



Kunming Biodiversity Fund Direct Allocation Project Proposal

I. Basic Information				
Project Title	Strengthening Community Engagement for Biodiversity Conservation in the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area.			
Funding Priority	Indigenous Peoples and local communities' engagement in biodiversity conservation, identification of biodiversity hotspots and assessment of the current management effectiveness of the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area against the IUCN Green List standard.			
Implementing Entity and Focal Point	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)		Barsha Lekhi	
			Barsha Lekhi Indigenous Engagement Specialist, UNESCO Kathmandu b.lekhi@unesco.org	
Geographical scope	Kanchenjunga Conservation Area in Taplejung District of Eastern Nepal			
Beneficiary Country and Focal Point	Nepal			
	Dr. Meghnath Kafle Joint Secretary, Ministry of Forests and Environment Singha Durbar, Kathmandu, Nepal mkafle1@hotmail.com			
Total Budget (USD)	KBF funding requested:	US\$ 199543	Co-funding Sources (if applicable):	UNESCO staff time
	Co-funding provided (if applicable):	US\$ 27624		
	Total	US\$ 227167		
Delivery timeframe	8 months			
Date of Executive Council Approval	24 October 2024			
KBF: Doreen Lynn Robinson, Co-chair of the KBF Executive Council (Signatur				
UNESCO : Michael Croft, Representative (Nepal) (Signature :				
II. Introduction				



The Kanchenjunga Conservation Area (KCA) is a vital hotspot of biodiversity, home to endangered species like the snow leopard and red panda and is integral to the cultural and economic well-being of indigenous communities. However, the area faces significant challenges due to the escalating impacts of climate change, and poaching of wildlife, which is threatening fragile ecosystems and the traditional livelihoods of local communities, while inadequate funding limits the capacity for effective conservation and community-based initiatives. Additionally, there is a critical gap in comprehensive biodiversity documentation and monitoring, which is essential for informed conservation strategies. The limited use of scientific and technological tools hinders the ability to track ecological changes and implement effective conservation measures. Integrating modern research and monitoring tools, while keeping Indigenous communities and their traditional knowledge at the center, is vital for addressing these challenges.

The proposed project will enhance biodiversity documentation and conservation in the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area by introducing advanced scientific tools and integrating indigenous knowledge. This will accelerate implementing the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) by contributing to global biodiversity data, strengthening regional cooperation, improving national conservation policies, and empowering local communities. By addressing critical gaps in monitoring and sustainable development, the project supports the potential nomination of KCA for IUCN green listing and for UNESCO biosphere reserve thereby contributing to national effort towards Target 3 of Kunming Montreal (KM)-GBF.

III. Project Objective

The proposed project aims to drive transformational change in biodiversity conservation through a governance-focused approach by aligning with the KM-GBF and contributing to the 2050 Vision and target 3 of the GBF. The core objective is to enhance the governance, management effectiveness, and equitable outcomes of the KCA through the piloting of the IUCN Green List Standards and integration with UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme.

Nepal, with its diverse ecosystems ranging from lowland Terai to the Himalayan landscapes, has committed to ambitious conservation goals under the KM-GBF. Target 3 of the KM-GBF mandates the effective conservation of at least 30% of terrestrial, freshwater, and marine areas through well-connected systems of Protected Areas (PAs) and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs). The project will enhance the KCA's status as a potential OECM by improving its management and governance in line with the IUCN Green List Standards and UNESCO MAB programming, thus contributing significantly to this target.

The project's alignment with CBD Decision 13/2 and 15/22 supports effective PA management and species conservation, strengthening cooperation and actions for biodiversity. By involving Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), including women and youth, the project fosters inclusive and equitable governance, directly addressing gender disparities and enhancing community ownership. This involvement is crucial for sustainable conservation and helps combat wildlife poaching.

Implementing community-based monitoring and information systems will provide valuable baseline data and actively engage local stakeholders in conservation efforts. This aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 15.4, focusing on conserving mountain ecosystems



and their biodiversity. The project's engagement with women and students will promote their roles in conservation, reflecting transformational change by recognizing and amplifying their contributions.

