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Agenda Item 02

**WORK PROGRAM
FOR THE
GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK FUND (GBFF)**

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having reviewed document GEF/GBFF.06/02, *Work Program for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund*, approves the Work Program comprising two projects, subject to comments made, prior and during the Council meeting and additional comments that may be submitted in writing to the Secretariat by July 1, 2026.

Total Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) resources approved in this Work Program amounted to \$20,544,000, including GEF project financing and Agency fees. The Work Program is comprised of the projects listed in Annex A.

With respect to the projects approved as part of the Work Program, the Council finds that each of these projects (i) is, or would be, consistent with the Instrument and GEF or GBFF policies and procedures, and (ii) may be endorsed by the CEO for final approval by the GEF Agency, provided that the final project documents fully address comments provided the CBD Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Council Members, and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAP) on the Work Program, and that the CEO confirms that the project continues to be consistent with the Instrument and GEF or GBFF policies and procedures.

All final project documents approved in this Work Program will be posted on the GEF website for information after CEO endorsement.

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Introduction

1. This Work Program is the fourth to be presented to the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) Council and requests \$18,818,169 of GEF project financing and \$1,725,831 in associated Agency fees for a total Work Program of \$20,544,000.¹ The Work Program leverages an indicative \$46,922,533 in co-financing.
2. The proposed Work Program contains two projects at the CEO endorsement stage, consistent with the GBFF Programming Directions framework.² These projects represent a new set of GBFF investments to advance many of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) Targets and in particular, targets 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 14, 18, 19, 21, 22, and 23.
3. The two projects in the Work Program cover two countries that will benefit from support from the GBFF, namely India and Papua New Guinea. 39.0 percent of total GEF project financing (including agency fees) will be directed to support actions by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), ranging from 38.4 percent to 40.2 percent between the two projects.
4. This cover note outlines key aspects of the proposed Work Program, including alignment with the GBFF action areas and KMGBF targets, programming analysis, outcome targets, and IPLC considerations. The Council is requested to review and approve the Work Program for the total resources requested (see Annex A for the financial details of the projects).

Work Program Preparation and Streamlined Project Cycle Policy

5. The GBFF Council decided to allocate resources through discrete programming tranches to improve predictability for recipient countries, while accommodating financial contributions on a rolling basis. The adoption of the GBFF Resource Allocation Policy³ triggered the opening of the first GBFF programming tranche on February 21, 2024, which made available \$211 million for programming. A second GBFF programming tranche was opened on August 11, 2025, 18 months after the first one, making available \$161.8 million for programming.
6. As agreed in the GBFF Programming Directions, submissions are evaluated on the seven selection criteria as follows:
 - Potential to generate Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs);
 - Alignment with the GBFF Programming Directions and advancing the KMGBF implementation;

¹ Excluding PPG and PPG fees which are not subject to Council approval.

² GEF, 2023, [Programming Directions of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund](#), Council document GEF/C.64/06/Rev.02.

³ GEF, 2024, [Policy on Allocation of Resources for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund \(GBFF\)](#), Council document GEF/GBFF.01/03/Rev.03.

- Alignment with the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and National Finance Plans or similar instruments to identify national and/or regional priorities;
- Level of policy coherence and coordination across multiple ministries, agencies, the private sector and civil society;
- Balance amongst regions;
- Mobilization of private sector and philanthropies' resources;
- Engagement with and support to Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs).

7. Both projects included in this Work Program were submitted in the third selection round of the first programming tranche, held in August and September 2024.

GBFF Resources Requested for the Work Program

8. The total of \$20,544,000 of GEF project financing and Agency fees is requested for two projects in the June 2026 GBFF Work Program, as presented in Table 1. These two projects had also requested \$546,000 in PPGs and associated PPG fees.

9. Both countries included in the Work Program, namely India and Papua New Guinea, requested 100 percent of their respective country maximum dollar value of funding requests for the first programming tranche of the GBFF, which had been made available on February 16, 2024.⁴

⁴ GEF, 2024, [Country Maximum Dollar Value of Funding Request\(s\) for the First Programming Tranche of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund](#), Council document GEF/GBFF.02/Inf.01. Please note that an [updated version](#) of this document has also been issued for the second programming tranche.

