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**Annex B**  
**SGP OP8 STRATEGY FOR**  
**INDIGENOUS AND COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREA (ICCA)**  
**GLOBAL SUPPORT INITIATIVE**  
**PHASE 2 (2025-2028)**



*Cleft honeybee hive, Lamjung*

*Photo@Sailesh Ranjitkar*

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## 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-8 Programming Directions, [UNDP's Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#) and [UNDP Nature Pledge](#), targets agreed by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and national priorities to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals and other international commitments.

Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs) are natural sites, resources, and species habitats conserved voluntarily and in a self-directed way through community values, customary laws, and institutions. According to the World Parks Congress Recommendation V26 (2003), ICCAs are 'natural and/or modified ecosystems containing significant biodiversity values and ecological services, voluntarily conserved by indigenous and local communities, through customary laws or other effective means.' Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPs and LCs) play a crucial role in the conservation of biological diversity at local, national and global levels. The ICCA GSI ('Phase 2' of the partnership between the German BMUV IKI with the UNDP) will support inter alia the implementation of Targets 3, 21, 22 and 23 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework ([GBF](#)) in 50 countries.

Target 3 refers to the need to protect or conserve a minimum of 30% of the planet's land and sea surface by the year 2030. Target 21 refers to the need to ensure that the best available biodiversity data, information and knowledge are readily available to decision-makers and other relevant actors to support informed biodiversity policy, planning and decision-making processes, as well as for monitoring, reviewing and reporting progress in implementation. Target 22 refers to the need for equitable, inclusive and effective involvement of IPs and LCs in decision-making about nature conservation and biodiversity. Target 23 to the need to ensure gender equality in the implementation of the Framework through a gender-responsive approach. Gender responsive is the process of ensuring that programmes, policies and institutions take into account the different needs and experiences of people based on their gender identity.

The primary focus of the ICCA GSI Phase 2 is the provision of small grants directly to civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples and community-based organizations. The initiative also works closely with a range of global partners including the Global ICCA Consortium, the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) with respect to reporting on CBD targets by governments and non-state actors, as well as international NGOs such as IUCN.

The nested Madi-Marsyandi sub-landscape (MMSL) within the Budhigandaki-Kaligandaki landscape as identified in the Country Programme Strategy (OP8) in Nepal's Gandaki Province exemplifies the definition of ICCA, representing a landscape where Indigenous communities, particularly the Tamu (Gurung) people and other ethnic groups, have maintained long-standing relationships with their natural environment through customary governance systems, traditional ecological knowledge, and community-based resource management practices.

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This document provide guideline for the grants available under ICCA GSI Phase 2 to the registered civil society organizations (CSOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), Indigenous Peoples' organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating within the ICCA area. Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to community-based conservation and have experience working with Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

## **2. SUMMARY: Key Results/Accomplishments (1 page)**

### **2.1 SGP Nepal History and Achievements**

SGP Nepal commenced operations in 1998 and has since supported nearly 300 Small Grants Projects across the country. The programme has consistently engaged Indigenous Peoples including Tharu, Gurung, Magar, Tamang, Chepangs, Sherpa, Thakali, Newar, Raji, Bankariya, Kumal, Chantyal, Lama, and nomadic Rautes. While Nepal did not participate in ICCA GSI Phase 1, SGP-supported community forestry models have demonstrated sustained effectiveness over 25 years, establishing a robust foundation for ICCA GSI Phase 2.

Key thematic achievements include: In 2012, SGP specifically supported ICCA promotion by documenting best practices and strengthening Nepal's nascent ICCA network. Subsequent initiatives included supporting nomadic rights of the Rautes people, forest and grassland protection via the indigenous Nawa system of Sherpa communities in Sagarmatha National Park, conserving traditional knowledge systems of Amchi (Himalayan Healers) and Tharu Baidawa healers, and revitalizing Khoriya lands of Indigenous Chepangs.

### **2.2 Madi-Marsyandi - Baseline**

The strategic foundation for ICCA Phase 2 is built on baseline data confirming extensive, community-driven conservation values. The Tamu (Gurung) people have historically governed their territory through the robust *Nalsabha* system, managing 125 villages across eight territorial *Nals* (territorial clan divisions of the Tamu governance system) via a formal four-tiered structure. This system is complemented by the Thiti culture, an indigenous mechanism for sustainably managing limited agro-pastoral lands. The *Nalsabha* has been pivotal in managing disputes over grazing lands (Kharka), agro-pastures, forests, and honey-harvesting rocks by implementing seasonal restrictions (bandej) and organizing collective access.

Concrete evidence of conservation values:

- The MMSL maintains 22 varieties of indigenous millet, crucial for climate resilience and food security, through traditional cultivation methods in Madhya-Nepal Municipality.
- The Dura territory contains 14 forest patches covering 791 hectares under customary management in Sundarbazaar, with ethno-medicinal surveys confirming 73 plant species used to treat 64 ailments.
- Community-protected forest patches in Rainas Municipality harbor threatened species including Indian Pangolin, vultures (Bearded, Egyptian, Red-headed), Leopard Cat, Lynx, and Large Indian Civet.
- The ancient Bön culture in Ghale gaun directly enforces community-based resource regulation through the Koibo Dhin cultural center, manifested through living traditions including cliff honey hunting.

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## Key Lessons Learned

Community-based conservation approaches are mature and effective in Nepal. The success of community forestry models demonstrates that formal recognition and support of customary governance systems can deliver measurable conservation outcomes while improving livelihoods. The Ghale Gaun homestay model proves that cultural heritage and conservation can be monetized sustainably. However, without systematic documentation and institutional support, traditional knowledge systems face erosion, making ICCA GSI Phase 2 intervention critical and timely.

