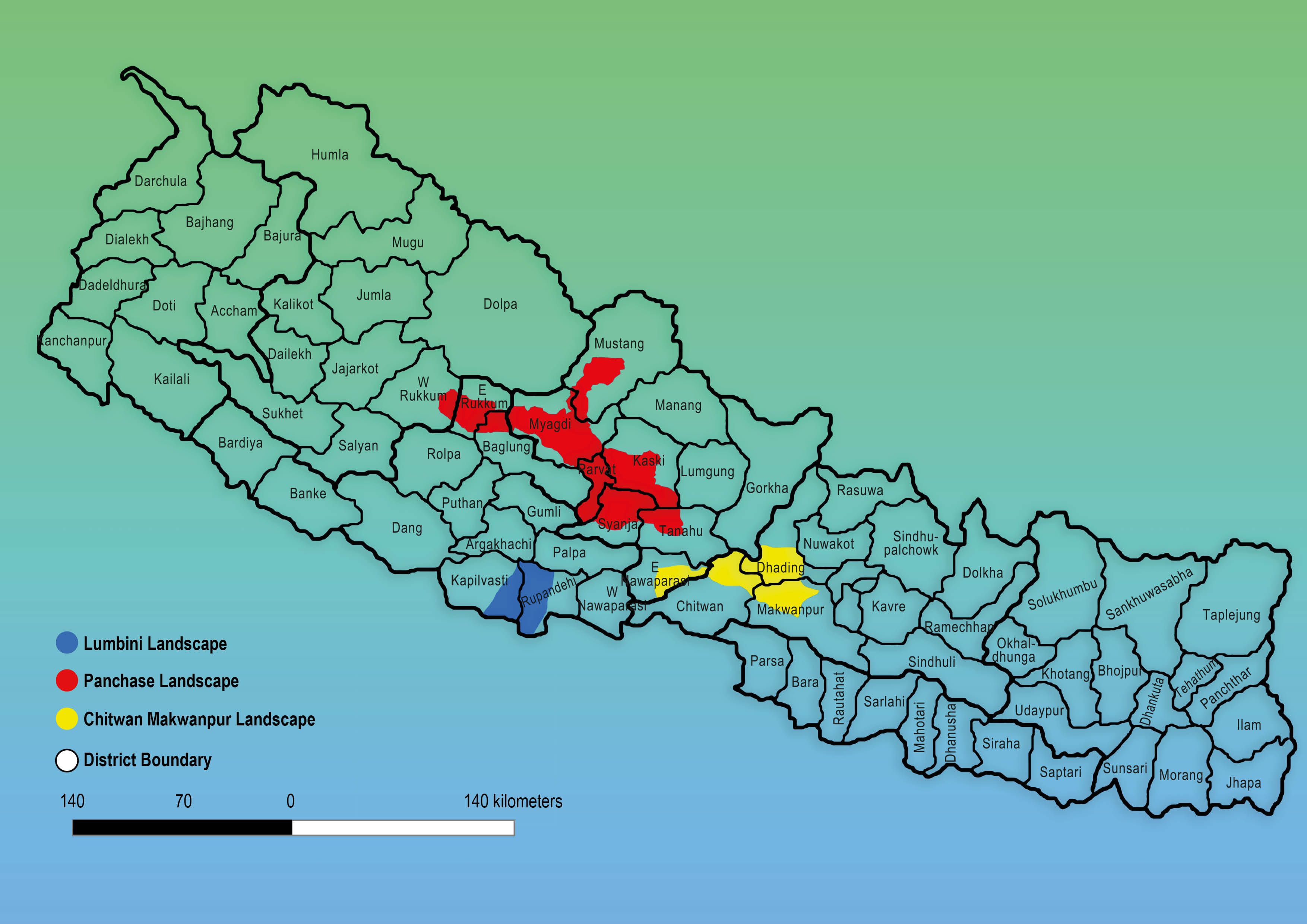
**b) Selected Landscapes for OP7**

In OP7, three landscapes are selected based on their unique landscape, representation of all ecological zone from lowland Terai to Highland Himalayan zone and trans-Himalayan zone, species richness, endemism and habitat for endangered species, Ramsar sites and world heritage sites, representation of protected area system and predominanace of indigenous peoples and marginalized communities. The landscape area and typology are given in the table 3.