Table 1. GBFF Resources Requested in the June 2026 Work Program⁵

Project Title	Country	Agency	GBFF Project Financing (\$)	Agency Fee (\$)	PPG + PPG agency fee	Total GEF Resources ⁶ (\$)	% Support to Actions by IPLCs out of Total GEF Resources ⁷
Conservation of Biodiversity, its Sustainable Use, Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits in India (CONSERVE)	India	UNDP/ World Bank	12,378,900	1,114,100	327,000	13,820,000	38.4
Empowering Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) for sustainable management and conservation of 700,000 hectares of critical ecosystems in three Highland provinces in Papua New Guinea	Papua New Guinea	FAO	6,439,269	611,731	219,000	7,270,000	40.2
TOTAL			18,818,169	1,725,831	546,000	21,090,000	39.0

10. Each GBFF project tracks the amount of resource allocated to support actions by IPLCs for the conservation, restoration, sustainable use and management of biodiversity at various stages of the project cycle. The two projects included in this Work Program are allocating \$8,224,250 in resources for actions by IPLCs, representing 39.0 percent of the total GEF resources for these projects.

11. For the project in India, \$5,300,000 of \$13,820,000 in total GEF resources, or 38.4 percent, supports actions by IPLCs. For the project in Papua New Guinea, this figure stands at \$2,924,250 of the \$7,270,000 in total GEF resources, or 40.2 percent.

Alignment with GBFF Action Areas and KMGBF Targets

12. The GBFF Programming Directions include eight GBFF Action Areas that are aligned with 23 KMGBF targets, as shown in Table 2. The three projects presented in this Work Program address Action Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Together, they support achievements of Targets 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 14, 18, 19, 21, 22, and 23 of the KMGBF, which are summarized by the CBD Secretariat as follows:

- [Target 1: Plan and manage all areas to reduce biodiversity loss;](#)

⁵ Only the GBFF project financing and agency fee columns are subject to Council approval. PPG, PPG agency fee and total GEF resources are for reference only.

⁶ Including GBFF project financing, agency fee, PPG and PPG agency fee.

⁷ Expressed as a percentage of the total GEF resources, including agency fee, PPG and PPG agency fee.

- [Target 2: Restore 30 percent of all degraded ecosystems;](#)
- [Target 3: Conserve 30 percent of land, waters and seas;](#)
- [Target 5: Ensure sustainable, safe and legal harvesting and trade of wild species](#)
- [Target 9: Manage wild species sustainably to benefit people;](#)
- [Target 10: Enhance biodiversity and sustainability in agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, and forestry;](#)
- [Target 14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-Making at Every Level;](#)
- [Target 18: Reduce harmful incentives by at least \\$500 billion per year, and scale up positive incentives for biodiversity](#)
- [Target 19: Mobilize \\$200 billion per year for biodiversity from all sources, including \\$30 Billion through international finance;](#)
- [Target 21: Ensure That Knowledge Is Available and Accessible To Guide Biodiversity Action;](#)
- [Target 22: Ensure participation in decision-making and access to justice and information related to biodiversity for all;](#)
- [Target 23: Ensure gender equality and a gender-responsive approach for biodiversity action.](#)

13. In particular, the project on the conservation of biodiversity, its sustainable use, fair and equitable sharing of benefits in India (CONSERVE) addresses GBFF **Action Area 1** by generating biodiversity-informed spatial data, developing state conservation plans, and embedding these into official land-use and investment frameworks to ensure that biodiversity becomes a core parameter in decision-making. The project also supports GBFF **Action Area 2** by institutionalizing, identifying and managing other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) through participatory governance structures that adhere to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), anchoring biodiversity management in customary tenure and traditional knowledge while supporting culturally appropriate livelihoods through biodiversity-friendly enterprises and payments for ecosystem services. Under **Action Area 4**, CONSERVE embeds biodiversity finance within national and state budgetary processes, including biodiversity expenditure reviews, budget tagging, and the design of biodiversity finance plans in three states. In addition, the project will pilot innovative financial instruments to ensure long-term financial sustainability beyond the project’s lifetime and contribute directly to GBFF’s goal of scaling biodiversity finance.