### 3. COUNTRY PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT (2 pages)

#### 3.1. Alignment with national priorities

This strategy aligns with Nepal's constitutional and policy frameworks for Indigenous Peoples' rights and biodiversity conservation. **Nepal's Constitution 2015** (Articles 51(j)(8), 56(5), 59(4), and 33(5)) mandates the state to ensure Indigenous peoples' rights to dignity, self-governance, and participation in decision-making concerning their affairs, with emphasis on preservation and promotion of traditional knowledge, skills, culture, and social practices. The **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)** affirms Indigenous peoples' rights to self-determination (Article 3) and autonomy in internal and local affairs (Article 4). **ILO Convention No. 169** obligates states to protect and integrate Indigenous laws and institutions within national legal systems.

The MMSL strategy aligns directly with Nepal's **National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP 2014-2020, and the currently developing NBSAP 2025-2030)**. The strategy supports mainstreaming biodiversity conservation by integrating it into indigenous knowledge systems and resource management, including Community Forest User Group (CFUG) management. It enhances benefits through developing sustainable value chains for high-value bio-resources while protecting traditional knowledge from erosion.

Table 1: Alignment with KMGBF Targets

KMGBF Target	Description	Proposed Intervention
Target 3: Protected and Conserved Areas	Conserve at least 30% of terrestrial, inland water, and coastal/marine areas by 2030 through ecologically representative, well-connected, equitably governed systems of protected areas and OECMs, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories.	Map and strengthen ICCA-like areas within Community Forests, Community Protected Areas and sacred sites; integrate traditional governance systems ( <i>Nalsabha, Thiti</i> ) into CFUG management plans; support OECM identification and documentation in the MMSL; link to Nepal's national protected area network.

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Target 21: Knowledge and Information	Ensure that the best available data, information and knowledge—including traditional knowledge of IPs and LCs with their FPIC—are accessible to decision-makers and practitioners to guide effective and equitable biodiversity governance.	Systematically document Dura tribe's ethno-medicinal TEK (73 plant species), 22 indigenous millet varieties and Allo fibre processing with FPIC; establish community-led biodiversity knowledge databases; contribute data to national and global ICCA registries.
Target 22: Governance and Participation	Ensure full, equitable, inclusive and gender-responsive representation and participation of IPs and LCs in decision-making related to biodiversity, with access to justice and information, respecting their cultures and rights over lands, territories, resources and traditional knowledge.	Revive the tiered Tamu <i>Nalsabha</i> governance system across at least 2 <i>Nals</i> (territories); integrate <i>Thiti</i> agro-pastoral protocols into CFUG operational plans; support IP representatives to participate in national biodiversity policy forums; strengthen Bon cultural governance at Ghale Gaun.
Target 23: Gender Equality	Ensure gender equality through a gender-responsive approach, recognizing women's equal rights to land and natural resources and their full, meaningful participation and leadership at all levels of biodiversity action, engagement, policy and decision-making.	Maintain at least 33% women's representation with substantive decision-making roles in all supported CFUGs; develop profitable women-led NTFP processing and homestay enterprises; integrate gender-sensitive indicators in all project M&E frameworks; document and replicate successful gender-inclusive conservation models.

Table 2: Alignment with Nepal's NBSAP 2025 Targets

NBSAP 2025 Target	Description	Proposed Intervention
Target 1.3 & 1.4: Protected Areas and OECMs	By 2030: ensure ecologically representative, inclusive, equitably governed and effectively managed protected areas; and conserve 30% of biodiversity-important areas through OECMs, community-based management, forest conservation	Identify and document potential OECM sites in the MMSL; strengthen biodiversity-inclusive CFUG management plans integrating <i>Nalsabha</i> and <i>Thiti</i> governance; contribute to Nepal's national 30x30 progress outside the formal PA network adjacent to ACAP and MCA.

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	areas, biological corridors and conservation landscapes, recognizing IPLC rights and practices.	
Target 1.5: Species Protection	By 2030, reduce the risk of human-induced extinction of known threatened species; maintain and enhance populations of nationally protected wild species; conserve Rare, Endemic, Endangered and Threatened wild plant species.	Support community-initiated Indian Pangolin protection in Rainas Municipality; pilot innovative HWC mitigation through habitat modification; establish community monitoring for vultures (Bearded, Egyptian, Red-headed), Leopard Cat, Lynx, Large Indian Civet and Himalayan Goral.
Target 1.6: Genetic Diversity Conservation	By 2030, maintain and restore the genetic diversity of native, wild and domesticated species, including in-situ and ex-situ conservation, community seed banks and on-farm conservation.	Conserve indigenous millet varieties through community seed banks in Madhya-Nepal Municipality; propagate conservation to at least 50 additional households; promote traditional in-situ crop conservation practices aligned with ITPGRFA commitments.
Target 1.7: Human-Wildlife Conflict	By 2030, manage human-wildlife interactions effectively for co-existence by building stakeholder capacity, increasing access to preventive measures and providing financial protection from wildlife-related losses.	Pilot proactive HWC mitigation through habitat modification and buffer planting in Rainas (targeting reduction from current ~70-80 lakh rupees annual compensation); strengthen CFUG and local government capacity for conflict response; document and disseminate the Rainas model as a replicable innovation.
Targets 2.3 & 2.4: Sustainable Management and Biodiversity-Friendly Practices	By 2030, manage 50% of areas sustainably under forestry, agriculture, grasslands and wetlands; and encourage and promote biodiversity-friendly practices including agroforestry, organic farming, integrated pest management and customary sustainable use by IPLCs.	Integrate <i>Nalsabha</i> seasonal restriction systems (bandej) and <i>Thiti</i> agro-pastoral governance into formal CFUG operational plans; support Lokta paper, Allo fibre and cliff honey enterprises using sustainable harvest protocols; promote agroecological practices across MMSL sub-divisions.
Target 4.3: Knowledge	By 2030, integrate knowledge, innovations and practices of IPLCs in	Document Dura ethno-medicinal knowledge (73 plant species treating 64 ailments) under