The project supports goal A and B of the 2050 Vision by halting biodiversity loss, enhancing ecosystem resilience, promoting sustainable use and management of biodiversity. It aligns with KM-GBF targets 20 by strengthening IPLC capacities for scientific biodiversity monitoring, 21 by making knowledge accessible to guide biodiversity actions, and 22 integrating indigenous rights and gender-responsive measures into conservation strategies.

Overall, the project is poised to effectuate significant improvements in biodiversity conservation by integrating traditional knowledge with modern scientific tools, fostering inclusive governance, enhancing local capacity for biodiversity conservation and equitable benefit-sharing and setting a benchmark for effective area-based conservation.

IV. Rationale for KBF Investment

The Kangchenjunga Conservation Area (KCA) operates within a dynamic socio-economic context, reliant on traditional agriculture, animal husbandry, and a growing tourism sector. These activities sustain local livelihoods, with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) playing a pivotal role in biodiversity conservation through community-managed forests and traditional ecological knowledge.

The Kunming Biodiversity Fund (KBF) investment aligns with and enhances ongoing initiatives in KCA, building on UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme. Identified as a potential Biosphere Reserve (BR) since 2014, KCA has seen significant engagement through stakeholder meetings and a mission in 2024. The project advances this designation by addressing gaps in biodiversity monitoring and integrating Indigenous knowledge.

The project will build the capacity of partners for long-term conservation success and sustainable use of biodiversity resources by piloting the IUCN Green List process in the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area of Nepal, demonstrating global best practices in conservation management. It will strengthen governance, equity, and inclusivity in PA management to align with Target 3 of the KM-GBF and ensure effective conservation outcomes that contribute to the 30x30 goal of KM-GBF, especially in ecologically significant areas.

The project addresses Focus Area 5 of KBF, "National Knowledge Management and Communication Strategies," by incorporating advanced biodiversity monitoring tools, such as camera traps and GPS, to fill gaps in biodiversity-related data and documentation. The project activities also focus on building the capacities of indigenous communities and drawing on relevant traditional knowledge and practices, ensuring free, prior, and informed consent from IPLCs.

The project aligns with Decision 15/22 of the CBD, addressing tasks 2c, 2d, and 3b of the Joint Programme of Work (JPoW).

Additionally, the KBF investment complements efforts of organizations like Samridhha Pahad's park center initiative. This integration ensures that KBF investments strengthen existing strategies and foster cohesive and sustainable development in KCA.



V. Project alignment

The KBF project aligns with ongoing efforts in KCA by complementing existing initiatives. WWF's community-based snow leopard monitoring will be enhanced with advanced tools, while Samridhha Pahad's park center will benefit from enriched biodiversity data. The Red Panda Network's protected area work will be supported through improved species monitoring and hotspot zoning. Pangolin conservation efforts by NTNC, ZSL, and National Geographic will gain from better data collection and anti-poaching measures. Building on ICIMOD's sustainable development efforts, KBF fosters collaboration, leverages past successes, and ensures a unified approach to conservation, strengthening biodiversity preservation in the region.

The project will complement existing GEF projects as well. It aligns with GEF project ID 10381 Outcome 1 by strengthening community engagement in biodiversity conservation; GEF project ID 11286 support to NBSAP Update and the 7th National Report by integrating knowledge of IPLCs and applying gender responsive plans in biodiversity monitoring; GEF project ID 11030 targets 1, 2, 3, 12, 14, 20, and 21 by seeking to identify potential Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) and assess the effectiveness of the Green List standard for protected area management in KCA, and by building the capacity of IPLCs.

VI. Specific activities

Outcome 1: Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), with meaningful participation of women and girls, are engaged in community-driven efforts and initiatives to conserve biodiversity.

Output 1.1: Strengthened capacities of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), including women and girls, in biodiversity conservation in Kanchenjunga Conservation Area.

Activity 1.1.1: Organize consultation workshops with the IPLCs to identify areas for pilot survey, including school and women groups, for project implementation.

Activity 1.1.2: Organize capacity-building workshops and training on biodiversity conservation using scientific tools like camera trapping and GPS to monitor and collect information.