14. The project on empowering Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) for sustainable management and conservation of 700,000 hectares of critical ecosystems in three

Highland provinces in Papua New Guinea will support GBFF **Action Area 1** by improving the management of critical habitats, including through the establishment of one new protected area and ten OECMs, restoring degraded areas, and supporting biodiversity conservation planning at the provincial level. In support of GBFF **Action Area 2**, the project will empower IPLCs to establish, legally declare and effectively manage their lands as conservation areas through inclusive governance mechanisms, participatory zoning and planning, and community-based monitoring. The project addresses GBFF **Action Area 3** on policy alignment and development by working with national and provincial governments in aligning planning and reporting frameworks in support of community-led conservation. By supporting the definition and application of financial mechanisms in support of community-level conservation, it also supports **Action Area 4**. Finally, the project contributes to **Action Area 5** by supporting local communities in managing and harvesting wild species, and to **Action Area 6** by supporting the application of biodiversity-friendly practices in production sectors.

Table 2. GBFF Action Areas and Alignment with KMGBF Targets

Action Areas	Description	Alignment with KMGBF Targets
1	Biodiversity conservation, restoration, land/sea-use and spatial planning	Targets 1, 2, 3
2	Support to IPLC stewardship and governance of lands, territories, and waters	Targets 1, 2, 3, 22
3	Policy alignment and development	Targets 14, 15, 18
4	Resource mobilization	Targets 18, 19
5	Sustainable use of biodiversity	Targets 5, 9
6	Biodiversity mainstreaming in production sectors	Targets 7, 10
7	Invasive alien species (IAS) management and control	Target 6
8	Capacity building and implementation support for biosafety, handling of biotechnology and access and benefit sharing, including under the Nagoya and Cartagena protocols	Targets 13 and 17

Status on the Use of GBFF Resources

15. The Work Program contributes to programming of resources from GBFF's first programming tranche (Table 3). The two projects are from the third selection round of the first programming tranche.

Table 3. GBFF Resources for Five Selection Rounds of the First Tranche⁸

	First Programming Tranche			Second Programming Tranche		Grand Total
	1 st selection round (\$)	2 nd selection round (\$)	3 rd selection round (\$)	4 th selection round (\$)	5 th selection round (\$)	
Resources requested in June 2026 work program			21,090,000			21,090,000
Resources approved by Council and CEO to date	39,778,910	60,975,157	35,937,678			136,691,745
Resources set aside for approved PPG requests to date		9,686,750	34,147,535	87,102,196	73,407,148	204,343,629
Grand Total	39,778,910	70,661,907	91,175,213	87,102,196	73,407,148	362,125,374

Distribution of GEF Project Financing by Region

16. Two recipient countries will benefit from this Work Program, namely India and Papua New Guinea.

17. In terms of regional distribution, Asia will receive \$18,818,169 or 100 percent of the GEF project financing considered in this Work Program.

Distribution of Resources by Agency

18. Three of the 18 GEF Agencies are represented in the June 2025 Work Program. FAO will manage \$7,051,000 in GEF project financing, for the project in Papua New Guinea. UNDP and the World Bank will each manage 50 percent, or \$6,746,500, of the total GEF project financing for the CONSERVE project in India.

19. Table 4 summarizes Agency shares of GBFF resources requested in the June 2026 Work Program, as well as resources approved and/or set aside from the GBFF's first two programming tranches, from the first to the fifth selection rounds.

⁸ Inclusive of PPGs and PPG fees.

Table 4. Agency Distribution of GBFF Resources in the June 2026 Work Program, Approvals and Set-Aside to Date, and Cumulative Resources⁹

Agency	Resources Requested in June 2026 Work Program (\$)	Resources Approved by Council and CEO to Date (\$)	Resources Set Aside for Approved PPG Requests to Date (\$)	Cumulative Resources Approved and Set-Aside (\$)	Agency Share of Cumulative Resources (%)
ADB		3,000,000	1,500,768	4,500,768	1%
CAF		16,055,485	3,718,654	19,774,139	5%
CI		23,376,006	12,298,206	35,674,212	10%
DBSA			2,209,975	2,209,975	1%
FAO	7,270,000	12,348,505	24,347,339	43,965,844	12%
Funbio		9,880,000		9,880,000	3%
IADB			20,540,566	20,540,566	6%
IFAD			4,527,504	4,527,504	1%
IUCN		4,050,000	14,194,603	18,244,603	5%
UNDP	13,820,000	25,818,566	43,799,580	83,438,146	23%
UNEP			17,083,523	17,083,523	5%
World Bank			51,592,566	51,592,566	14%
WWF-US		42,163,183	8,530,345	50,693,528	14%
Total	21,090,000	136,691,745	204,343,629	362,125,374	100%