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Recognition and Integration	the management of biodiversity and ecosystems with their free, prior and informed consent; develop policy and institutional mechanisms for documentation, recognition and protection of traditional knowledge.	FPIC protocols; compile Tamu <i>Nalsabha</i> governance records and <i>Thiti</i> customary rules; document cliff honey hunting traditions in Dordi and Dudhpokhari; establish community-owned knowledge management systems.
Targets 4.4 & 4.5: Inclusive Decisions and Gender-Responsive Approach	By 2030, ensure full, equitable, inclusive and gender-responsive representation and participation of IPLCs, Dalits, women and girls, youth and persons with disabilities in biodiversity decision-making; ensure a gender-responsive approach in all biodiversity actions for women and girls.	Maintain at least 33% women's representation with substantive roles in all supported CFUG executive committees; develop women-led NTFP processing and homestay enterprises; support youth-elder mentorship for intergenerational TEK transfer; document and share gender-responsive conservation models at provincial and national levels.
Target 6.2: Inter-Sector and Inter-Government Coordination	By 2026, establish institutional arrangements at all levels of government for inter-sectoral and intra-government communication, coordination and collaboration for biodiversity management, including at provincial and local government levels.	Facilitate coordination between MMSL communities and the Gandaki Province Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forests and Environment; link CFUG governance with Palika (local government) biodiversity planning; connect IP governance institutions with NFDIN and federal biodiversity processes; contribute to provincial NBSAP roadmaps.

### 3.2. Gaps and opportunities

#### *Key Gaps Identified*

**Erosion of customary institutions:** Eroding knowledge of customary practices such as *Nalsabha* and *Thiti* systems represents a significant challenge. The absence of written records detailing operations or decisions compounds this gap, though oral accounts from community elders underscore their importance and growing desire for revival. While sporadic revival efforts have occurred (2009 assembly by *Tamu Hyula Chonj Dhin*; 2015 *Barthar Nalsabha*), these have lacked resources, awareness, and sustained momentum.

**Shrinking pasture lands:** The *Thiti* system faces contemporary pressures as community forestry expansion and cash crop farming reduce traditional pasture areas, making seasonal livestock movement increasingly difficult and

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threatening the remaining integrated agro-pastoral livelihoods, which, though diminished, still persist in several *Nal* territories that have sustained these communities for generations.

**Undocumented TEK and limited commercialization:** A wealth of traditional ecological knowledge remains trapped as tacit information, unavailable to fuel sustainable community development or generate much-needed income. Without systematic documentation, this knowledge risks permanent loss as elder knowledge-holders pass away.

### *Strategic Opportunities*

- **Proven replication model:** The Ghale Gaun homestay and cultural tourism model is replicable across the MMSL, particularly in Dordi (traditional crafts, Lokta paper) and Sundar Bazar (heritage tourism), demonstrating how cultural and natural assets can be monetized while strengthening conservation.
- **High community conservation willingness:** Active community support for Indian Pangolin protection in Rainas offers an immediate flagship conservation entry point with demonstrated local ownership.
- **Climate-resilient TEK:** Conservation of 22 indigenous millet varieties provides established climate defense strategies that can be documented, validated, and scaled.
- **Human-wildlife conflict innovation:** Exceptional biodiversity value combined with innovative HWC mitigation approaches (habitat modification rather than reactive compensation) offers clear pathways for policy influence.

### *Complementarity and Synergy with Other Programs*

The MMSL strategy is designed to create synergies while avoiding duplication. SGP will provide community-level implementation capacity, complementing GEF-funded protected area management initiatives and UNDP's federal governance support programmes. The strategy complements Government of Nepal programmes, particularly the government's community forestry policies under the Forest Act 2019 and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), by serving as an innovation and testing ground. Active coordination with conservation NGOs (Bird Conservation Nepal, IUCN Nepal, WWF Nepal), and the National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) will ensure technical support for biodiversity monitoring. SGP's focus on small grants and grassroots innovation clearly differentiates it from larger infrastructure or policy projects.

**Alignment with Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs):** The MMSL lies entirely outside the formal protected area network, making it highly relevant to the OECM framework under CBD Decision 14/8. OECMs are defined as geographically defined areas other than Protected Areas that are governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for in-situ biodiversity conservation. The community forests, sacred groves, and customary governance territories within MMSL meet the key OECM criteria: they are geographically defined, managed under community and indigenous governance systems, and deliver demonstrated biodiversity conservation outcomes. Nepal is currently developing national OECM guidelines in collaboration with

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WWF Nepal and GEF support to contribute to GBF Target 3 (conserving 30% of land by 2030). The WWF Nepal OECM booklet identifies community-managed forest areas, areas with important agro-biodiversity, and archaeological and cultural sites as potential OECM categories—all of which are present in the MMSL. This strategy will support the identification and documentation of potential OECM sites within the landscape, contributing to Nepal's progress toward GBF Target 3 while complementing, rather than duplicating, the existing protected area system managed by NTNC in the adjacent Annapurna Conservation Area (ACA) and Manaslu Conservation Area (MCA).