Activity 1.1.3: Engage school students in conservation practices through camera trapping and develop guidelines to recognize their efforts.

Activity 1.1.4: Identify biodiversity hotspots, integrating local and indigenous knowledge and community engagement using camera trapping and GPS.

Outcome 2: Concerned stakeholders of Kanchenjunga Conservation Area are informed to deliver successful conservation outcomes through effective and equitable governance and management.

Output 2.1: The management effectiveness of the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area accessed, , and the communities capacitated/informed on the sustainable management of natural resources through OECM around the KCA area.



Activity 2.1.1: Conduct workshops to inform the IUCN Green List standard and the OECM at the federal, provincial, and local levels.

Activity 2.1.2: Assess the current management effectiveness of the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area against the IUCN Green List standard and access the potential OECM sites in the Kanchenjunga area.

Activity 2.1.3 Conduct the workshop to share the Management effectiveness gap and the potential OECM opportunities in the KCA area.

The two outcomes exhibit strong coherence and alignment to achieve the project's outcomes by building a participatory and capacity-driven approach to biodiversity conservation and governance.

VII. Sustainability, replication and scale up

Several strategic actions will be taken to ensure the sustainability of the project's results and benefits in the long run. The project's initiatives will be anchored by working closely with key stakeholders, including the National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), local governments who can take ownership and allocate budget annually to continue the important activities. By fostering a sense of ownership and encouraging these stakeholders to budget for the continuation of these activities, we aim to ensure the sustained implementation of conservation efforts.

The project's piloting in one area in KCA can be replicated across other areas, expanding its impact throughout the region. The potential designation of KCA as Nepal's first UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (BR) presents a significant opportunity for sustained and scaled-up funding.

Additionally, partnerships with ongoing projects by organizations like NTNC, and Samriddha Pahad will be leveraged to scale up the project.

The IUCN Nepal Office will be onboarded as an implementing partner for the IUCN Green Listing component. By aligning with the IUCN Green List standards, the project will ensure that the conservation gains achieved are measurable, maintainable, and replicable. The Green List process creates a foundation for sustained long-term governance improvements, which will enable the KCA to continue delivering effective conservation outcomes well into the future.

These efforts ensure the project's outcomes are not only sustained but also expanded over time.

VIII. Gender

Inclusive Representation: Acknowledging the crucial role women, girls, and marginalized communities play in biodiversity conservation, the project will empower women and girls as custodians of traditional and Indigenous ecological knowledge, through leadership opportunities and full participation in conservation governance. The project will actively incorporate gender perspectives to ensure meaningful involvement by identifying and



engaging women's and mothers' groups in leadership and decision-making positions throughout the implementation of the project.

Capacity Building: The project will implement capacity-building programs that prioritize equitable participation of women and girls, aiming to strengthen their skills in biodiversity conservation and sustainable practices. These initiatives will acknowledge and build upon the existing knowledge and contributions of women and girls, empowering them to take a central role in biodiversity management. Through training and leadership opportunities, particularly for women and girls, the project will cultivate future conservation leaders while ensuring gender equity supports the sustainability of conservation efforts. This approach aligns with the goals of the CBD and GBF to integrate gender perspectives into biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

Monitoring and Evaluation with Gender Lens: Gender-specific indicators will be integrated into the monitoring and evaluation framework to regularly track participation and impacts on women and girls to ensure that the project remains inclusive and equitable and promotes gender equality throughout its implementation.

IIIX. Communications, Outreach and Learning

To meet the communication, outreach and learning requirements of the proposed project, a multifaceted approach will be implemented to reach both project stakeholders and broader audiences.

Key activities will include:

- **Publishing Articles:** News articles will be published in local media outlets to highlight project milestones, community involvement, and conservation successes.
- **Bulletin and annual reports:** Regular updates on the project's progress and outcomes will be shared through the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) bulletin, NTNC, UNESCO Nepal and Sambriddha Pahad's annual reports ensuring visibility among conservation stakeholders.
- **Web Stories:** Project updates and success stories will be featured on the UNESCO, NTNC and IUCN websites, targeting a global audience and promoting the integration of traditional knowledge and scientific approaches.
- **Brochure Creation:** A brochure summarizing the project's activities related to MAB will be developed and distributed to local communities, schools, and government agencies.
- **Documentary Video:** A short documentary video will be produced, documenting the project's journey, community engagement, and the role of IPLCs in biodiversity conservation.
- **Publish report:** KCA Management effectiveness report, OECM sites report for the Kanchenjunga area.