Outcome Targets for the Work Program

20. This proposed Work Program identifies ambitious outcome targets for enhancing biodiversity, aiming to improve practices and management of over 2 million hectares of land, including 276,102 hectares of protected areas. The Papua New Guinea project accounts for most of this, with an expected 1.6 million hectares of landscapes under improved practices, and accounts for the entirety of the Work Program’s contribution to Core Indicator 1 (terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management). An additional 5,000 hectares of land and ecosystems will undergo restoration, all in Papua New Guinea.

21. The CONSERVE project in India will also yield significant co-benefits in the form of climate change mitigation with a total of 3.48 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (mtCO₂eq), direct and indirect, avoided, resulting from reducing deforestation and forest degradation in the project sites over a 20-year period. This amount will be complemented by a further 962,172 tCO₂eq from the Papua New Guinea project, totaling 4,444,599 tCO₂eq for the entire Work Program.

⁹ Resources include project grant amount, Agency fee, PPG and PPG fee. These figures include the GBFF’s first two tranches in their entirety.

22. Both projects included in this Work Program support actions by IPLCs. Also, in total, 51,000 people have been identified as benefiting directly from these investments across both countries, including 25,080 women.

23. Table 5 presents the contribution of the Work Program to the Core Indicators.

Table 5. Contribution of June 2026 GBFF Work Program to Core Indicators

Core Indicator	Value
1. Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management (ha)	276,102
3. Area of land and ecosystems under restoration (ha)	5,000
4. Area of landscapes under improved practices (ha)	1,800,000
11. People benefiting from the conservation, sustainable use or restoration of biodiversity	51,000
- of whom women	25,080
6. Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated (metric tons of CO ₂ eq)	4,444,599

Portfolio-Level Targets

24. The GBFF has three portfolio-level targets, included in the Council-approved GBFF Programming Directions. The contributions of the three projects included in this Work Program for the portfolio-level targets are summarized below to provide a snapshot of progress being made towards portfolio-level targets.

- i. **36 percent + 3 percent allocated to small island developing States (SIDS)/least developed countries (LDCs):**¹⁰ of the two countries benefiting from the projects, one is a SIDS (namely Papua New Guinea), totaling 34.3 percent of the GBFF resources requested in the current Work Program.
- ii. **25 percent to be programmed through international financing institutions (IFIs):**¹¹ One of the two agencies implementing the CONSERVE project in India is an IFI, namely the World Bank, representing 33.6 percent of the GBFF resources requested in this Work Program.
- iii. **Aspirational share of 20 percent by 2030 to support actions by IPLCs:** The two projects presented in this Work Program are proposing to allocate \$8,224,250 of GEF project

¹⁰ As stated in the Council-approved Programming Directions, the 3 percent portion to SIDS and LDCs will be reviewed after 3 years of the date of the Fund ratification at the Assembly. If unused, the 3 percent will be reprogrammed to other countries.

¹¹ As stated in the Council-approved Programming Directions, a report to the GBFF Council will be presented at the GBFF council 2 years after the date of ratification of the GBFF at the GEF Assembly. This report will include the distribution of GBFF resources by agencies. The GBFF Council can, at that time, discuss new measures as needed to ensure that the target for IFIs is achieved.

financing, or 39.0 percent of the total GEF project financing requested for the Work Program, to support actions by IPLCs.

25. Across the GBFF's entire portfolio to date, including projects both below and above \$5 million, progress towards the portfolio level targets has been made as follows:¹²

- i. 38.8 percent of GBFF financing has been allocated to SIDS and LDCs.
- ii. 30.4 percent of funding has been programmed through IFIs.
- iii. 31.8 percent has been allocated to support actions by IPLCs.