#### 4. ICCA GSI PHASE 2 PRIORITY GEOGRAPHIES (2 pages)

##### 4.1 Landscape Selection Process

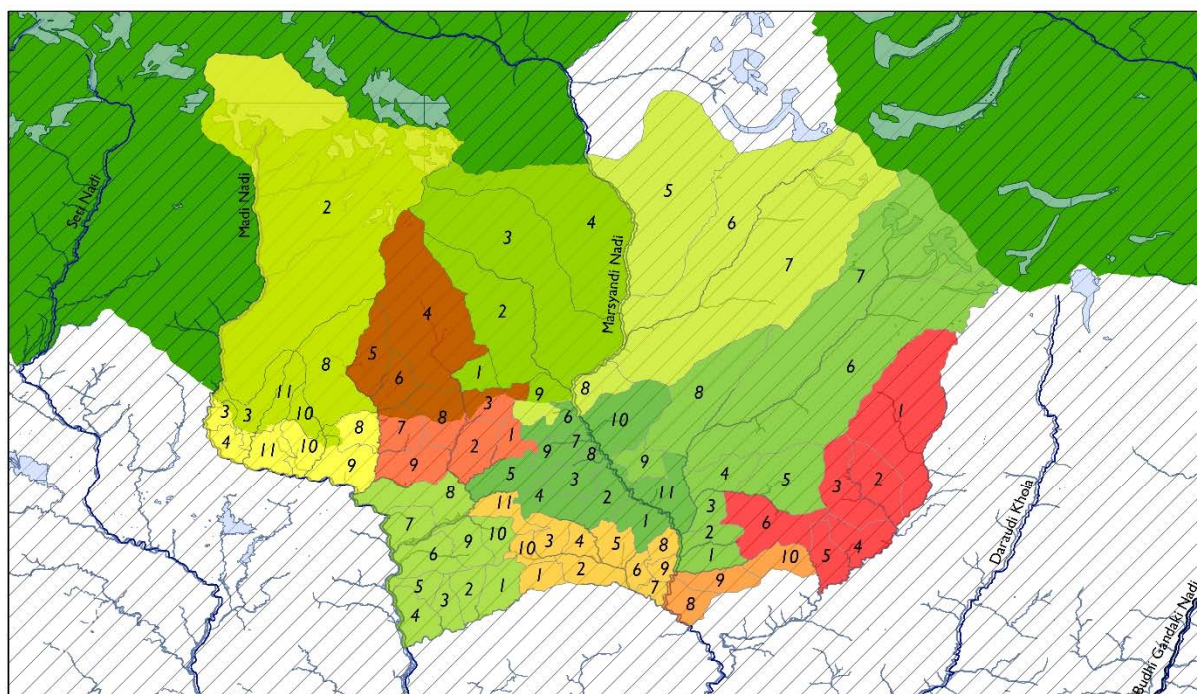
The Madi-Marsyandi Sub-Landscape was selected through a systematic and participatory process involving spatial analysis backed by expert opinion, government partners, and Indigenous Peoples' organizations. The National Steering Committee, Technical Advisory Group, and consultations with the Nepal ICCA network guided the selection process. Key selection criteria included:

- **Indigenous peoples and customary governance:** Presence of Gurung (Tamu), Dura, and Magar communities with unique systems of cultural cohesion, natural resource management, customary rule-making (*Nalsabha, Thiti*), and traditional practices including cliff honey hunting.
- **Biodiversity significance:** Rainas-Dudhpokhari sub-division hosts approximately 10% of Nepal's wild species, with confirmed community-initiated Pangolin habitat conservation.
- **Existing possible ICCA presence:** Functional Tamu cultural institutions, community forests under traditional management, and living cultural heritage practices.
- **High poverty and livelihood needs:** High out-migration rates, marginalized communities, limited economic opportunities requiring sustainable livelihood interventions.
- **Urgent threats:** Severe human-wildlife conflict (70-80 lakh rupees annual compensation in Rainas alone), active landslides threatening community forests.
- **Replication potential:** Proven Ghale Gaun cultural tourism model demonstrating successful integration of heritage preservation and livelihood improvement.
- **Climate vulnerability and adaptation potential:** The landscape is highly susceptible to climate-induced hazards including increased landslide frequency, erratic rainfall, and shifting agro-ecological zones. Indigenous climate-resilient practices such as conservation of 22 millet varieties and traditional agro-pastoral land management offer proven adaptation strategies that can be documented and scaled.

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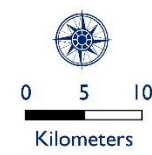
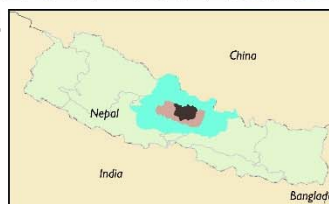


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**Selected R/Municipalities for ICCA Support Initiative 2**

- Chitwan Annapurna
- Dudhpokhari
- Marsyangdi
- R/Municipalities**
- Kwholasothar
- Rainas
- Besishahar
- MadhyaNepal
- Sundarbazar
- Dordi
- Madi
- Major rivers



Recommended Landscapes  
GEF-SGP Operational Phase 8  
country strategy program (CPS)

Developed by: N.Gene Solution of Natural Innovation Pvt. Ltd.

Figure 1: Map of Madi-Marsyangdi sub-Landscape showing municipalities and key features

Table 3: Sub-Division Profiles and Strategic Focus

District	Municipality	Wards	Area km <sup>2</sup>	Priority Strategic Focus
Kaski	Madi	11	407	Tamu culture preservation, Indigenous governance revival, flagship species conservation
Lamjung	Besishahar	11	128	High-value crops (Timur, Macadamia), scientific forest management, market linkages
	Dordi	9	351	Tamu practices, Lokta paper industry, cliff honey hunting, homestay replication
	Dudhpokhari	6	153	Tamu practices, cliff honey hunting, community wildlife conservation, biodiversity monitoring

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	Kwholasothar	9	175	Tamu governance (Thiti), cliff honey hunting, eco-tourism, landslide stabilization
	Madhya-Nepal	10	114	Agro-biodiversity conservation (22 millet varieties), systematic beekeeping, seed banking
	Marsyangdi	9	597	<i>Nalsabha</i> revival, Thiti documentation, cliff honey hunting, homestay expansion
	Rainas	3	31	Highest biodiversity priority, Indian Pangolin protection, innovative HWC mitigation
	Sundarbazar	11	72	Dura TEK documentation (73 medicinal plants), ecosystem services, low-impact enterprises
		79	2028	

#### 4.2 Landscape Description and Typology

The Madi-Marsyangdi Sub-Landscape (MMSL) is located in Gandaki Province, central Nepal, encompassing portions of Lamjung and Kaski districts. The landscape extends from the Chepe River in the east to the Madi River in the west, with the Marsyangdi River dividing the landscape into eastern and western parts. The northern boundary reaches the sub-alpine zones adjoining the Annapurna Conservation Area (ACAP) at approximately 3,500m elevation, while the southern boundary follows the foothills transitioning into the Tarai lowlands at approximately 300m elevation. The core ICCA territory comprises Tamu Community settlements distributed across a **202,800 hectare (2,028 sq km)** area.

