**SGP Country Programme Strategy for OP7**

**Uzbekistan**

****

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total SGP Grants to date since (2008):  | **USD $3 528 529,86** |
| OP7 GEF Core Funds:  | USD $500,000 (tbc) |
| OP7 GEF STAR Funds:  | **USD** $1,422,542 (tbc) |
| OP6 GEF Core and STAR remaining balance (if applicable) | **USD** $35,000 |
| Other funds (secured) | **USD** |
| Other funds (expected/to be mobilized)  | **USD** |

1. **BACKGROUND**

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.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Building on its over 26 years of successful operations in total over 133 countries, the 7th Operational Phase of the SGP aims “*to promote and support innovative, inclusive and scalable initiatives, and foster multi stakeholder partnerships at the local level to tackle global environmental issues in priority landscapes and seascapes.*”

1. **SUMMARY: Key Results/Accomplishments**
	1. The Programme was launched in Uzbekistan in 2008 when the GEF SGP in Uzbekistan[[3]](#footnote-3) approved its first two projects on September 18, 2008 and shortly thereafter started their implementation. Over the past twelve years, the Programme has supported 104 projects totaling over $3,500,000 USD funded by GEF. The Programme also has raised additional co-financing from various sources in the amount exceeding over $12,000,000. Among the 104 projects that the Programme implemented, 18 were in the biodiversity (BD), 46 – in climate change (CC), 33 in land degradation (LD), and 7 in capacity building focal areas[[4]](#footnote-4).
	2. It should be noted that even though many projects have been formally identified as belonging to one focal area, in practice they are frequently crosscutting through several themes and are interlinked. For example, a project on no-tillage in Karakalpakstan was labeled as a climate change project because its main objective was GHG (nitrous oxide) emissions mitigation, however it can also be identified as a land degradation combating project because the proposed solution also restores soil fertility.
	3. The key breakdown of projects by focal areas is provided below.

**Figure 1. Number of projects**

**Figure 2. Total GEF SGP Project Funding**

**Figure 3. Distribution of Funds among thematic focal areas**

**Figure 4. Share of funds by focal areas**

* 1. Since its inception, the Programme has been assisting its partners in delivery of multiple environmental benefits across the entire country. Only in OP6 the Programme mainly focused geographically on three provinces. However, the interventions continued to last for the whole country. The benefits include, among others, improved land management practices over 5,000 hectares of agro/ecosystems[[5]](#footnote-5) ; prevented, avoided and reduced GHG emissions in the amount of 39,500 tons of CO2 equivalent. Over 157 thousands trees have been planted and over 43 million m3 of irrigation water has been saved preventing secondary salinization in many areas. The Programme has assisted in expansion of protected area (PA) system coverage by 11,000 ha, and has been supporting conservation of both individual ecosystems and species.
	2. The most prominent result of the Programme is not the numbers but the impact the Porgamme has had and examples that GEF SGP projects demonstrated, which has been followed by other resource users apart from direct project applicants. The Programme in Uzbekistan has always been following the path – “show a way that is beneficial both to environment and local people, disseminate the knowledge, and others will follow and replicate a practice without further assistance from outside”. Therefore the effect of the Programme lies not in the individual projects but in spil over effect and others that followed the Programme set examples. Below are just a few past examples of the Programme’s initiatives:
1. *Afforestation of arid foothills of the country through establishment of pistachio plantations by the local population* – This initiative started with a simple demonstration project in the Djizzak province. After implementation of six similar pilot/training projects in various provinces in which the Programme invested $262,000, where we only covered around 500 ha, we achieved a noticeable impact – people throughout the country have started to establish pistachio plantations. Now national and local governmental agencies have developed and are implementing regional strategies and plans that aim to cover more than 100,000 ha arid foothills with pistachio and other drought resistant tree species. The key for success of this land use practice upscaling was a detailed cost-benefit analysis that showed to land users that pistachio tree cover is the most monetary beneficial practice of land use in the long term. Potential area where this practice, which is sustainable and beneficial for land across the country, can be replicated represents over 78, 000 km2 or 7,800,000 ha.
2. Implementation of *laser leveling for efficient agricultural land use* results in water savings and prevents soil salinization. The SGP started to support this technology at the outset of the Programme twelve years ago. Thanks to multiple demonstrations throughout the country and promotion of the technology’s benefits, the practice has received recognition and is now widely applied by farmers across the country. The Government adopted a programme for wide implementation of this technology throughout the country.
3. Rollout of *biogas technology* for energy and organic fertilizer production for rural populations – the GEF SGP also has started pilot programs for demonstration of biogas plants in various provinces across the country. Based on these results, the relay has continued through Low Carbon Development Strategy Project (UNDP) contributing to adoption of a number of governmental resolutions and norms on national biogas development, and through the World Bank’s WB-GEF FSP project for promotion of alternative energy in agriculture enabling farmers to receive a loan for construction of a biogas plant on their farm.
4. One of the key interventions launched by the Programme in 2010, but was more prominently focused on in OP6 period, was conservation agriculture development in Uzbekistan. The Programme has partnered with FAO and paid special attention to promotion of sustainable agriculture land use practices. The numerous demonstrations and trainings across the country more and more frequently draw attention of farmers to conservation agriculture approach. More than 3000 ha of land already experience benefits of no till practice and mulching. The expansion of the approach will be retained by the Programme in OP7.
5. **COUNTRY PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**
	1. **Alignment with National Priorities**

Uzbekistan is a signatory to many international environmental conventions and agreements. Those directly related to GEF focal areas are listed in Table 1 below.

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  **Conventions + national planning frameworks** | **Date of ratification / completion** |
| GEF-7 National Dialogues | 26-29 September 2017 |
| Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)  | 17 October 1995 |
| CBD National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) | 11 June 2019 |
| Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) | Not adopted |
| UN Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES) | 8 October 1995 |
| UN Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species (The Bonn Convention) | 1 May 1998 |
| UN Convention on Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat (RAMSAR Convention) | 30 August 2001 |
| UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) | 20 June 1993 |
| UNFCCC National Communications (1st, 2nd, 3rd) | 22 October 1999, 3 December 2008, 21 February 2017 |
| UNFCCC Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) | n/a |
| UNFCCC National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPA) | n/a |
| Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for Paris Accord | 9 November 2018 |
| UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) | 31 October 1995 |
| UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAP) | Not adopted |
| Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) | 26 September 2019 |
| SC National Implementation Plan (NIP) | n/a |
| Minamata Convention (MC) on Mercury | Not adopted |
| UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) | 20 October 2018 |
| Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the UN SDGs | Tbd 2020 |
| Strategic Action Programmes (SAPs) for shared international water-bodies (IW) [[6]](#footnote-6) | n/a |

* 1. **Gaps and Opportunities**
		1. Since 2016, the country received an immense impetus in socio-economic development. The country started to open up to the world with corresponding market transformation and higher integration into the world community. New policies by the new leadership of the country resulted in multifaceted development in all spheres of life in Uzbekistan. This both constitutes opportunities and certain risks for environmental management. Many previously existed limitations for socio-economic development were eliminated, and provided opportunities for various sectors development, including main natural resources consuming sectors. The transformation certainly concerns such sectors as energy production, industry, agriculture, transport and many others. On the level of regular people and local communities and businesses, this surely implies changing approaches to energy, soil, water and biodiversity use.
		2. The major environmental issues are usually clustered around three main thematic areas – climate change, land degradation and biodiversity conservation, which coincide with GEF main areas. The narration below briefly stipulates the existing risks and opportunities for the country in general and GEF SGP in particular.