Table 3. Landscape characteristics

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Landscape** | **Area (km2)** | **Key characteristics/justification for the selection** |
| Lumbini | 1,229 | High value Sal (*Shorea robusta*) forest ecosystem stretching over the lowland Terai-Madhesh and Chure ecological zones; prime habitat of threatened saras crane (*Grus antigone); giant hornbill*; includes a Ramsar wetland (Jagdishpur), and Lumbini - an important religious and culture site and a national pride. Served as corridor connecting Chitwan National Park and Banke National Park, Predominance of indigenous Tharus |
| Panchase | 4,551 | Landscape spread over to Trans-Himalayan zone, covers Himalayas including Mt Dhaulagiri, Mt Annapurna (both 8km high), Includes Panchase Protection Forest, which is one of the last remaining storehouses of mountain forest biodiversity in the country, including many endemic species of orchids; includes some important natural and Ramsar listed wetlands (such as Phewa, Rupa and Begnas lakes in the Pokhara Valley); Important bird area, predominantly inhabited by indigenous Gurung and Thakali people. Includes Annapurna Conservation Area. |
| Chitwan-  Makwanpur | 2,189 | Includes fragile Chure mountainous region inhabited by disadvantaged indigenous Chepang and Tamang communities where GEF SGP Nepal has past experience of implementing successful projects. Includes Chitawan National Park (World Heritage site), habitat of endangered Rhino, Tiger, Elephant; Important bird area |
| **Total 3** | **7,969** |  |

**Figure 1: Location of the three landscapes to be targeted in the OP7 period**



1. **OP7 Strategic Initiatives in the landscapes**

During OP7, the GEF SGP Nepal will primarily focus, within the selected landscapes, its activities in the following **thematic areas**.

1. Reclamation of degraded public and community lands, particularly focusing on (but not limited to) shifting cultivation areas in the Chitwan-Makwanpur landscape.

1. Promotion of green economy and enhancement of local livelihoods through forest and agriculture based micro-enterprises (such as NTFPs, ecotourism etc.).

1. Promotion and mainstreaming of crop diversification, and promotion of good agricultural practices, including innovative *climate smart agriculture*. The latter involves making agricultural production systems more productive, use inputs more efficiently, and making them more resilient to risks, shocks and long-term climate variability. Climate smart agriculture can reduce greenhouse gas emissions per unit of land and/or agricultural product and increase carbon sinks thereby contributing to the mitigation of climate change (FAO, 2013).

1. Promotion of renewable and alternative energy and efficiency in use of energy by building on and further expanding of the past successful initiatives.

1. Conservation of globally and nationally important ecosystems (such as World Heritage Sites, Important Bird Areas, nationally unique forest ecosystems), and endemic and threatened species of flora and fauna.

1. Conservation of wetlands, focusing on the globally and nationally important wetlands (e.g. Ramsar sites), particularly those located within the selected landscapes.

1. Conservation of agro-and forest genetic resources, and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from conservation of these resources.

1. Implementation of the government's recently developed Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) policy in the GEF SGP landscapes by encouraging co-funding from the private sector.

1. Implementation of community based REDD+in feasible areas.

1. Management of forest and wildfires that cause loss of biodiversity and contribute to global warming.

1. Public awareness and participation for elimination of Chemical and Persistent Organic Pollutants and its sources, including promotion of environmentally sound waste management practices in hospitals and other health care facilities.

1. Strengthening of CSO-government policy and planning dialogue platforms for conservation initiatives.

1. Promoting gender mainstreaming and social inclusion in GEF SGP focal area related conservation initiatives

1. Creating awareness and empowering local communities to participate in national and global environmental concerns.

Priority will be given to those aspects of the thematic focal areas that compliment government's identified priorities related to GEF-7 strategic priorities. Likewise, projects initiated and implemented by women, youth, Indigenous peoples, *Dalits* and other disadvantaged and marginalized social groups will also be prioritised. Around 70 percent of the total grant is expected to be allocated to projects within these three landscapes. The STAR allocation fund (approx. USD 520,000) which is received from land degradation focal area, will be used mainly in restoring degraded land.

* 1. **Grantmaking Outside the Priority Landscapes**

Around 30% of both core and STAR resources would be allocated for projects outside the targeted landscapes. These resources would be allocated to innovative projects and priority will also be given to Grantmaker’s Plus related projects/initiatives as below (note: these projects could be specific to the landscapes and included in section 3.1.), including CSO-Government-Private Sector Dialogue Platforms; Social Inclusion initiatives/projects; and Knowledge Management.