The MMSL occupies a unique geographic position between the Annapurna Conservation Area (ACAP) to the north and west, and the Manaslu Conservation Area (MCA) to the northeast. ACAP, covering 7,629 sq km across Kaski, Lamjung and three other districts, and MCA, covering 1,663 sq km in Gorkha district, are both managed by the National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC). This positioning creates opportunities for collaboration with NTNC's existing conservation programmes, particularly in biodiversity monitoring, eco-tourism promotion, and community-based natural resource management. The landscape functions as a critical ecological corridor connecting these two major protected areas, enhancing habitat connectivity for wildlife movement across elevational gradients.

The landscape exhibits significant **vertical zonation**, creating distinct ecological and economic zones: subtropical Sal forests (*Shorea robusta*) in the lower zone below 1,000m; temperate broadleaf forests with diverse hardwood species in the mid-hills; and medicinal plant-rich sub-alpine forests above 3,500m. This elevational gradient supports exceptional biodiversity and provides the ecological foundation for diverse livelihood strategies.

#### 4.3 Geohazard Context and Integrated Risk Management

The geological profile of the MMSL, characterized by its location along the active Main Central Thrust zone (MCT), presents both risks and opportunities. The strategy will prioritize **nature-based solutions** for slope stabilization, involving bio-engineering techniques with deep-rooted native species that deliver environmental benefits (reduced

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erosion and landslide risk) and socio-economic gains (species with high-value NTFP potential). Critical landslide zones including the active *Puwa ko Bhir* landslide and unstable slopes in Kwholasothar-7 are prioritized for emergency stabilization.

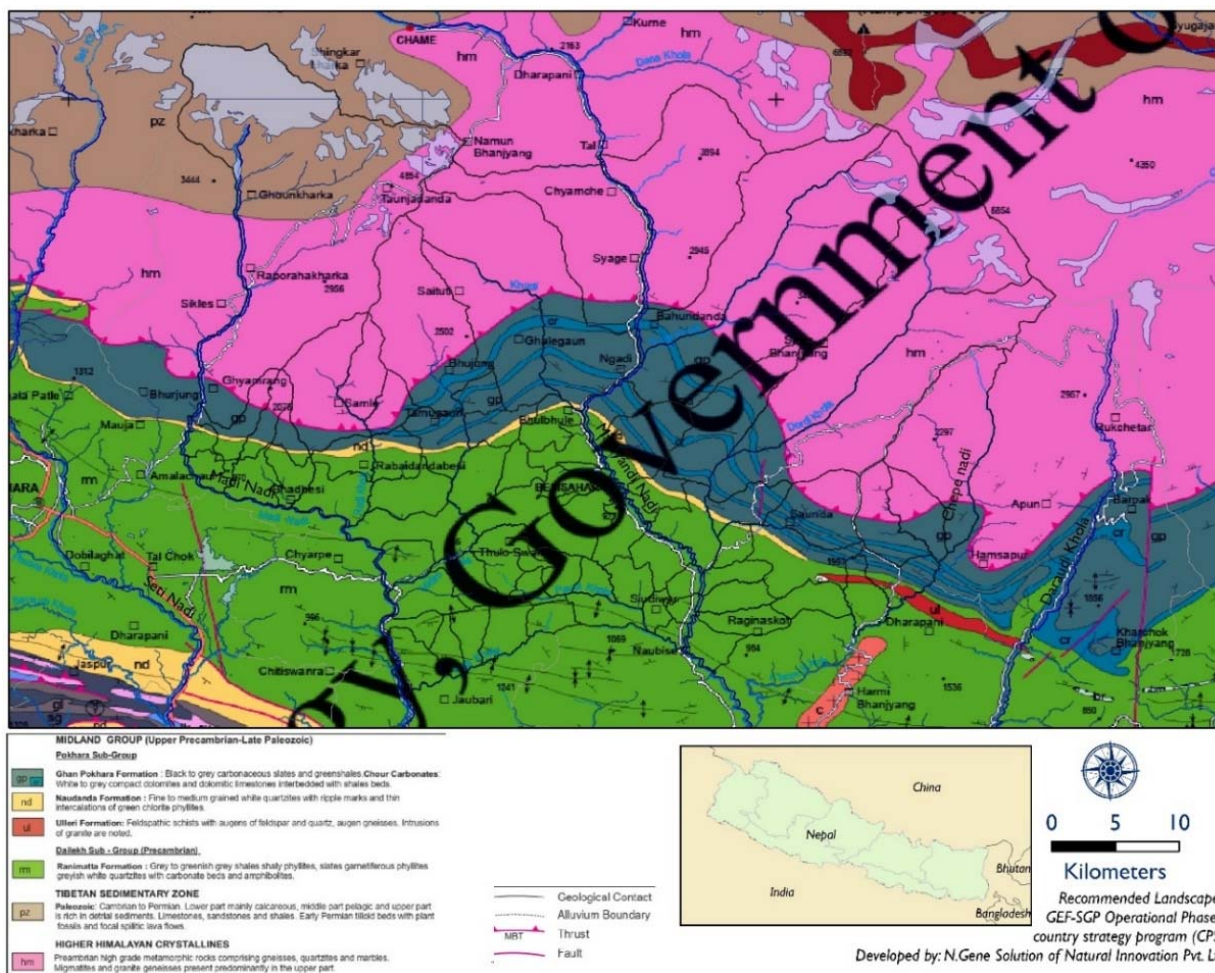


Figure 2: Geological Map of Madi-Marsyangdi sub-Landscape showing Main Central Thrust zone

## 5. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT (1 page)

### 5.1 Knowledge Generation Process

Knowledge generation will employ a **participatory documentation approach** where communities capture innovations and traditional ecological knowledge using video, photography, and case study methodologies. All documentation will strictly respect **Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC)** protocols, ensuring communities retain ownership and control over their traditional knowledge. Academic partnerships with Tribhuvan University and the

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Nepal Academy of Science and Technology will provide scientific rigor for biodiversity monitoring and impact assessments, while community members will be trained as citizen scientists.