26. The IFI and IPLC portfolio targets have been exceeded. The SIDS and LDC target has been met.

IPLC Considerations

27. In the last months of project development, agencies have refined the budget share supporting actions by IPLCs as the relevant GBFF guidelines were finalized.¹³ Approaches and engagements with IPLCs in each project are summarized below:

28. India project: IPLCs are known in India as Tribal Peoples and local communities (TPLCs). Of these, Tribal Peoples constitute approximately 88 percent of the population in Nagaland, 31 percent in Tripura, and 18 percent in Uttarakhand. A total of \$5.3 million in GBFF financing (38.4 percent of total financing) will directly support actions by TPLCs/IPLCs through community institutions such as Biodiversity Management Committees, Village Ecosystem Management Committees and Joint Forest Management Committees. Outputs supporting actions by TPLCs/IPLCs consist in designing innovative conservation-livelihood models by local institutions (output 1.1.2, \$900,000); implementation of OECM management plans through community participation (output 2.1.1); and implementation of co-investment models through community-led institutions across three identified OECM landscapes (output 2.2.1).

29. Papua New Guinea project: In Papua New Guinea, IPLCs own approximately 97 percent of the land and have sustained around 80 percent forest cover through customary management systems, yet their contribution remains underrecognized and is increasingly threatened by land-use pressures, alongside capacity, governance, and financing gaps. The project is placing IPLCs at the center of conservation efforts by strengthening the regulatory recognition of IPLC-led initiatives, reinforcing inclusive governance systems, and supporting participatory zoning and planning of community lands, as well as community-based monitoring. A total of \$2.9 million, or 40.2 percent of total financing, will be allocated to directly support actions by IPLCs. The project

¹² All figures include the first two programming tranches, totaling five selection rounds, in their entirety and are as of March 31, 2026. The share to support actions by IPLCs may fluctuate as agencies refine the budget dedicated to supporting actions by IPLCs during project preparation.

¹³ GEF (2025). [Guidelines on Actions by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities](#). Council document GEF/GBFF.05/Inf.04.

will strengthen IPLCs' capacities for financial planning, support them in developing finance mechanisms, and provide grants directly managed by IPLCs to carry out conservation activities.

Gender Considerations

30. Both projects in this GBFF Work Program substantially incorporated gender equality considerations, in full compliance with GEF requirements and GBFF Programming Directions to ensure gender-responsive implementation of the KMGBF. Both projects contribute to realizing targets 22 and 23 of the KMGBF. Some highlights of good practice gender-responsive actions of the three projects are presented below:

31. India project: Women suffer from three barriers in the project sites: (i) unequal access to and control of natural resources, (ii) restricted participation and decision-making in environmental planning and governance at all levels, and (iii) limited access to income-generated activities, services, credit, technology, information, and capacity building. To address these, the project will strengthen the gender mainstreaming and gender analysis skills of project personnel, including training on collecting gender-disaggregated data; promote dialogue on the effects of social norms that undermine women's rights; foster women's active and meaningful participation, leadership and involvement in project decision-making; share lessons in gender empowerment to contribute to delivering KMGBF targets 22 and 23; and operationalizing the project-level grievance redress mechanism before the project starts.

32. Papua New Guinea project: The project fully recognizes the distinct roles and constraints of women in the targeted landscapes in Papua New Guinea. Women are predominantly engaged in agricultural labor, particularly in growing and selling fresh food crops and rearing livestock. However, they are typically underrepresented in leadership and decision-making in natural resource management and face significant barriers in access to and management of finance. The project will adopt gender-responsive approaches to the delivery of social and livelihood benefits, prioritizing options that generate benefits for women. It will engage gender-focused civil society organizations and community-based organizations to support women's empowerment and participation in community-led conservation. The project will also facilitate women's access to land, credit and startup kits, and supporting the development of women-focused cooperatives or networks to improve the bargaining power of women-led initiatives.

Risk Profile

33. Under the Context risk dimension, the risk is rated Substantial (3.0), while the Innovation and Execution dimensions are rated Moderate (both rated 2.0). These ratings are based on a four-point scale, where 1 = Low, 2 = Moderate, 3 = Substantial, and 4 = High. They are based on Agencies' assessments of project risks and planned mitigants, with scores reflecting residual risk after mitigation.

34. To align project-level ratings across nine risk categories with GEF's risk appetite (Substantial for Context, High for Innovation, Moderate for Execution), Table 6 provides an

average for each dimension, calculated using the highest category rating per project. This approach produces slightly higher dimension-level ratings than category-level ratings. The risk profile from the December 2025 Work Program is presented alongside the June 2026 profile for reference.