1. ***CSO-Government-Private Sector Dialogue Platform***

With the objectives of promoting role of CSOs as a “bridge” between and among the grassroots communities and their organizations, and also between them and the national planners and policymakers, the GEF SGP Nepal will support establishment of dialogue platforms across the selected themes. Some examples include: (i) national, landscape or district level forums to share experiences and lessons of different projects related to a particular thematic area, (ii) joint publication of project profiles and other scientific reports, and (iii) local networks of agro-seeds producers, horticulture or organic farmers, relevant CSOs, CBOs, and relevant local government agencies.

The dialogue platforms are expected to facilitate the uptake of good practices, and enhance communications among key stakeholders. Moreover, the platform can be used to communicate the experiences and lessons learnt from GEF SGP-funded projects to inform and influence policy at the local, regional and national levels. The platform at the national level can be managed by a suitable academic or training institution. Efforts will be made to network all GEF SGP grantees to allow for information exchange and sharing of experiences.

1. ***Promoting Social Inclusion, including gender equality and women’s empowerment***

There are several crucial barriers that limit full participation by women, *dalits* and other disadvantaged social groups in development activities in Nepal. Widespread gender biased attitudes, limited access of women to productive resources, and unfavorable conditions for women for participation and learning are some of such major barriers. High illiteracy rates, domination of *dalits* by other caste groups, poverty, and geographical remoteness are other key factors that act as barriers (ADB, 2010).Usually there is a lack of recognition of the forest based knowledge and skills of women and indigenous communities, which is speculated to have negative effects on forest conservation (WWF, 2013).

The GEF SGP Nepal’s social inclusion strategy in OP7 will be oriented to contribute to the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming (2011), which states that “the GEF Secretariat and GEF Partner Agencies shall strive to attain the goal of gender equality, the equal treatment of women and men, including the equal access to resources and services through its operations.” The policy states that “to accomplish this goal, the GEF Secretariat and GEF Partner Agencies shall mainstream gender into their operations, including efforts to analyze systematically and address the specific needs of both women and men in GEF projects.

The GEF SGP Nepal will strive to promote removal of the institutional and structural barriers to gender and social inclusion at different levels. It will also encourage and promote increased participation and benefit sharing by women, *dalits* and other disadvantaged social groups in managing forest and other natural resources for improved livelihoods. Emphasis will be given to capacity building of women, and other disadvantaged social groups for their meaningful participation in decision making processes. Engaging and empowering women and marginalized people in equitable sharing of benefits through meaningful participation in the GEF SGP-funded initiatives is another priority strategy.

Integrating Gender and Social Inclusion dimensions in all thematic and cross-cutting components of the country programme; enhancing capacity of CSOs and other partners and stakeholders to enable women and socially excluded groups to claim their rights in natural resources management; promoting a favorable institutional and policy environment for mainstreaming gender equality and social inclusion in GEF SGP focal themes (such as biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation) are some of the specific strategies to be implemented in OP7 period. The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nepal is expected to provide a strong basis for greater participation of women, disadvantaged social groups, and indigenous communities in different levels of government, access to opportunities, aid packages, and public services.

1. ***Knowledge Management***

Knowledge management will be an integral component of the GEF SGP Nepal in OP7. The objective of the programme's knowledge management efforts is to leverage lessons learned from the past GEF SGP projects, to replicate the successes in other suitable areas, and to inform and positively influence the relevant policies and practices. The concept is to use the power of knowledge to improve effectiveness and efficiency and to demonstrate the projects' impacts.

The GEF SGP Nepal’s knowledge management strategy in OP7 comprises of the following main components:

1. *Collection of information to monitor and evaluate the project portfolio.* Every GEF SGP grantee is expected to document the best practices and lessons learned and share these with GEF SGP office for entry into the country database and with other stakeholders and grantees. The success stories are documented and highlighted for replication and development of best practice guidelines.

1. *Analysis and codification of lessons learned.* The country programme will review, analyze, and codify results of the on-the-ground actions in the selected landscapes and elsewhere to distill and disseminate lessons which can be used for replication in other areas within the country and in other parts of the world.