## 5.2 Key Knowledge Products

- **Case studies:** Documented successful models including Ghale Gaun replication process, HWC mitigation through habitat modification (Rainas model), and *Nalsabha* revival experiences. Each case study will include replication guidelines.
- **Policy briefs:** Targeted at provincial and federal government on proactive HWC management approaches, economic valuation of ecosystem services, and recognition frameworks for customary governance institutions.
- **Technical manuals:** Sustainable NTFP harvesting protocols, community-based biodiversity monitoring methods, and traditional governance documentation guidelines.
- **TEK databases:** Systematic documentation of Dura ethno-medicinal knowledge (73 plant species), millet varieties, and *Thiti* protocols, with appropriate access controls respecting community wishes.

## 5.3 Dissemination Mechanisms

**Annual Knowledge Fairs:** Landscape-level events will bring together CFUGs, local governments, and partners to share innovations and lessons learned. Fairs will feature demonstration sites showcasing successful interventions.

**Peer-to-peer exchanges:** Structured exchanges between MMSL sub-divisions and other SGP landscapes nationally and regionally, enabling direct learning from practitioners. Priority exchanges with similar mountain landscapes in Bhutan and northern India.

**Digital platforms:** All knowledge products will be made available through SGP Nepal's website and contributed to global ICCA databases. Engagement with policy forums at provincial and national levels will ensure direct policy influence. All knowledge will be open-source (except where community consent restricts access) to maximize replication potential.

## 6. COMMUNICATION PLAN (1 page)

The communication strategy aims to build awareness, foster partnerships, demonstrate impact, and create enabling conditions for policy influence and replication.

### **Core Strategic Messages**

- Indigenous peoples and local communities are effective conservation actors whose traditional practices deliver measurable biodiversity outcomes.
- Traditional ecological knowledge is essential for climate adaptation and provides solutions validated by generations of practice.

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- Economic benefits drive sustainable conservation: when communities benefit economically from biodiversity, they become its strongest protectors.
- Women's leadership produces stronger outcomes in forest management and enterprise development.
- Proactive HWC approaches through habitat modification work better and cost less than reactive compensation systems.

### ***Target Audiences***

**Primary:** Local communities and CFUGs in the MMSL (direct beneficiaries); local and provincial government officials (policy makers and service providers); development partners and donors (potential co-financiers).

**Secondary:** Academic and research institutions (documentation partners); conservation NGOs (technical partners); general public (awareness and advocacy); national and international media (visibility and influence).

### ***Communication Activities***

**Storytelling and visual media:** Production of documentary films showcasing transformation, photo essays on cultural heritage and conservation practices, video testimonials from community members demonstrating impact.

**Digital presence:** Regular updates via SGP Nepal website, social media campaigns highlighting milestones and stories, contribution to UNDP and GEF global communications.

**Events and forums:** Presentations at national and provincial policy forums, joint events with government partners, participation in international conferences (CBD COP, IUCN Congress).

**Publications:** Quarterly newsletter, annual report, contribution to peer-reviewed publications through academic partnerships.

All materials will acknowledge GEF, UNDP, BMUV IKI, and Government of Nepal support, positioning MMSL as a national model for achieving GBF targets through community-based approaches.

## **7. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION (1 page)**

Resource mobilization is focused on leveraging SGP grants to secure significant co-financing and expanding funding access for communities, ensuring sustainability beyond the project period.

### **7.1. Secured and planned cash and in-kind co-financing**

#### ***Project Level***

Each SGP project will secure co-financing comprising: community in-kind contributions including labor, local materials, and land; CFUG financial resources from forest product revenues and savings; local government cash and in-kind support through ward and municipality budget allocations aligned with local development priorities. In-kind

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support from academic institutions (Tribhuvan University) for research and monitoring, and from conservation NGOs (Bird Conservation Nepal, WWF Nepal, NTNC) for technical assistance.

### ***Country Level***

In-kind policy support from UNDP Country Office. Technical staff time and policy support from Federal Government of Nepal through the Ministry of Forests and Environment and National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities.

## **7.2. Co-financing Opportunities**

### ***Multilateral Resources***

Exploration of linkages with Green Climate Fund (GCF) community-based adaptation projects and Adaptation Fund initiatives. Engagement with World Bank-funded programmes including Forest Investment Program.

### ***Bilateral and Foundation Resources***

Engagement with bilateral programmes active in Nepal's indigenous peoples, conservation and forest sector.

### ***Private Sector Funding***

Partnerships with eco-tourism operators to invest in community-based infrastructure and capacity building. Engagement with NTFP buyers and processors for sustainable supply chain development. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) funding from hydropower companies operating in the Marsyangdi basin. Collaboration with Gandaki Province tourism associations (such as the Trekking Agencies' Association of Nepal regional chapter and local hotel associations) to co-finance eco-tourism promotion at ICCA sites, including trail development, heritage interpretation, and homestay network expansion. Private sector investment in tourism infrastructure and hydropower at ICCA sites can generate returns through visitor fees while directly supporting community conservation efforts.