*Climate change mitigation*

* + 1. Uzbekistan was responsible for approximately 239 million t CO2 emissions of greenhouse gas (GHG) *excluding* Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) in 2012. Approximately 85% of the GHG are associated with the energy use, followed by agriculture (11%)[[7]](#footnote-7). The figures reflect pre-2016 development path. Now the picture is rapidly changing. The energy production in 2019 was 60 billion kWt\*h and forecasted to double by 2030 – estimation is that we would require 112 billion kWt\*h in 2030.
		2. The economy of Uzbekistan remains to be intensively energy consuming. Uzbekistan spends 35% more energy per unit of GDP than the neighboring Kazakhstan, and three times more than Germany. The Government sets an objective to decrease the energy intensity of the economy by 50% by 2030. However, Uzbekistan has not bound itself with any strict international obligations on mitigation objectives that would imply that the country *must* comply with the emission reduction targets. The Intended Nationally Determined Contributions of the Republic of Uzbekistan (INDC) are very modest and set as “To decrease specific emissions of greenhouse gases per unit of GDP by 10% by 2030 from level of 2010”. It should be noted that the mitigation objective is bound with the unit of GDP but not with the absolute figure of 2010 emissions volume. Taking into account that the energy consumption will double by 2030, 10% reduction in per GDP unit cannot be considered as any strict obligation to cut emissions.
		3. Nonetheless, the Government is currently developing a new Low Carbon Development Strategy for Uzbekistan. A big role in the energy sector is given to non-fossil fuel energy production. The current projections are seen as in the Figure 5 below.

**Figure 5. Energy generation changes projections[[8]](#footnote-8)**

* + 1. Apart from energy generation capacities, which is supply side, it is important to look at the demand side. Small and medium business sector rapidly grows as an energy consumer. Its share in energy consumption has risen from 12.9% in 2000 to 45.3% in 2016. Having in mind the rapid liberalization of the economy after 2016, it is obvious that this sector will grow even further as an energy consumer.
		2. All above mentioned creates certain opportunities for the SGP development interventions. Whereas SGP can have no or very little influence on big energy generation capacities, there are number of opportunities in creating examples in decentralized energy generating capacities and improving energy efficiency. Especially this is true for rural areas.
		3. Agriculture also remains one of the most energy consuming sectors of the economy due to reliance on inefficient water pumping infrastructure and obsolete land cultivation practices and equipment. The agricultural sector produces more than 30% of the country GDP, employs more than 27% of all labor power of Uzbekistan, and generates 25% of all export. The Government puts a lot of attention to this sector development. The National strategy for agriculture development 2019-2030[[9]](#footnote-9) was prepared adopted recently, which sets a number of objectives for the sector modernization and development.
		4. The SGP can work well on the level of farms and small and medium businesses in agricultural sector in order to create opportunities for green energy production and sustainable energy consumption, which will all eventually cut GHGs emissions. The big potential in carbon emission reduction and sequestration also lies in areas like soil management, irrigation improvements, transport, local energy generation capacities, fruits and vegetable refining and value added capacities, prevention of food waste and many others.

*Climate change adaptation*

* + 1. Uzbekistan is also a country that will be seriously affected by the climate change and adaptation measures are crucial. The major consequences of the climate change for Uzbekistan are increased temperatures (by more than 20C by 2030), increased frequency and severity of droughts, changed precipitation patterns with unbalanced in time, geographically and intensity precipitation events. The impacts will include decreased water availability in river flows and runoffs, increased salinization and mineralization, increased desertification, biodiversity, shifting species distribution, including crop species. The most affected will be the agricultural sector that is projected to face reduced crop yields, lower livestock productivity and decreased food security[[10]](#footnote-10).
		2. This requires urgent and massive actions on:
1. improvement of irrigation and crop cultivation practices and culture across the whole country that will cope with water deficit;
2. demonstration of practices and techniques that enable people to grow crops based on natural precipitation and water/moisture retention technologies rather than getting access to and depletion of any available water sources that takes place now;
3. development of drought resistant and climate smart agriculture;
4. massive integration of agroforestry concept;
5. mitigating consequences and developing opportunities for pollinators;
6. and many others.

*Land degradation*

* + 1. Land degradation remains one of the key environmental problems for Uzbekistan with over 2.17 mln ha of agricultural lands salinized, over 643.2 thousand ha of irrigated lands eroded, and over 1.6 mln ha of pastures and rangelands degraded[[11]](#footnote-11).
		2. More than 50% of agricultural landscape is salinized, 80% is affected by water and wind erosion, more than 75% of pastures are overgrazed and eroded. However, the land degradation does not draw efficient attention from the governing bodies. It can be seen from the availability of data and research on land degradation problems in Uzbekistan. Only old figures are available. The national action plan on land degradation and desertification was developed in far 1999 and never adopted. The costs of land degradation for the economy of the country has been heavily neglected. Various researches show that annual cost of land degradation was around 0.8[[12]](#footnote-12) – 1.0 billion SUD (2009), which corresponds to 3-4% of the country GDP. The cost of action is 5 times less than the cost of inactions, meaning that each 1 dollar spent on prevention of land degradation will result in 5 dollar of proceeds.
		3. The major types of land degradation remain to be:
1. secondary salinization in the irrigated lands due to ineffective irrigation and land cultivation;
2. soil erosion in the irrigated, rainfed and mountainous areas caused by overgrazing, land management techinques, loss of vegetation cover, and other factors;
3. desertification and change in soil structure and qualities caused by loss of vegetation, detrimental change in the vegetation composition and other factors.
	* 1. The area of land degradation is unjustifiably neglected by other donors. This is sad. However, this is the area where SGP assistance has been particularly important and valuable. Working with local farmers and local communities brings tangible, fast and well disseminating results. The general areas and opportunities for GEF SGP interventions remain to be:
4. Improved soil and biomass retention management practices that improves biological and soil productivity
5. Transforming agro landscape to agroforestry landscape
6. Crop rotation and divertification for better soil health/fertility
7. Improved irrigation
8. Adaption to climate change and introducing climate smart agro business.