These efforts will ensure that the project's results are widely disseminated, raising awareness and catalyzing further conservation efforts beyond the project's immediate stakeholders.



1. Budget

Project Activities			Expenditure category	Description of expenditure	Estimated amount	% of Fund
Outcome 1 Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), with meaningful participation of women and girls, are engaged in community-driven efforts and initiatives to conserve biodiversity.	Output1.1 Strengthened capacities of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), including women and girls, in biodiversity conservation in Kanchenjunga Conservation Area.	Activity1.1.1 Organize consultation workshops with IPLCs to identify areas for pilot survey, including school and women groups, for project implementation.	Training, Workshops and Conference	Space rental, meal and stationery	\$5,205.00	2.61%
			Travel	Surface/Air, DSA, Accommodation, etc) for staff and participants	\$10,560.00	5.29%
			Consultants	3 consultant to conduct consultation, research and training	\$6,000.00	3.01%
		Activity1.1.2 Organize capacity-building workshops and training on biodiversity conservation using scientific tools like camera trapping and GPS to monitor and collect information.	Training, Workshops and Conference	space rental and food	\$5,115.00	2.56%
			Equipment	camera and GPS	\$27,770.00	13.92%
			Consultants	develop guideline	\$2,234.00	1.12%



		Activity1.1.3 Engage school students in conservation practices through camera trapping and develop guidelines to recognize their efforts.	Contractual Services	reward for students	\$3,000.00	1.50%
			Equipment	equipment	\$2,000.00	1.00%
		Activity 1.1.4 Identify biodiversity hotspots, integrating indigenous and local knowledge and community engagement using camera trapping and GPS.	Consultants	facilitation	\$2,000.00	1.00%
			Training, Workshops and Conference	space rental and food	\$3,000.00	1.50%
Outcome 2 Concerned stakeholders of Kanchenjunga Conservation Area are informed to deliver successful conservation outcomes through effective and equitable governance	Output 2.1 Management effectiveness of Kanchenjunga Conservation Area assessed and the communities capacitated on the sustainable management of natural resources.	Activity2.1.1 Conduct workshops to inform the IUCN Green List standard and the OECM at the federal, provincial, and local levels.	Training, Workshops and Conference	Workshop 35 participants x 2Nos. and related supplies and consumables	\$3,550.00	1.78%
			Staff Cost	IUCN Staff and Expert Inputs to execute the activity	\$14,520.00	7.28%
			Travel	Travel (Surface/Air, DSA, Accommodation, etc) for staff and participants	\$4,550.00	2.28%



and management.			Training, Workshops and Conference	Training Costs 1 Participants x 10Nos. and related supplies and consumables	\$5,950.00	2.98%
		Activity 2.1.2 Assess the current management effectiveness of the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area against the IUCN Green List standard and access the potential OECM sites in the Kanchenjunga area.	Staff Cost	IUCN Staff and Expert Inputs to execute the activity	\$9,352.00	4.69%
			Consultants	experts hired 4 Nos intermittently approx. 30days	\$18,000.00	9.02%
			Travel	Travel (Surface/Air, DSA, Accommodation, etc) for staff and participants	\$9,670.00	4.85%
			Training, Workshops and Conference	Training Costs 20Participants x 2Nos. and related supplies and consumables	\$2,100.00	1.05%
		Activity 2.1.3 Conduct the workshop to share the Management effectiveness gap	Staff Cost	IUCN Staff and Expert Inputs to	\$5,000.00	2.51%



		and the potential OECM opportunities in the KCA area.		execute the activity		
			Contractual Services	Management effectiveness and OECM report	\$3,000.00	1.50%
			Travel	travel (Surface/Air, DSA, Accommodation, etc) for staff and participants	\$4,500.00	2.26%
Communication material			Contractual Services	documentation-brochure, documentary video and report	\$7,000.00	3.51%
Monitoring and evaluation			Travel	Surface/Air, DSA, Accommodation, etc) for staff and participants	\$5,913.00	2.96%
Staff Cost			Staff cost	Personnel and cost recovery	\$26,500.00	13.28%