1. *Effective and efficient dissemination of the knowledge gained.* The knowledge gained from implementation of the projects, particularly information on model projects and success stories, will be published in the UNDP and partners' (government and non-government) monthly e-newsletters, reports and other national as well as local print media. Audio-visual production of selected successful projects and dissemination through electronic media would be another strategy. The GEF SGP Nepal website will be reviewed and updated to make it more informative and user friendly. Review and learning workshops can be organized periodically to share experiences and lessons learned and to form a network of expertise for sharing of locally acceptable technologies and information pertinent to their need and for extending partnership for development. Observation tours to model projects and demonstration sites will be highly encouraged to individuals from civil society, local, provincial and national governments, UNDP, and other relevant local, national and international stakeholders.

1. *Knowledge uptake for application and improvement.* Stakeholders will be encouraged to apply the knowledge gained about good practices, replicate those practices in other suitable areas, and use the information to formulate or improve policy.
2. **COMMUNICATION PLAN**

An effective communication strategy and mechanisms is necessary to actively engage and update the concerned GEF SGP Nepal stakeholders. Information sources such as database, website, popular publications, and documentaries can be developed for greater awareness and dissemination. The GEF SGP office will make efforts to establish an effective and efficient south Asian regional network to exchange ideas, practices, knowledge, innovations, technologies and policy through the internet.

1. **RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND PARTNERSHIP PLAN**

In OP7, GEF SGP Nepal will make the following additional efforts to develop partnerships with local and international agencies and private sector to attract non-GEF funds to support the GEF SGP country programme.

* The links of GEF SGP with other UNDP-supported programmes and similar programmes funded by bilateral and multilateral donors (e.g. JICA, GIZ, USAID, Swiss, DFID, ADB, World Bank), INGOs (e.g. CARE, IUCN, WWF), government agencies (local, federal and national), and regional organisations (e.g. ICIMOD) will be further consolidated, expanded, and strengthened.

* Project proponents will be encouraged to obtain leverage funding from other donors, national and or local government and private sector aside from the GEF SGP grants. Additional funding from GEF SGP may also be considered after completion of the first phase of the project.

* Diverse activities will be promoted to generate internal core funds of the grantees, but this will be done in such a way that unnecessary burden does not fall upon poor communities. Resource mobilisation through partnership arrangements as cost-sharing and /or parallel funding will be encouraged.

* The possibility of establishing, in other areas, the type of Community Environment Trust Fund initiated earlier by the *Samudayik Digo Bikash Karyakram* (SADIKA) in Salyan and Sustainable Development Facility (SDF) in Surkhet with the support from GEF SGP will be explored.

* CBOs will be supported to improve their internal governance to make them as self-governing and self-sustaining institutions. Such CBOs, with the support of I/NGOs, are expected to attract matching funds from resources of the village municipality, Provincial government and others, for carrying out community development activities.

* An advisory group can be set up to guide and monitor the above activities so that resource mobilization and implementation of funds takes place effectively and transparently.
* Further opportunity will also be explored for SGP Nepal to to serve as a delivery mechanism of other projects and programmes;
* Potential private sector funding (e.g.in support of successful sustainable enterprises for scaling up).

The co-financing policy of GEF SGP Nepal in OP7 will be based on the past best practice, reflective of the nature of the programme as a demand-driven, grant-making entity duly considerate of the context and situation of the community and civil society stakeholders.

1. **Grantmaker Plus & Partnership Opportunities**

As usual, The SGP team and the NSC will assist communities and CSOs develop proposals to access other donors and funding facilities. SGP team will also encouraged local communities and CSO to apply for various national and global awards which would not only help in resource mobilization but also enchance the visibility of the initiatives. SGP team, when required, will also provide references to access funds from different donors.

1. **RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Potential risks to the GEF SGP Nepal can be categorized as the programmatic risks, and operational risks. Example of programmatic risks include the challenge of working with CSOs and CBOs that have a low level of technical and management capacity, and delays in programme implementation by CSOs and CBOs due to change in government policies or issuance of new directives. Programmatic risks have the potential to affect the ability of GEF SGP national programme to realize its goal and objectives. The risks may also affect day-to-day operations and financial management of the programme.