*Biodiversity conservation*

* + 1. On biodiversity conservation side, the situation remains similar to that before the OP6. Analysis shows that for the last 10-20 years as a result of intensive use of natural resources, multiple species of plants and animals of Uzbekistan have been subjected to increasing anthropogenic impacts, and consequently their population and habitats have decreased. Certain species are at the brink of extinction or have completely become extinct while populations of other species have continued to decrease. Among the most immediate threats are (a) direct use of biological resources beyond the carrying capacity of ecosystems; (b) encroachment of human activities on animal and plant habitats; (c) fragmentation; and (d) environmental pollution.
		2. The protected area coverage is around 5% of the country territory. The adopted Strategy[[13]](#footnote-13) on biodiversity conservation for 2019-2028 sets an objective to expand the PA coverage to 12%. But that is by far is the only meaningful smart indicator of the Strategy. The action plan has not yet been adopted.
		3. Thanks to active FAO position, the work is ongoing for improvement of forestry sector. According to Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) definition, the forest coverage in Uzbekistan is around 1% of the country territory with about 20.6% of other wooden land (orchads, bushlands, etc), whereas the total area of the Forest Fund is around 20% of the country territory. The forest cover of the country suffers from overgrazing and logging[[14]](#footnote-14).
		4. Overall, interest of local communities and NGO sector to problems of biodiversity conservation has been very low and the GEF SGP activities up to the moment cannot show any prominent successes that have potential for replication.
	1. **OP7 Strategic Priorities of the SGP Country Programme**
		1. The Table 2 below provides a short summary of the SGP Country Programme’s priorities based on SWOT analysis, needs and opportunities at the country level. The country has certain priorities to have a profound and more focused impact and therefore they are not in all global strategic initiatives of the GEF, listed in left column. Absence of priorities does not imply absence of any SGP activities in the strategic initiatives during the OP7 cycle.

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, 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
 | *To improve community-led initiatives, including targeted increase in survival and prosperity of pollinators, protecting national agro biodiversity pool, improved forestry and agroforestry practices* | The GEF SGP will continue to be an integral part of UN team work in Uzbekistan, which is overarched by UNDAF (currently implemented) and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025 (under development). The Programme will closely cooperate with: GEF-FAO FSP (OP-7, ID 10367) “Sustainable Forest and Rangelands Management in the Dryland Ecosystems of Uzbekistan”GEF-FAO FSP (OP-6, ID 9190) “Sustainable Management of Forests in Mountain and Valley Areas”Decree of the President №УП-5863 30/10/2019 “Concept of environment conservation for Uzbekistan for 2019-2030”  |
| ***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.
 | *To conserve soil fertility for food security and improve agro ecosystem sustainability;**To improve diversification of agro production;**To widen and promote transformation of agro landscape to agroforestry landscape;**To prevent land degradation and restore productive agro landscapes.*  | The GEF SGP will continue to be an integral part of UN team work in Uzbekistan, which is overarched by UNDAF (currently implemented) and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025 (under development). The Programme will closely cooperate with: GEF-FAO FSP (OP-7, ID 10367) “Sustainable Forest and Rangelands Management in the Dryland Ecosystems of Uzbekistan”GEF-FAO FSP (OP-6, ID 9190) “Sustainable Management of Forests in Mountain and Valley Areas”“State Strategy on development of agricultural sector for 2020-2030” |
| ***Low-carbon energy access co-benefits***Support implementation of Paris Agreement and the NDCs1. 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.
 | *To promote establishment of renewable and energy efficient technologies as well as carbon sequestration methods that provide socio-economic benefits and improved livelihoods to local communities.* | Strategy for transfer to Green Economy 2019-2030, # ПП-4477 04.10.2019Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers №ПП-4422 22/08/2019 “On measures on improving energy efficiency and development of alternative energy” |
| ***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
 | *To reduce/remove use of chemicals in agriculture by biological substitutes and improved agro technologies;**To promote circular economy* | Decree of the President №УП-5863 30/10/2019 “Concept of environment conservation for Uzbekistan for 2019-2030” |
| ***Catalyzing sustainable urban solutions***1. Improved capacities to promote community-driven, socially inclusive and integrated solutions to address low-emission and resilient urban development
2. Demonstrated innovative socially-inclusive urban solutions/ approaches (including waste and chemical management, energy, transport, watershed protection, ecosystem services and biodiversity)
3. Implement public-private partnership approach for low carbon energy access for marginalized urban communities
 | *To improve community-driven capacities in urban forestry management, sustainable transport and sustainable urban development* |  |
| ***Community-based Adaptation*** (with AusAID or other funding – not eligible with GEF funding)1. Reduce vulnerability and improve the adaptive capacity of communities
2. Provide countries with concrete ground-level experience on CCA
3. Provide clear policy lessons and mainstream CBA within national processes.
 |  |  |
| ***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
 |  |  |
| ***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
 |  |
| ***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*
 |  |
| ***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*** 1. *Administer new M&E strategy in country programme and project design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms*
 |  |

* + 1. The GEF SGP will be acting in line with and complementary to all existing and emerging strategies and plans aiming at sustainable development of Uzbekistan and individual sectors.
		2. Among other GEF-supported interventions in Uzbekistan, the closest one to the GEF SGP areas are existing and planned FAO activities. UNDP-GEF full-size project plans to work focusing on the Aral Sea region as the zone of environmental disaster, which is logistically and conceptually is going to be hard for the SGP to partner with apart from sharing the used technologies and practices.
1. **OP7 PRIORITY LANDSCAPES/SEASCAPES & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**
	1. **Grantmaking Within the Priority Landscape/Seascapes[[15]](#footnote-15)**
2. **Process for selecting priority landscapes and seascapes**
	* 1. Having analyzed all existing conditions and criteria for selection of a possible landscape(s) for the OP-7 GEF SGP focus, the CPS is planning to build its future success on the landscape selected for the previous Operational Programme – agro landscape. In other terms, to maximize the benefits of limited GEF funding allocated to GEF SGP in OP7, the Programme is planning to focus its activities *on conservation, improvement and restoration of agricultural landscapes/ecosystems, including irrigated and rain-fed areas*. The criteria and assumptions described further have determined selection of the landscape/ecosystem.
		2. The following criteria were taken into consideration during appraisal process for selecting the focused landscape:

[ ]  **Global Environmental Characteristics**

[x]  Presence of important ecosystems that are recognized globally and/or nationally

The last national report to the convention biological diversity from Uzbekistan (Fifth National Report) in the third paragraph of its very first part stipulates: “Due to the reason that *the agriculture is one of the most important sectors* in the economy of Uzbekistan, the well-being and sustainable development of Uzbekistan depends significantly on the state of its natural resources”[[16]](#footnote-16). Further, down the report, when it comes to recognition of the strategic directions in biodiversity conservation for the country, the first clause of the strategic priorities refers to “Support and restoration of ecosystems and their key components in productive landscapes in order to ensure ecosystem services”[[17]](#footnote-17).