## **8. PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES (1 page)**

The SGP platform will be leveraged to increase the total financial resources available to the MMSL beyond SGP grants. This function shifts SGP from being solely a grant-maker to being a key facilitator of community access to broader public and private investment.

### **Proposal Development Support**

The SGP Country Team will provide proposal development support to successful grantees, using their SGP track record as proof-of-concept for applications to larger funding sources. This involves: training CFUG leaders in proposal writing and project design; building financial management and reporting capacity to meet donor requirements; connecting communities with appropriate government, donor, and foundation funding streams; providing technical assistance in developing bankable project concepts.

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### ***Specific Partnership Opportunities***

**Government programmes:** Accessing resources from the Gandaki Province Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forests and Environment for landscape-level conservation and eco-tourism development; federal Forest Act 2019 provisions for community forestry CFUG capacity building, National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN) programmes for indigenous knowledge documentation, and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP 2025–2030) implementation funds; provincial environment and tourism programmes for cultural tourism infrastructure.

**Bilateral programmes:** Exploring opportunities with SDC's (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation) green resilient growth portfolio; UK Aid's nature-based solutions programming; biodiversity conservation activities through applications to Rufford Foundation for conservation projects; Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund for biodiversity initiatives; Whitley Fund for Nature for community conservation leaders.

**UN Agencies:** Exploring opportunities to collaborate with projects and programme implemented in selected ICCA landscape from UNDP or Other UN Agencies, particularly the programme related to youth, IP, women and civil society engagement for environment conservation, biodiversity and livelihood enhancement

**Private sector engagement:** Facilitating partnerships between CFUGs and tourism operators for homestay networks; connecting NTFP producer groups with fair trade buyers; engaging hydropower companies in watershed conservation financing.

### **Expected Outcomes**

By the end of ICCA GSI Phase 2, at least 5 CFUGs will have successfully accessed funding beyond SGP grants, demonstrating sustainable pathways for continued conservation investment. The SGP network will be established as a recognized platform for connecting grassroots organizations with larger funding opportunities, creating lasting institutional capacity for resource mobilization.

## **9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN (2 pages)**

### **9.1. Monitoring Approaches at Project and Country Levels**

#### ***Project-Level Monitoring***

The M&E system ensures systematic data quality, participatory engagement, and adaptive management. Project-level monitoring includes: project establishment baselines capturing initial conditions; quarterly progress reports from grantees against agreed indicators; site visits by the SGP Country Team (minimum 2 per project per year) for verification and technical support; photographic and GPS documentation of physical interventions.

Data quality assurance will be maintained through site verification visits, multi-source triangulation (community reports, technical assessments, satellite imagery), and community validation sessions. All project and country-level

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data will be systematically recorded in the SGP database as an ongoing undertaking, with quarterly data entry and annual portfolio reviews.

ICCA-GSI projects will be monitored using Project Management Tool (PMT) that are mandatory for all projects. The PMT incorporates indicators for the targeted goals stated in the ICCA-GSI Project Document that were agreed upon by the donor and UNDP. These indicators are aligned to GBF Targets 3, 21, 22 and 23.

### ***Participatory Monitoring***

Communities will participate in defining project results through initial visioning exercises and indicator selection. Simple, visual monitoring tools will be developed with communities to track key indicators including forest condition (using community-defined quality criteria), species sightings (camera traps, community patrol records), and income changes (household surveys). Monitoring will be community-owned through seasonal community monitoring events, with results discussed in CFUG assemblies before being reported to SGP.

### ***M&E Capacity Strengthening***

ICCA GSI Phase 2 projects will strengthen M&E capacities of grantees through: training in basic monitoring methods and data collection; provision of simple tools (GPS units, camera traps, data recording forms); mentoring during site visits; peer learning through joint monitoring activities across clusters of projects.

### ***ICCA Security and Resilience Index***

In accordance with ICCA GSI Phase 2 requirements, the ICCA Security and Resilience Index will be applied at baseline, and endline assessments. This ensures community-conserved areas are measured for socio-ecological health and resilience through community ownership of the scoring process. Index assessments will be conducted through facilitated community workshops with results validated by community assemblies.

### ***Portfolio Evaluations***

Mid-term Portfolio Evaluation (Year 2) and Comprehensive End-of-Phase Evaluation (Year 4) will be conducted by independent consultants to assess progress, identify lessons, and recommend adjustments. Evaluations will employ mixed methods including document review, stakeholder interviews, site visits, and outcome harvesting. Joint monitoring partnerships with academic institutions and conservation NGOs will enhance cost-effectiveness and technical quality.

While M&E is the responsibility of the National Coordinator (NC), a grant (up to USD 50k) for a national catalytic organization (NCO) can be provided to support the NC using the two aforementioned tools. Following training from ICCA-GSI Project Management Unit (PMU) in headquarters, National Coordinators and Programme Associates/Assistants will train NCOs in their respective countries on the Project Management Tool and Resilience and Security Index.

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Table 4: Monitoring Matrix

M&E Activity	Purpose	Implementer	Timeline
Stakeholder mapping and identification of key implementing partners	Identification of key stakeholders and strategic partners to support operationalization and implementation of ICCA GSI Phase 2	NC, UNDP	Q4 2025
Establish project baseline	Establish baseline data for the MMSL project landscape	Local NGOs/CBOs	Q1 2026
Identification of strategic partners at national and district levels	To ensure support to IP Organizations and communities in project/proposal formulation, implementation, and reporting	Selected implementing partners (capacity building grant) and NC	Annually
Field monitoring visits and reporting highlights to NC	Ensure consistent and accurate reporting of project implementation progress	Respective project focal officer and grantee	Quarterly
Annual monitoring	Enable efficient documentation of project implementation progress	NC supported by NCO/capacity building grantee/partner	Dec-Jan of every year
Project technical and financial review submission	Documentation of project progress, issues, and gaps	Grantees/CSO/project focal officer and NC	Semi-annually
Reporting to the NSC and GEF	Progress update and seek approval for adaptive management if needed	NC	Annually
Audit	Ensure compliance with implementation/management standards and norms	As per UNDP auditing schedule	Annually

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## 9.2. ICCA GSI Phase 2 Results Framework

The framework is structured across Impact, Outcome, and Output levels, aligning with SGP OP8 global indicators while incorporating MML-specific targets developed through the baseline assessment process.