Some of the strategies to manage the programmatic risks include: (i) provision for flexible allocation of grant funding, (ii) clustering and focusing of grant portfolios within the selected five landscapes and focus areas, with the expectation that it will increase impact and reduce cost of monitoring, (iii) enhancing the GEF SGP’s role as a Grantmaker+, which is based on the programme’s experience and assets that were built up over the years and will create value beyond the grant-making by GEF SGP, (iv) increasing resource mobilization from diverse sources and enhancing partnerships with other donor-funded programmes and projects, and (v) strengthening collaborations with well-established and reliable past grantees. While selecting grantees from remote areas, especial consideration will be given to the need for external support and monitoring. The National Steering Committee will provide necessary strategic guidance and oversight and for addressing key any programmatic issues as required.

Operational risks are related to the capacity of GEF SGP grantee organization to implement the project successfully. It can be related to the technical capacity of the organization, timely availability of the financial resource (from GEF SGP and non-GEF SGP sources), or other unpredictable factors related to the politics or trade. Potential effects of climate change can be another important risk, particularly with respect to biodiversity and land degradation. One of the strategic measures to dealing with the operational risks will be mandatory provision of a risk analysis and risk management plan in all project proposals seeking grant from GEF SGP Nepal.

The projects’ risk management plan framework should identify and briefly describe the identified environmental and social risks that could be associated with a proposed project, judgment of the degree (low, medium or high) of the risk, probability (low, medium, high) of the risk, and risk management or mitigation measures. The risk analysis should state the critical assumptions and external factors upon which the success of project depends.

Ensuring social and environmental sustainability is an important objective of the risk management plan, which will be achieved through environmental and social risks screening of projects following the UNDP guidelines. This is required to “enhance positive social and environmental opportunities and benefits as well as ensure that adverse social and environmental risks and impacts are avoided, minimized, mitigated and managed” (UNDP, 2012).

Table 4. Description of risks identified in OP7

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Describe identified risk** | **Degree of risk (low, medium, high)** | **Probability of risk (low, medium, high)** | **Risk mitigation measure foreseen** |
| COVID-19 pandemic | high | high | Initiate projects without mass gathering, training one by one and initiating projects on wetland conservation, organic farming etc. |
| Policy changes | high | medium | Apply flexibility and work as per the changed policy |

1. **MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN**

Monitoring involves the collection and analysis of data about project activities. It allows project participants to keep track of project activities to determine whether project objectives are being achieved, and if not, what changes are necessary to improve the project performance. Evaluation considers the results and effects of a project in terms of the local, national and global environment and the quality of human life. The M&E is required at the project level, national level and global level.

**9.1 Monitoring and Evaluation guidance note**

The GEF SGP Nepal views M&E as an important component of projects. No project can be approved without an M&E plan, including quantifiable indicators and targets, where possible. Occasional group meetings and workshops of project managers and other key stakeholders will be organized to review and revise monitoring strategies that are best suited for the types of field projects being funded by GEF SGP Nepal.

The GEF SGP Country Programme Coordination office will analyse the M&E reports submitted by individual projects to keep track of the projects’ progress and give feedback to the organizations to make corrections where necessary. The projects will be visited preferably once in six months, or at least before the release of the second and third installments. The visiting team will interact extensively with the implementing CSO/CBO and other project stakeholders, and will also directly observe the progress in the field. Feedback, comments and suggestions will be given in writing to the implementing organization and reported to the National Coordinator and National Steering Committee. The release of the second and third installments shall be dependent on satisfactory reports from the organization and the visiting team. Public auditing of projects will be encouraged in order to maintain financial transparency and contribute to result-based management approach. Final evaluation may be done in a workshop mode, where the implementing organization and the stakeholders will together reflect on and evaluate the project and its outcomes.

**9.2 Monitoring and Evaluation at Project and country levels**

At the project level, the M&E facilitates the identification and resolution of problems, enhances project performance and ensures congruence with the GEF criteria. It also provides the basis for technical and financial accountability, builds local capacity to implement and manage projects successfully, and promote the identification and dissemination of lessons learned by participants themselves. GEF SGP Nepal encourages capacity building initiatives for grantees to enhance their skills and performance for producing higher impacts of the project intervention.