[x]  Presence of globally and/or nationally threatened species

Agricultural landscape is the biggest and the most important ecosystem of Uzbekistan both the well-being of other country ecosystems and humans dwelling in and around it. Experts agree that most of the biodiversity of Uzbekistan exists beyond the country PA system, and its habitat largely overlaps with agricultural landscape.

[x]  Areas of increased threats to ecosystem integrity

The agricultural sector uses the most of the country ecological resources and the pressure on the landscape is the biggest. Harmful and unsustainable practices threaten the ecological integrity in many terms, including distortion of provision of such ecological services as circulation of water, carbon, nutrients within the system, provision of soil fertility for biomass grow, ensuring biodiversity habitat for number of critical species, including birds and insects that jeopardizes pollination services stability, and thus food security, and many others.

[x]  Presence of degraded land areas that are prioritized globally and/or nationally

As it was mentioned earlier, the Government puts special stress on recovery of the numerous productive areas prone to degradation in the country. The scale and scope of degradation in the agricultural landscape is the biggest among all other ecosystems of the country.

[x]  Areas facing climate change vulnerability

Agricultural landscape both generates Agricultural sector apart from industry faces the greatest vulnerability as the agricultural production is directly linked to climate consequences – availability of precipitations, their number, water deficit or availability, temperatures during various seasonal phases, etc. And this vulnerability is thus puts under stress the overall country food security and well being of its people, as all of them directly depends on productivity of the landscape. It is worth repeating that the agricultural sectors generates more than 30% of the country GDP, employs more than 27% of all labor power of Uzbekistan, and generates 25% of all export.

[x]  **Socio-economic characteristics**

[x]  Areas of the country with high poverty/low human development index

It is worth mentioning that the population of Uzbekistan reached 34.03 million people in April 2020, with 50.5% of them living in urban areas and 49.7% - in rural areas. The share of rural population can be considered to be greater as many settlements are regarded as urban whereas they are in fact can well be regarded as rural ones. There are no easily accessible figures on comparing regional disparities in Uzbekistan, but all decision makers agree that disparities exist and there is a clear strategy to increase urbanization. Rural communities have lower indexes on many aspects of human development – lower educational levels, access to health facilities, etc.

[x]  **Stakeholder Capacities**

[x]  Availability of organizations (NGOs, CSOs and CBOs)

Rural areas has multiple community-based organizations. The community of farmers is especially strong and has many organizations including Council of Farmers, Council of young Farmers, water users associations, etc.

[x]  Availability of partner institutions (local governments, civil society groups, universities, others)

There are also a number of partners, which are ready to work for developing the sector. Among the strongest donor partners is certainly Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). And it is also very instrumental when a local government is headed by an understanding leader, who can understand the need for transformation and facilitates the process. There is no doubt that it is easier to work with local governmental entity rather than with higher state bodies, like ministries. Plus, there is always numerous business sector represented by farmers and businesses.

[x]  **Additional considerations: long term potential for SGP role**

[x]  Build on gains and networks of previous operational phases

This and the following clause are perhaps ones of the strongest arguments for selecting the agricultural landscape as the focus one for the current OP7 stage.

We have managed to build trust, partnership and confidence of our beneficiaries in the proposed technolgoies and approaches. We simply must strengthen the results.

[x]  Provides opportunities for deeper impact and broader adoption (scaling up, replication, policy influence)

The previous OP the GEF SGP was especially effective in promoting and developing conservation and climate smart agriculture. And we have to build on the previous success to have a country wide impact. Certainly having a wide impact requires certain continuity and integrity. We had similar experience when promoting pistachio, biogas and lazer leveling. Now it is turn of the conservation agriculture and agroforestry technologies. We already see first results – farmers start to pick up the practices of no tilling, mulching, crop rotation, moisture management, better irrigation. We have to keep pushing and disseminating the technologies in order to make them “business as usual” and build the culture of accepting soil, water and biodiversity as the main building stones and key capital for agricultural productive landscapes.

[x]  Presence or potential to collaborate with other large-scale efforts for co-financing and joint initiatives (e.g. GEF and UNDP Projects, multilateral/bilateral donors, private sector, foundation)

The GEF SGP will be closely partnering and cooperating with all FAO initiatives in this sector, including that was recently approved for development – “Sustainable Forest and Rangelands Management in the Dryland Ecosystems of Uzbekistan” that largely focuses on sustainable use of lands in agro landscapes.

[x]  Logistical considerations (example, geographic accessibility, security concerns, infrastructure)

As in the previous OP, the GEF SGP will continue working in three selected provinces, that are very close to the capital of the country - Tashkent, easy to travel to, minimize the administrative costs to manage the projects and easy to demonstrate the selected approaches and technologies for the potential beneficiaries from the rest of the country for successful upscale.