Table 6. Risk Profile of the Work Program (ratings: 1 Low – 4 High)

Category	December 2025 WP	June 2026 WP
CONTEXT	2	3
Climate	2	3
Environmental and Social	1.7	2
Political and Governance	2	1.5
INNOVATION	2.3	2
Institutional and Policy	2	2
Technological	2	1.5
Financial and Business Model	2.3	1.5
EXECUTION	2.3	2
Capacity for Implementation	2	2
Fiduciary	1.7	1.5
Stakeholder	2.3	1.5

35. Under the **context risk** dimension, the average rating is 3.0, driven by substantial climate risk. The Papua New Guinea project, supporting IPLCs in the Highland provinces of Enga, Jiwaka, and Chimbu, carries a high climate risk rating from intensifying extreme precipitation events affecting rural communities, women, and children, mitigated by integrating climate-informed spatial planning and ecosystem-based adaptation into participatory landscape management. India's CONSERVE project faces Moderate Climate risk from droughts, landslides, and forest fires in regions such as Nagaland and Uttarakhand, addressed through climate vulnerability overlays in spatial biodiversity plans, locally adapted restoration models, and linkages to the Forest Survey of India's national early warning network. environmental and social risks are Moderate and well-managed across both projects: Papua New Guinea prioritizes native and local species to guard against invasive or alien species, while India applies a comprehensive ESMF, FPIC protocols, and a Gender Action Plan mandating at least 50 percent women's representation in governance bodies. Political and governance risk is low at 1.5, with Papua New Guinea addressing inter-tribal conflict through a detailed Stakeholder Engagement Plan, and India anchoring governance continuity in the National and State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans through multi-tier Project Steering Committees.

36. The **innovation risk** dimension is rated 2.0, reflecting well-managed risks across all three categories. Institutional and policy risk is moderate for both projects: Papua New Guinea provides targeted technical assistance and knowledge-sharing to strengthen provincial and district institutions, while India organizes policy dialogues backed by legally vetted documentation to streamline OECM recognition and the integration of biodiversity budget codes into official financial systems. Technological risk is rated 1.5: Papua New Guinea's technologies are appropriate to remote highland conditions and co-identified with local stakeholders, while India's

biodiversity management information system is developed in partnership with the National Informatics Centre, with user-friendly interfaces and automated validation protocols to ensure broad agency adoption. Financial and business model risk is also rated 1.5, with Papua New Guinea embedding flexibility through community-validated livelihood models and contingency co-financing arrangements, and India piloting a portfolio of biodiversity finance instruments embedded directly into national and state budgeting processes.

37. **Execution risk** is rated 2.0, reflecting strong implementation foundations across all three categories. On Capacity for implementation, Papua New Guinea's project design was explicitly calibrated to existing national and sub-provincial capacities through stakeholder consultations, with FAO providing direct execution support to the Papua New Guinea Conservation and Environment Protection Authority under a Direct Execution modality and engaging experienced Civil Society Organizations such as the Wildlife Conservation Society and Care International. India's CONSERVE project leverages the financial management and procurement systems of the World Bank-supported ELEMENT project in Nagaland and Tripura, embedding good practices into Training-of-Trainers models and Standard Operating Procedures to ensure institutional continuity beyond individual staff. Fiduciary risk has improved to 1.5: Papua New Guinea benefits from FAO's established financial management and procurement rules, regular audits, and community grants channeled through the Biodiversity and Climate Fund in successive tranches subject to results-based evidence; India draws on the ELEMENT project's Financial Management Manual, routes procurement through the Government e-Marketplace portal, and conducts six-monthly joint World Bank and UNDP fiduciary reviews. Stakeholder risk has improved markedly to 1.5, underpinned by the high level of interest among communities in Papua New Guinea in pursuing community-led conservation, and by India's CONSERVE project systematically embedding FPIC-compliant processes, disaggregated MIS tracking of participation, and market access support to ensure tangible local benefits from the outset.

Work Program Description

38. ***Conservation of Biodiversity, its Sustainable Use, Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits in India (CONSERVE) (GEFID 11784)***. Agency: UNDP and the World Bank; GEF project financing: \$12,378,900; co-financing: \$30,250,000. India's rich biodiversity faces challenges from unsustainable land use, ecosystem fragmentation and inadequate monitoring and financing. The project will take a transformative, phased approach to address these challenges by developing comprehensive biodiversity-inclusive spatial plans, institutionalize interoperable digital monitoring systems, and formally recognize OECMs through participatory processes rooted in FPIC. It will also mainstream biodiversity into public budgets via expenditure reviews and tagging.