Total Direct Cost	\$186,489.00	
Management Cost - 7%	\$13,054.23	6.54%
Total Project cost	\$199,543	100.00%

2. Implementation arrangement/Work Plan

Project Activities		Timeline							
		Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8
Output1.1 Strengthened capacities of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), including women and girls, in biodiversity conservation in Kanchenjunga Conservation Area.	Activity1.1.1 Organize consultation workshops with the communities to identify areas for pilot survey, , including school and women groups, for project implementation.								
	Activity 1.1.2 Organize capacity-building workshops and training on biodiversity conservation using scientific tools like camera trapping and GPS to monitor and collect information.								



	Activity 1.1.3 Engage school students in conservation practices through camera trapping and develop guidelines to recognize their efforts.								
	Activity 1.1.4 Identify biodiversity hotspots, integrating indigenous and local knowledge and community engagement using camera trapping and GPS.								
Output 2.1 Management effectiveness of Kanchenjunga Conservation Area assessed and the communities capacitated on the sustainable management of natural resources.	Activity 2.1.1 Conduct workshops to inform the IUCN Green List standard and the OECM at the federal, provincial, and local levels.								
	Activity 2.1.2 Assess the current management effectiveness of the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area against								



	the IUCN Green List standard and access the potential OECM sites in the Kanchenjunga area.								
	Activity 2.1.3 Conduct the workshop to share the Management effectiveness gap and the potential OECM opportunities in the KCA area.								
	Communication material								
	Monitoring and evaluation								



3. Risk Management Framework

Risk category	Description	Probability	Mitigation action
Contextual risks Risks related to conflicts, safety and political insecurity jeopardizing the delivery of the project outputs	Political instability and high turnover of important posts in the government sector resulting in absence of institutional memory and unwillingness towards long term commitment	<i>Rare</i>	Implement project activities through local partners and who have experience working with local government with community involvement. Regular follow up and consultation with government counterparts. .
Institutional risks Risks related to the beneficiary country's institutions participation in the project activities	As a result of [cause(s) to be defined depending on the context], UNESCO may conclude an agreement/contract with entities allegedly involved/causing with their businesses human and labor rights violations, environmental damages, corruption, which would lead to affected reputation/credibility and potential legal damages	<i>Rare</i>	Conduct a due diligence process



<p>Project level risks Risks that may negatively affect the delivery of the project outputs.</p>	<p>As a result of environmental factors, natural hazards, pandemic in a country or region, project implementation may be affected resulting in financial losses, delays in work plan delivery, security issues for involved personnel.</p>	Possible	<p>Follow Nepal Government and UNDSS travel advisory. Conduct missions and field visits and workshops outside of monsoon season. Implement project activities through local partners who mobilize local staff based in and around the target municipalities.</p>
	<p>As a result of alleged legal breaches and /or anti-competitive/corrupted practices for a parent company of UNESCO partner, UNESCO and its partner may be affected by negative media coverage, which would lead to affected reputation/credibility and potential legal damages.</p>	Possible	<p>Conduct due diligence processes for private and business sector partners. Monitoring media Develop the project communication/visibility plan to highlight the benefits of the partnership</p>
	<p>As a result of insufficient contractor/implementing partner's capacity, deliverables may be of poor quality and/or unsuitable for intended purpose, which would lead to delays in project</p>	Unlikely	<p>Evaluation of contractor/implementing partner's capacity</p>



	<p>implementation, financial losses, contract/agreement not finalized</p> <p>As a result of insufficient organizational capacity/media literacy/appropriate dissemination support (e.g. website, report), the communication related to the project may be deficient, which would lead to limited echo of UNESCO actions, impacted visibility, not satisfied donors</p>	Unlikely	Development of project communication strategy and monitoring during project life cycle.
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