* + 1. The agro landscape selection was made having in mind the same approach, taken last time – the landscape allows to exploit a holistic and integrated approach to solving various environmental problems interlinked between each other.
		2. In this landscape climate change and land degradation are closely intertwined. For instance, much of the agricultural productive landscape depend on energy intensive water pumping. Gravity irrigation and decrease in the volume of water needed will greatly diminish GHG emissions. But even better potential of the climate change mitigation has another perspective – promotion of conservation agriculture instead of conventional agriculture. Conventional agriculture results in a huge amount of emissions associated with both loss of carbon and NOs from the soil and extensive land cultivation by machineries. It is a fact that globally there is more organic carbon in the soil than in the vegetation and atmosphere combined. The introduction of the just no till may result in 6-10 times less carbon emissions in comparison with traditional agriculture. The data of the European no till research shows that the potential of CO2 sequestration in Europe can be increased from 15 mln tons of CO2 to189 mln tons of CO2 through no till wide introduction. “If all European farmland was converted to conservation agriculture, it would reduce atmospheric carbon as much as planting 65 millions hectares of forest”[[18]](#footnote-18). Promotion of the conservation and resource efficient agriculture in Uzbekistan will greatly reduce volume of GHGs emissions associated with the landscape. The GEF SGP puts a great focus on this direction due to the fact of its immense potential for climate change mitigation.
		3. The agricultural landscape also has huge and most practical potential in climate change adaptation. The biggest potential lies in the area of transformation of agricultural landscape into agroforestry landscape and again – introduction of the conservation agriculture. Both of the mentioned directions greatly increase vegetation cover, improve soil organic content and structure. By improving these features of the landscape, the landscape will contribute to greater potential for water storage, transmission of water between surface and underground, improved moisture content, decreased wind pressure on taking away moisture. The improved water and moisture retention capacities are increasingly important for aggravating aridization of Uzbekistan climate.
		4. The landscape is both strongly dependent on and have huge effect on biodiversity. The loss of vegetation cover due to various unsustainable agricultural practices – crop cultivation, monoculture, absence of forest stands, use of chemicals, logging and overgrazing – unfortunately strongly affect biodiversity habitat and thus biodiversity status. Loss of habitat is attributed to all stratas of biodiversity: insects, birds, animals, wild and domesticated plants, gene pool and landscapes. Loss of pollinators, loss of aboriginal agro biodiversity (fruits and vegetables) are among the biggest problems. But other problems also have a huge negative effects. For instance, the vegetation loss in foothill and mountainous areas directly affect watershed status and indirectly the overall condition of biodiversity up and downstream.
		5. To summarize the selection process in favor of agro ecosystems, the following can be stated:
* The landscape embraces all kinds of environmental problems and is well suited for GEF thematic areas interventions;
* The existing problems have various solutions that if rightfully implemented can yield good results in mitigating environmental damages;
* There are a number of various threats to environmental sustainability present within the landscape. They can well be tackled by communities and should be addressed in the most holistic and integrated manner;
* Any demonstrations within the focused area of the landscape can be easily replicated, disseminated to and upscaled on the same landscape across the country;
* The size of the landscape is big enough to make substantive environmental benefits that will have a beneficial spill-over effect to other, contiguous landscapes;
* Focus on the landscape will have the most productive output for the limited resources of the Programme;
* the Programme has been working in the landscape for a long time, has established networks, credibility and comparative advantages. We have an established basis and substantive experience that we are building on;
* As mentioned, half of the country can be effected by positive shifts in this landscape, i.e. there is a great number of potential beneficiaries;
* focus on this landscape has the best potential for further upscaling of the results in comparison with other landscapes
	+ 1. The discussion of the Strategy and the proposed landscape has been taking place via online discussion due to present restrictions linked with COVID pandemia. All comments are received through online communications. The NSC had a chance to discuss the approach on the previous meetings. The comments on the strategy and the selected landscape will be collected by the end of July 2020.
1. **Selected Landscapes/Seascapes for OP7**
	* 1. It was decided to retain both landscape and geographical focus of the strategy. The following rationale was applied:
2. The selected area contains the most typical threats and problems relevant to the selected landscape and is representative for the majority of the landscape across the country;
3. The area contains both arable land segments – irrigated and rainfed;
4. The area is easily accessible and can be effectively monitored;
	* 1. The geographical focus of the GEF SGP interventions during OP6 has shown its effectiveness. During OP7 cycle the focus will remain within the agro landscape area of Syrdarya river watershed beyond Fergana valley – one of the two major rivers of the whole region. The watershed of Amudarya lies further away from the capital, is difficult to manage and access, and has much lower density of population. And therefore, there are less number of potential replicates and beneficiaries from SGP investments. Moreover, the northern part of the country – near the Aral Sea basin is already targeted by multiple donors. It would be highly unreasonable to duplicate and compete with other donors with limited SGP resources. The investments SGP can provide to the currently selected area and landscape can bring much higher return and effectiveness.
		2. The selected area is shown on the Map # 1 below and marked in bright green (irrigated) and yellow (rain fed).
		3. The selected area administratively resides in three provinces of Uzbekistan – Tashkent, Syrdarya and Djizzak provinces. The total landscape territory in these provinces occupies an area of 1,061,900 ha, where 810,600 ha of irrigated landscape and 251,300 ha of rain fed arable lands. The share of provinces is 332,400 ha, 261,300 ha and 249,000 ha of irrigated lands in Tashkent, Djizzak and Syrdaya provinces respectively, and 32,100 ha, 219,200 ha and 0 ha of rain fed lands in the provinces[[19]](#footnote-19). The geographical focus area constitutes 24.19% of the total selected landscape of Uzbekistan and 0.24% of the total country area. The quality of the landscape is similar to most of the landscape lands in Uzbekistan with 59, 50 and 51.5 bonitet score in Tashkent, Djizzak and Syradarya provinces respectively.