39. By systematically addressing the underlying drivers of biodiversity loss in India and dismantling barriers related to governance, capacity, financing, and equity, the project will contribute to strengthening of biodiversity governance and financing and thus advance the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) in India. It will do so by implementing the following approaches:

- Strengthening biodiversity governance and spatial planning to overcome fragmented land-use planning and poor management of non-protected areas;
- Considering IPLCs as biodiversity stewards through inclusive OECM management; and
- Leveraging biodiversity finance for sustainability by addressing chronic underfunding and weak monitoring.

40. Through these approaches, the project will develop three State spatial biodiversity plans and bring at least 200,000 hectares of landscapes outside protected areas under improved management practices, including through the formal designation of five new OECMs. It will directly benefit an estimated 30,000 people, 50 percent of whom are women. These improved management interventions will result in the mitigation of approximately 3.48 mtCO₂eq. They will also strengthen ecological connectivity and improve the resilience of ecosystems and vulnerable communities to climate impacts. Thanks to its biodiversity finance interventions, the project will mobilize at least \$2 million annually of additional funds for community-level biodiversity conservation. This holistic design positions biodiversity as integral to development and advances India's commitments under the KMGBF (Targets 1, 2, 3, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23).

41. ***Empowering Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) for sustainable management and conservation of 700,000 hectares of critical ecosystems in three Highland provinces in Papua New Guinea (GEFID 11787)***: Agency: FAO; GEF project financing: \$6,439,269; co-financing: \$16,672,533. Papua New Guinea is one of the world's most biodiverse countries. However, it faces increasing biodiversity pressures from deforestation driven by subsistence agriculture and commercial activities such as oil palm and logging. Despite this, around 80 percent forest cover has been maintained largely due to the traditional systems of management and conservation applied by local indigenous communities, which remain underrecognized and increasingly threatened.

42. This project will enhance biodiversity conservation across critical ecosystems in three Highland provinces of Papua New Guinea by empowering IPLCs to foster connectivity in biodiversity corridors and peacebuilding. It will support communities to establish, legally declare and effectively manage their lands as conservation areas. This will be done in the context of larger conservation landscapes and provincial government planning into which conservation issues will be mainstreamed. Community-based conservation will furthermore be supported by channeling existing innovative financing mechanisms, such as Papua New Guinea's Biodiversity Climate Fund and REDD+ results-based payments from the Green Climate Fund, and multi-stakeholder dialogue and cooperation platforms. The project will generate synergistic livelihood and biodiversity benefits, reducing productive and extractive pressures that threaten the area's numerous endemic and/or globally endangered species, while providing local communities with multiple livelihood alternatives and incentives, as well as safeguarding environmental services on which they depend.

43. The project will improve management effectiveness across 276,102 hectares of terrestrial protected areas, including creation of a new protected area, support the restoration of 5,000 ha,

and bring a total landscape of 1,600,000 hectares under improved practices, including 10 OECMs to be supported. It will directly benefit 21,000 people of which 10,080 women (48 percent) and mitigate 962,172 mtCO₂eq. The project contributes to the following KMGBF targets: 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 14, 19, 21, 22 and 23.

Annex A: Project Proposals Submitted for GBFF Council Approval

June 3, 2026

No.	GEF ID	Project Title	Focal Area	Country	Agency	PPG Amount	PPG Fee	GEF Project Financing	Agency Fee	Co-financing	Total Project Cost
in US \$											
GBFF Projects											
<i>Biodiversity</i>											
1	11784	Conservation of Biodiversity, its Sustainable Use, Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits in India (CONSERVE)	Biodiversity	India	UNDP/ World Bank	300,000	27,000	12,378,900	1,114,100	30,250,000	44,070,000
2	11787	Empowering Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) for sustainable management and conservation of 700,000 hectares of critical ecosystems in three Highland provinces in Papua New Guinea	Biodiversity	Papua New Guinea	FAO	200,000	19,000	6,439,269	611,731	16,672,533	23,942,533
Total						500,000	46,000	18,818,169	1,725,831	46,922,533	68,012,533