GEF SGP Nepal will continue to adopt participatory approach to project monitoring and assessment, which involves early consultation with the community members and stakeholders about project design, the problems to be addressed, and potential courses of action to be taken. Participatory research can be used to assess the baseline situation, to make an agreement on project concept, and to bring consensus about the project objectives and activities. A simple structure of the project level M&E plan is presented in Table 5

Table 5. M&E Plan at the Country Level

| **M&E Activity** | **Purpose** | **Responsible Parties** | **Budget Source** | **Timing** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country Programme Strategy elaboration | Framework for action including identification of community projects. | NC, NSC, country stakeholders,  grantees | A SGP planning grant to engage consultants may be used to update OP7 CPS. | At start of OP7 |
| As part of NSC meetings, ongoing review of project results and analysis. This includes an Annual CPS Review. | Assess effectiveness of projects, country portfolio; learning; adaptive management. | NC, NSC, UNDP Country Office. Final deliberations shared/ analyzed with CPMT colleagues. | Staff time, Country Operating Budget | At least annual review[[3]](#footnote-3) to ensure OP7 CPS is on track to achieve its results and make timely and evidence-based modifications to CPS as may be needed[[4]](#footnote-4). |
| Annual Monitoring Report Survey[[5]](#footnote-5) | Enable efficient reporting to CPMT and GEF. It serves as the primary tools to record and analytically present results to donors. | NC/PA in close collaboration with NSC. CPMT provides technical guidance support and receives final country submission for further action. | Staff time | Once per year in June- July |
| Country Portfolio Review | Methodological results capture of the portfolio at a given point to note impact level change as well as broader adoption. The goal is to support reporting to stakeholders, learning, and support to strategic development/ implementation of CPS. | NC, NSC | SGP planning grant to engage consultants may be used to undertake previous operational cycles impact review and utilize lessons for both OP7 CPS development and its implementation.  Global technical M&E support can be expected. | Once per operational phase |
| SGP Database | Ensure recording of all Project and Country Programme inputs in SGP database. | NC, PA | Staff time | Throughout the operational phase. Ensure quality assurance and completion of data prior to annual monitoring cycle (May- June of every year). |
| Audit | Ensure compliance with project implementation/management standards and norms. | UNOPS / External Contractor. NC/ PA to provide requisite support. | Global Operating Budget | Annually for selected countries on risk-assessment basis |