**Map # 1. The geographical focus of the selected agro landscape.**



* + 1. As previously, the consideration took into account the following arguments and characteristics of the area that helped to make the decision:
1. Geomorphological characteristics of the area are typical for the rest of the agricultural landscape of the country. It contains various types of valley, foothill and mountainous areas typical for other territories of the agricultural landscape across the country.
2. It shares similar agro climatic characteristics with most of the agricultural landscape of the country, including those in Fergana valley, Samarkand, Kashkadarya provinces. Zones of precipitation levels are similar to almost all other areas apart from parts of the landscape in Khorezm and Karakalpakstan;
3. Soils types are typical for the landscape in other part of the country;
4. Scopes of threats to environment taking into account approaches to use and management of the landscape are identical to those in other parts of the country, including overexploitation and mismanagement of soil, water, energy and biodiversity resources, climate change risks mismanagement, deforestation and vegetation loss. Those threats lead to various land degradation, biodiversity and climate change problems, including primary and secondary salinization of soils, loss of soils fertility, deficit of water resources for ecological needs, extinction of plant and animal species, and many others.
5. The area lies within the day-trip vicinity from the capital of the country and easy to access and monitor.
6. It is convenient to make knowledge sharing activities as most of the people from all provinces come to the capital – Tashkent from time to time.
	* 1. Hence, the GEF-7 country programme will keep focusing on conservation of agricultural landscapes/ecosystems with specific geographical focus on Syrdarya river watershed beyond Fergana valley. The emphasis will be made on building harmonious relationships between people and nature whereby human socio-economic activities in and outside of rural communities, including agriculture and forestry, will align with natural processes in the most sustainable manner. The resources and services provided by agricultural ecosystems include but are not limited to:
7. Soil formation and provision for agricultural production, including various food, fodder for livestock and other types of crops, representing the most important function. Without productive soil there is no agricultural production and no food security;
8. Water cycle circulation for all socio-economic and ecological functions;
9. Effective energy use and flow within the landscape;
10. Availability of habitats for biodiversity that provides multiple services like pollination of crops, a gene bank of various species, which is critical for society’s well-being, food productions and mitigation of risk due various extreme biological events, among others;
11. Circulation of important nutrients and chemical elements;
	* 1. Sustainable co-existence of human communities with nature where different types of land uses such as farmland, woodland, pastures and grassland, lakes, rivers and irrigation canals correlate with nature’s carrying capacity is on the forefront of the Programme's objectives. The Programme aims to support community innovative interventions:
	* where farm lands are managed to sustain long term soil fertility and sustainable use of ecological products and services in long term perspective;
	* water is used with regard to existence of other uses including ecological;
	* forests are planted additionally to naturally grown and only artificially planted wood stands are cut. The planting is made to maintain healthy vegetation cover, water purification, carbon sequestration, etc. and satisfying human need for wood fuel;
	* vegetation is used to maintain soil fertility and feed animals;
	* patches of habitats are sustained to conserve biodiversity and decrease fragmentation;
	* energy is sustainably produced and used;
	* and other initiatives that help to preserve healthy environment and meet the needs of humans in rural localities.
		1. The nature of the selected landscape focus dictates that primary stakeholders for the Programme will be rural population, including farmers’ communities and communities of individual households. Whereas the country Programme does have a geographical focus on Syrdarya river watershed beyond Fergana valley, it still does not seclude any of the country regions. The CPS will allocated 70% of its resources to the selected landscape and 30% - to interventions in other thematic and geographical areas.
		2. To make the most out of available limited resources, the country Programme will make focused and identical interventions in selected three provinces, trying to use economy of scale for knowledge sharing. Therefore knowledge from one project can be applied and disseminated though various channels to other parts of the country. Moreover, some elements or components in various projects can be complementary to other projects. Knowledge management initiatives for similar projects can be combined to save resources where possible.
12. **OP7 Strategic Initiatives in the landscapes/seascapes**
	* 1. The sole umbrella/agenda of putting the selected landscape under environmentally sustainable management will guide all initiatives under the forthcoming OP-7 strategy. The Programme will support and develop the following strategic initiatives further on:
* Demonstrating and dissemination of various components of the conservation agriculture, including no till, mulching and constant vegetation cover, crop rotation, tillage by roots of plants, creating healthy soil formation and soil bio organisms communities;
* Promotion of the best irrigation practices for both irrigated and rain fed agro landscape segments;
* Demonstration and dissemination of moisture saving technologies and practices and avoidance of reliance on drilled wells;
* Development of drought resistant local varieties of crops, their seed production, etc;
* Transformation of agro landscape into agroforestry landscape with wide integration trees into productive landscapes;
* Development of biological ways of anti weed and pest protection;
* Sustaining all possible methods for improving well being of all pollinators and ensuring pollination services;
* Working on possible ways to cut ineffective energy use and promote new, low carbon, alternative energy production and consumption;
* Developing and sustaining local , endemic agrobiodiversity and improving value chain for the conservation of local species/varieties of plants, pollinators and possibly animals;
* Other directions that will positively influence environmental sustainability and well-being of productive agro landscape.
	1. **Grantmaking Outside the Priority Landscapes/Seascapes**
		1. Two large areas beyond the focus landscape approach of the Programme may potentially cluster around two major themes:
1. Sustainable urban management, including urban forestry, transport, etc.
2. Development of circular economy
	* 1. The urban management attracts large attention of the public, especially in the capital of Uzbekistan – Tashkent. The most prominent problems that are widely discussed in the social media of the country are loss of tree cover in the cities, air pollution due to high increase of car numbers, degradation of the public transport and absence of conditions for development of green transport – bicycle, trams and trolleys. The trams and trolley buses were eliminated from the streets of most of the cities in Uzbekistan. A large network of tram ways were dismantled and trams sent to metal scrap. The only alternative of the lost green transports is metro, which received certain development. A new circle of Tashkent metro was built in the past few years. The overall public city transport system receives very little development.
		2. One of the promising directions in urban management is initiatives on tree coverage recovery. In this direction, the Programme plans to partner with the State Committee for ecology and city public initiative groups.
		3. Another important programme direction lies within the term of Circular Economy. The Circular Economy “… is designed to ensure that the value of products, materials, and resources is maintained in the economy at the highest utility and value, for as long as possible, while minimizing waste generation, by designing out waste and hazardous materials. The circular economy applies both to biological and technical materials.”[[20]](#footnote-20) The Circular Economy “…aims to keep resources in use for as long as possible, to extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, and to recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of their service life.”[[21]](#footnote-21) While the Programme is not aiming to support recycling initiatives that are well developed in Uzbekistan as business, it is open to innovative ways of alternate many high waste producing products and materials and improve the longevity of lifespan of potentially wasteful, hazardous and damaging products, raw materials and services.
		4. Up to 30% of the Programme’s resources can be channeled to these and other initiatives. The initiatives beyond landscape approach will be supported and nourished if emerged.
		5. Additionally, the Programme plans to support the Grantmaker Plus initiatives of the CSO-Government-Business sectors.
3. ***CSO-Government-Private Sector Dialogue Platform***
	* 1. The Country Programme will also act as a facilitator and participant of the CSO-government-business dialogue platforms to ensure promotion of the best practices and lessons learnt during OP6 and OP7 projects and other nature conservation projects and initiatives. The Programme will be linking voices from communities-partners with higher level national planners and policy-makers,a nd between each other. This will take place in form of various round tables, conferences, seminars, meetings, etc. The Programme learnt that peer to peer partnership and exchange of information is very effective and can bring good results. The knowledge management components of the Programme will also complement efforts of the SGP in establishing “the bridge” between communities, business and governmental authorities.
		2. Aside from the CSO-Government-Business Dialogue Platform initiative, the SGP country programme will use experiences and lessons learnt from SGP to inform and influence policy as part of its role as ‘Grant-makers+’ in OP7 at the local, regional and national levels through knowledge products dissemination and participation in various discussion processes regarding implementation of the global environmental agreements.
4. ***Promoting Social Inclusion, including gender equality and women’s empowerment***
	* 1. The SGP will keep paying particular attention to empowering and attracting women into using and promotion of the innovative practices and technologies. The number of women-farmers in Uzbekistan is limited due to various reasons. By various estimates, out of more than 70,000 farm entities there are around 12-14% of farms headed by women. Extra efforts will be made to ensure that women enjoy preferential possibilities during projects implementation processes and number of women-owners of business engaged in the landscape increases thanks to SGP demonstrations and activities.
		2. In OP6 the Programme started cooperation with the Council of Young Farmers. Plus, the Programme targets interventions that will otherwise benefit youth. A project in OP6 exclusively worked on activation of youth engagement into climate change movement. This work will be strengthened and continued in OP7.
		3. The Programme will assign a focal point for gender and youth engagement in the NSC.
5. ***Knowledge Management***
	* 1. The knowledge management activities of the Programme are by far is the foundation for capacity development of partners. The final objective of the knowledge sharing is to develop capacities of all potential beneficiaries to a level when they have respective potential to sustainable use natural capital. Plus, by training partners through projects and Progamme knowledge sharing activities, the Programme hopes to develop various skills of the beneficiaries that will help them to reach required level of efficiency in resource management.
		2. The knowledge plan largely bases on lessons learnt and successes from the previous country strategies. The previous knowledge sharing activities of the Programme proved its efficacy and the SGP is widely recognized as an effective capacity development and outreach partner.
		3. Each project or a cluster of similar projects will capture results and lessons learnt from on-the-ground activities. Big attention will be paid to cost-and-benefit analysis of each proposed practice as regular people are first interested in monetary attractiveness. Environmental dimension cannot serve as a motivator to shift to a proposed technology alone without clearly identified economic incentives. The results are then shared widely with other resource users, civil society, government, and other relevant stakeholders to foster replication and scaling up of community innovations.
		4. The strategy is to use the following instruments and approaches:
* Manuals on practices and technologies;
* Newsletters with analytical papers with economic justification of a practice/technology;
* Organization and participation of Field Days with direct demonstration;
* Organization and participation of Peer-to-peer exchanges;
* Organization and participation in fairs, round tables, seminars, etc.
	+ 1. All available knowledge products and manuals together with available analytical papers will be downloaded to global South-South exchange digital library. GEF SGP in Uzbekistan website – <http://www.sgp.uz> is also an open source of all available information amassed by SGP over the course of its activities in Uzbekistan.
1. **COMMUNICATION PLAN**
	* 1. The Communication Strategy fully bases its effectiveness on demonstration of successful examples of how environment can be conserved with simultaneous benefiting communities. The demonstrations and clearly articulated benefits description from each technology for economy and environment will serve as a key instrument to communicate the results of the SGP work and engage key stakeholders into further dissemination, replication and upscaling. Incentives to have similar results will serve as a basis for building further partnership with CSOs and governmental entities. The results of the SGP demonstrations will also be communicated with UNDP for possible policy dialogue initiation with Governmental partners.

1. **RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND PARTNERSHIP PLAN**

In OP7, the Government has allocated sufficient resources from STAR to implementation of the SGP. Additional resources will be mobilized on project level and if the situation and opportunities require and allow resource mobilization. The Programme has always been open to any partnership with any possible players, which may cooperate in the selected work.

* 1. **Secured and planned cash and in-kind co-financing**
		1. The resource mobilization will be firmly undertaken on a project level ensuring that sufficient co-financing in cash and in-kind is mobilized for effective project implementation. On the project and Programme level, 1:1 co-financing ratio is strictly followed to raise additional funds for the project/Programme implementation. The co-financing is expected to be raised from grantees and the private sector, donors and government.
		2. While advancing on the Programme implementation, additional attention and resources will be sought from any potential partners. In the view of latest developments, it is becoming very likely that the Programme will become a partner to support and promote various governmentally initiated interventions. The Governmental resources devoted to the initiatives are spent in parallel but joint efforts will eventually benefit the common objectives.
1. **Grantmaker Plus & Partnership Opportunities**

The Programme will act as a source of support and facilitation to activities of CSO and business sector in situations when no direct assistance can be granted from GEF grant funds. The Programme will serve as the “Grantmaker+” to help communities and CSOs formulate ideas, facilitate information gathering and other support to initiate a development initiative.

1. **RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Table 3. 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 | High | High | The only possibility that is available is to comply with governmental restrictions and try to implement as many initiatives via online support.  |
| Control and monitoring  | Low  | Low  | Transparency in implementation of SGP projects |
| Governmental interference into initiatives and barriers | Medium | Low | Close partnership and detailed justification to governmentl entities on the proposed interventions |
| Sustainability and maintaining of ongoing initiatives  | Medium  | Low  | Bridging gaps between beneficiaries and donors and local communities, capacity building of local communities and beneficiaries |

1. **MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN**
	1. **Monitoring Approaches at Project and Country Levels**
		1. The Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) plan will be based on the indicators and targets set in individual projects implementation and country programme implementation.
		2. Individual SGP projects’ M&E starts when a project makes its result-orientation plan with clear and SMART indicators. The community members who initiate a project are setting out the targets or the project together with the SGP National Steering Committee (NSC) and National Coordinator (NC). The participation of NC is justified to ensure that a project’s results complement the global environmental objectives set by the GEF. This mutually developed project framework becomes a basis for M&E of the project and the project is assessed against a set indicators and targets. The targets and indicators of each project are formulated in line with the CPS targets and indicators. The framework of each project becomes a reference source during the project implementation for M&E made by NC or NSC.
		3. NC conducts project monitoring visits at least once a year. The frequency of the monitoring visits by the NC depends on the complexity of a project and is determined by the NC according to the project results milestones. The NC also conducts a monitoring visit for a randomly selected projects at the end of a project or after its completion to verify that the project’s objectives have been achieved.
		4. Once a year, a mandatory NSC members monitoring visit is organized across selected projects to inform the NSC members with projects’ progress and results.
		5. Indicators at the country level are tracked and reported on through the Annual Country Reports (ACR). The Annual reports are transferred to global Central Programme Management Team (CPMT) in NY for further aggregation. The progress towards the CPS targets is assessed annually by collecting results of the individual projects, and appropriate adaptive management measures may be identified as necessary.
		6. The detailed M&E plan for individual country Programme level is provided in the Table 4 below.

Table 4. M&E Plan at the Country Programme 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[[22]](#footnote-22) to ensure OP7 CPS is on track to achieve its results and make timely and evidence-based modifications to CPS as may be needed[[23]](#footnote-23).  |
| Annual Monitoring Report Survey[[24]](#footnote-24) | 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. | NCs, PAs,  | 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**
		1. The table 5 below shows the expected results of the Country Programme Strategy for Uzbekistan and the Programme will be monitored against the depicted indicators.