* 1. **CPS Results Framework**

Table 4: Results Framework of SGP OP7 Country Programme Strategy

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Alignment with SDGs**   * SDG1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero hunger),5 (Gender Equality), 7(Affordable clean energy), 12 (Rseponsible consumption pattern), 13 (Climate action), 14 (life below water) ,15 (life on land) ,17 (Partnership for the goal) | | |
| **Synergy with UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD):**  **CPD: Output 3: By 2022, environmental management, sustainable recovery and reconstruction, and resilience to climate change and natural disaster are strengthened at all level** | | |
| **OP7 SGP Programme Goal:** *Promote and support innovative, inclusive and impactful initiatives, and foster multi-stakeholder partnerships at the local level to tackle global environmental issues in priority landscapes and seascapes.* | | |
| **1**  **OP7 SGP CPS Strategic Initiatives** | **2**  **OP7 CPS Indicators and Targets**  **(Identify relevant targets for the** | **3**  **Means of verification** |
| Strategic Initiative 1:  *Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species*  1 Improve community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches,  2 Enhance community led actions for protection of threatened species | *40 ha of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (GEF core indicator 4.1)*  *At least two community-based protected area/ conserved area networks strengthened*  *Two endemic and/or threatened species and varieties of flora and fauna conserved*  *Two globally or nationally important wetlands conserved.* | *Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports)*  *Baseline assessment comparison variables (use of conceptual models and partner data as appropriate)*  *Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database*  *Country Programme Review* |
| Strategic Initiative 2:  *Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security*  1 Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in vulnerable ecosystems of mountains.  2 Increase diversification and livelihood improvement  3 Remove deforestation from supply chain and expanded restoration of degraded lands | *20 ha of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems (GEF core indicator 4.3)*  *10 ha of degraded agricultural lands restored (hectares) (GEF core indicator 3.1)*  *At least 3 number of linkages and partnerships for sustainable food production practices (such as diversification and sustainable intensification) and supply chain management (esp. SMEs)*  *At least 100 households of small-holder farmers supported towards the achievement of national Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets* | Individual project reporting by SGP country teams *(as part of midterm and final Progress reports)*  Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database  Country Programme Review  Socio-ecological resilience indicators for production landscapes (SEPLs) |
| Strategic Initiative 3:  *Low-carbon energy access co-benefits*  1 Promote renewable and energy efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods.  2 Promote off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas | *At least 1 KW of installed renewable energy capacity from local technologies (e.g on types of renewable energy technology biomass, small hydro, solar).*  *At least one innovative locally adapted energy solution demonstrations or scaling up and replication.*  *At least one renewable energy production and energy efficiency units established*  *At least 100 of households achieving energy access, with co-benefits estimated and valued* | Individual project reporting by SGP country teams *(as part of midterm and final Progress reports)*  Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database  Country Programme Strategy Review  (NSC inputs) |
| Strategic Initiative 4:  *Local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management*   1. Promote plastics/solid waste management and circular economy 2. Reduce/remove use of chemicals in agriculture 3. Enhance local to global coalitions on chemicals, waste and mercury management | *At least 1 ton of Solid and liquid Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), POPs and mercury containing materials and products removed or disposed (GEF core indicator 9.6)*  *At least 2 communities working on increasing awareness and outreach for sound chemicals, waste and mercury management.* | Individual project reporting by SGP country teams *(as part of midterm and final Progress reports)*  Strategic partnership with IPEN and Mercury GOLD country partners  Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), global database  Country Programme Review |
| Strategic Initiative 6:  *CSO-Government-Private Sector Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms*   1. Promote/enhance community voices and participation in global and national policy, strategy development related to global environment and sustainable development issues | *At least 2 CSO-government-private sector dialogues convened to support community voice and representation in national/ sub-national policy development.*  *At least 100 representatives from social inclusion group (indigenous people, women, youth, persons with disability, farmers, other marginalized groups) supported with meaningful participation in dialogue platforms.*  *At least 2 Public-Private Partnership on key global environmental issues promoted* | Individual project reporting by SGP country teams  Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), global database  Country Programme Review |
| Strategic Initiative 7:  *Enhancing social inclusion*   1. Promote targeted initiatives 2. Mainstream social inclusion in all projects | *At least 550 number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment (GEF core indicator 11)*  *At least 2 SGP projects led by women and/or mainstream concrete mechanisms for increased participation of women.*  *50% of SGP projects that have targeted support for Indigenous Peoples in terms of country level programming and management.*  *At least 2 SGP projects that demonstrate appropriate models of engaging youth*  *At least one SGP projects that demonstrate models of engaging persons with disability.* | Individual project reporting by SGP country teams  Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database  Country Programme Review |
| *Strategic Initiative 8:*    *Monitoring and Evaluation and Knowledge Management*   1. *Administer new M&E strategy in country programme and project design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms* | *At least 5 projects administering results management modalities in programme design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms.*  *Quarterly updating SGP database for effective data collection, management and analysis supporting gains in programme performance and learning.*  *At least 1 south- south exchanges at global and regional levels to transfer knowledge, replicate technology, tools and approaches on global environmental issues.* | Individual project reporting by SGP country teams  Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database  Country Programme Review |

1. **National Steering Committee Endorsement**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **NSC members involved in OP7 CPS development,**  **review and endorsement** | **Signatures** |
| Ramesh Aryal |  |
| Vijaya Singh |  |
| Narendra Rasaily |  |
| Ramhari Panth |  |
| Nigma Tamrakar |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| (Add more rows as necessary) |  |

**ANNEXES (optional)**

Annex 1: Landscape baseline assessment Report

1. The level of SGP OP7 resources is an estimated total of: (i) the GEF7 core grant allocation (to be reviewed annually by CPMT on the basis of performance, co-financing and strategic partnerships, demonstrated NSC commitment rates, and UNOPS delivery); (ii) approved STAR resources; as well as (iii) other sources of third party cost sharing & co-financing (country, regional and/or global levels). SGP countries with remaining OP6 balances that have not been pipelined will be expected to use these balances in line with the OP7 strategic approach in order to be coherent in terms of SGP programming and results expected. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Refer to the various guidance documents on landscape/seascape selection and assessments. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. It is recommended that the Annual CPS review is done close to AMR submissions for both processes to benefit from each other (suggested timeframe is May- July). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Please note OP7 CPS will be regarded as a dynamic document and can be updated by the SGP country team and NSC on a periodic basis to reflect any necessary adjustments to ensure maximum impact. This CPS update process should be part of the Annual CPS Review. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Timely and quality country level submissions to *Annual Monitoring Process* are mandatory. As a Global Programme, it enables aggregated reporting by CPMT to GEF, UNDP and other stakeholders. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)