Table 5: Results Framework of SGP OP7 Country Programme Strategy

|  |
| --- |
| **Alignment with SDGs**GOAL 1: No PovertyGOAL 2: Zero HungerGOAL 3: Good Health and Well-beingGOAL 5: Gender EqualityGOAL 7: Affordable and Clean EnergyGOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic GrowthGOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and CommunitiesGOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and ProductionGOAL 13: Climate ActionGOAL 15: Life on Land |
| **Synergy with UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD):** * **By 2025, most at risk regions and communities of Uzbekistan are more resilient to climate change and disasters, and benefit from increasingly sustainable and gender-sensitive efficient management of natural resources and infrastructure, robust climate action, inclusive environmental governance and protection**
 |
| **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* Country priorities:*To improve community-led initiatives, including targeted increase in survival and prosperity of pollinators, protecting national agro biodiversity pool, improved forestry and agroforestry practices* | *At least 100 hectares of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (GEF core indicator 4.1)* | *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*Country priorities:*To conserve soil fertility for food security and improve agro ecosystem sustainability;**To improve diversification of agro production;**To widen and promote transformation of agro landscape to agroforestry landscape;**To prevent land degradation and restore productive agro landscapes.* | *At least 1000 hectares of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems (GEF core indicator 4.3)* | Individual project reporting by SGP country teams *(as part of midterm and final Progress reports)*Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global databaseCountry Programme Review  |
| Strategic Initiative 3: *Low-carbon energy access co-benefits* Country priorities:*To promote establishment of renewable and energy efficient technologies that provide socio-economic benefits and improved livelihoods to local communities.* | *At least 100 KW of installed renewable energy capacity from local technologies (e.g on types of renewable energy technology biomass, small hydro, solar).**At least 2 of typologies of community-oriented, locally adapted energy access solutions with successful demonstrations or scaling up and replication.**At least 2 of community-oriented, locally adapted energy access solutions with successful demonstrations for scaling up and replication*  | Individual project reporting by SGP country teams *(as part of midterm and final Progress reports)*Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global databaseCountry Programme Strategy Review (NSC inputs) |
| Strategic Initiative 4: *Local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management* Country priorities:*To reduce/remove use of chemicals in agriculture by biological substitutes and improved agro technologies;**To promote circular economy* | *At least 2 of typologies of community-oriented, locally adapted bio protection solutions or circular economy approaches with successful demonstrations or scaling up and replication.* | Individual project reporting by SGP country teams *(as part of midterm and final Progress reports)*Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), global databaseCountry Programme Review  |
| Strategic Initiative 5: *Catalyzing sustainable urban solutions**Country priorities:**To improve community-driven capacities in urban forestry management, sustainable transport and sustainable urban development* | *At least 2 of community-based urban solutions/ approaches (including chemical and waste management, energy, transport, watershed protection, ecosystem services and biodiversity) deployed.* | Individual project reporting by SGP country teamsAnnual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global databaseCountry Programme Review  |
| Strategic Initiative 6: *CSO-Government-Private Sector Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms* | *At least 1 of CSO-government-private sector dialogues convened to support community voice and representation in national/ sub-national policy development.* *At least 10 of 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 1 of Public-Private Partnership on key global environmental issues promoted* | Individual project reporting by SGP country teamsAnnual Monitoring Report (AMR), global databaseCountry Programme Review  |
| Strategic Initiative 7: *Enhancing social inclusion* | *At least 3 of SGP projects led by women and/or mainstream concrete mechanisms for increased participation of women.**At least 2 of SGP projects that demonstrate appropriate models of engaging youth*  | Individual project reporting by SGP country teamsAnnual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global databaseCountry Programme Review  |
| *Strategic Initiative 8:**Monitoring and Evaluation and Knowledge Management* | *At least 2 of projects administering results management modalities in programme design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms.**At least Quarterly Frequency of updating SGP database for effective data collection, management and analysis supporting gains in programme performance and learning.* *At least 1 of 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 teamsAnnual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global databaseCountry Programme Review  |

1. **National Steering Committee Endorsement**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **NSC members involved in OP7 CPS development,** **review and endorsement** | **Signatures** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| (Add more rows as necessary) |  |

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. The initial SGP OP7 concept was incorporated into the strategic directions for the overall GEF-7 replenishment negotiations in 2017, and subsequently approved by the GEF Council paper “GEF Small Grants Programme: Implementation Arrangements for GEF-7” (GEF/C.54/05.rev) in June 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The references: “GEF SGP”, “GEF SGP in Uzbekistan” and “Programme” are used interchangeably unless stated otherwise in the text. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. As of June 30, 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. While natural ecosystems are self regulating and self managing, agro-ecosystems are not. Humans actively interfere in regulation and management of ecosystem processes, especially those relating to soil in agricultural landscapes. Considering that agricultural landscapes occupy 38% of the world’s land area and the majority of this land is being degraded to various degrees, one of GEF’s main objectives is to arrest these processes. GEF strategy in addressing land degradation in the next cycle is focused primarily on agro-ecosystems/landscapes. That is why we also use this term in our strategy. Please refer to this [webpage](https://www.thegef.org/gef/land_degradation/GEF-5_strategy) for a more detailed description of the GEF land degradation global strategy. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Please also identify existing IW regional projects and the regional SAPs adopted by countries sharing international waterbodies so as to align SGP local interventions. Please check this website to find some of the SAPs: <http://iwlearn.net/publications/SAP> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Financing Climate Action in Uzbekistan, Country Study, 2016, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Based on the presentation of the Deputy Minister Shezod Khodjaev on the International Forum on energy reforms in Uzbekistan, July 2019, accessed at <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2019/07/18/energy/> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Adopted on 23 October 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Based on the information of USAID climate risk profile of Uzbekistan, accessed at <https://www.climatelinks.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/Uzbekistan_CRP_Final.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. National Report on State of Environment and Use of Natural Resources in Uzbekistan 2007. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Mirzabaev, Alisher & Goedecke, Jann & Dubovyk, Olena & Djanibekov, Utkur & Le, Quang Bao & Aw-Hassan, Aden. (2015). Economics of Land Degradation in Central Asia.. ZEF Policy Briefs. 1-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Republic of Uzbekistan # 484 dated on 11.06.2019, accessed at <https://lex.uz/docs/4372841> [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. GEF-FAO FSP project document, project code GCP/UZB/004/GFF, GEF Project ID: 9190 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Refer to the various guidance documents on landscape/seascape selection and assessments. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The Fifth National Report, p.7, accessed at <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/uz/uz-nr-05-en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Ibid, p. 10 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Proceeds of the International conference “Strategies for the Promotion of Conservation Agriculture in Central Asia”, 5-7 September 2018, presentation by Dr. Emilio Gonzales [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. As of January 1, 2016, data from MAWR. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Plastics and the circular economy, a GEF A STAP document, June 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. 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-22)
23. 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-23)
24. 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-24)