Table 5: Contribution to SGP OP8 Global Indicators

SGP OP8 Global Indicator	MMSL Target	Measurement Method
Hectares positively influenced	Forest patches representing ICCAs under improved management	ICCA records; GIS mapping; CFUG operational plans
Indigenous peoples and local communities supported	At least 3 TEK systems documented with FPIC; traditional governance institutions formally acknowledged by local government; 3 CFUGs with NRM practices integrating traditional knowledge	Project records; community documentation; TEK databases
Women in leadership	Female members of CFUG will develop leadership roles in allocated projects	Intervention records; CFUG committee composition
Women-led projects	Minimum 25% of grants to women-led project	Project proposals; grantee analysis
ICCA Security and Resilience Index improvement	Average 15% improvement from baseline across supported ICCAs	Index assessment tool; community scoring workshops
CSOs/CBOs with strengthened capacity	4 CSOs/CBOs with demonstrated capacity improvement	Capacity assessment tools; organizational assessments
Sustainable community enterprises	2 enterprises operational and profitable	Financial records; market data; profitability analysis
People with improved income	At least 100 households with documented income increase	Household surveys; income tracking
Degraded land under restoration	25 hectares under active restoration	Field verification; google map imagery; restoration records
Threatened species benefiting	2+ species: Pangolin, Red Panda, vultures (3 spp.), Leopard Cat, Lynx, Large Indian Civet, Himalayan Goral	Species monitoring; camera traps; population trends

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Table 6: Landscape-Specific Indicators and Targets

Focus Area	Indicator	Baseline (2025)	Target (2028)	Data Source
Human-Wildlife Conflict	HWC compensation expenditure (Rainas)	70-80 lakh rupees/year	Reduction in current compensation	Local government compensation records
Biodiversity Protection	Community anti-poaching system	Systematic protection lacking	Operational community patrol system established in at least 2 priority community forests in Rainas and Dudhpokhari	Community patrol records; incident reports
Traditional Knowledge	Indigenous millet varieties maintained	22 varieties in Madhya-Nepal	At-least 3 varieties preserved; community seed banks initiation; propagated to at least 50 additional households	Household surveys; seed storage records
Forest Enterprises	CFUGs with profitable enterprises	Multiple forest-based enterprises exist (NTFPs, homestays, handicrafts) but mostly lacking formal business planning, quality standardization, and reliable market linkages	Create five new forest based enterprises or support existing enterprises for up-scaling	CFUG financial records
Governance	Traditional institution revival	<i>Nalsabha</i> largely dormant across all 8 <i>Nal</i> territories; 0 functional assemblies	1 <i>Nal</i> territories with functional <i>Nalsabha</i>	Meeting minutes; governance records
Gender	Women in CFUG decision-making	Approximately 33% women representation in CFUG executive committees (national average); substantive participation in decision-making limited	Retain to 33% women representation in CFUG executive committees across all supported CFUGs, with documented substantive participation in decision-making	Governance assessment; meeting observation
Economic	Household income from biodiversity	Average household income from conservation-based	100 HH with 10% income increase	Income surveys

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		activities to be established through baseline survey in Year 1		
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This strategic document is grounded in the ICCA GSI Phase 2 vision, with a strong focus on community led conservation, governance strengthening, cultural preservation, and nature-based livelihoods. To ensure consistency with the GEF SGP Operational Phase 8 (OP8), the results framework has been structured around globally adopted indicators and targets, enabling both localized impact and global comparability. The following framework aligns with the ICCA GSI Phase 2 standard format, mapping indicators across BMUV prodoc IKI, Global Biodiversity Framework targets, GEF SGP indicators, and UNDP Strategic Plan outputs:

Table 8: The ICCA GSI Phase 2 standard format framework for the MMSL

No.	Indicator	BMUV prodoc IKI	Global Biodiversity	GEF SGP	UNDP Strategic Plan	Responsible Party
1	Number of people benefitting from projects, disaggregated: Direct: 300 (Women: 160, Men: 140); Indirect: 750 (Women: 450, Men: 300) - aligned with ICCA GSI indicator 1	SI 4-Capacity People: Number of people directly supported by IKI projects through networking and training to address climate change or to conserve biodiversity	GBF Target 22	Indicator 8: Number of representatives from social inclusion groups (IPs, women, youth, PWD) meaningfully engaged in multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms. Indicator 10: Number of CSO-government-private sector dialogues formed or strengthened	Output 3.4: Adaptive capacity of systems and communities to climate change and disasters is strengthened. 3.4.2: Number of people benefitted from sustainable natural resource management	SGP Country Teams
2	Increased area brought under improved conservation	SI 2-Ecosystems: Area of ecosystems	GBF Target 3	Mandatory GEF Core Indicator 3: Area of land and ecosystems	Output 3.1: Natural resources are sustainably managed, protected	SGP Country Teams

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	practices (Community Forests, sacred groves, agro-pastoral lands, sustainable land management): 5% from baseline - aligned with ICCA GSI indicator 2	with improved conservation and sustainable use due to IKI project measures		under restoration. Mandatory GEF Core Indicator 4: Area of landscapes under improved practices	and restored. 3.1.1: Number of hectares (ha) of terrestrial and water ecosystems under improved management practices	
3	Number of nature-based enterprises established or enhanced to increase income: 2 (e.g., Ghale Gaun homestay replication, NTFP processing enterprises)		GBF Target 3			SGP Country Teams
4	Number of women-led projects: minimum 25% of grants to women-led projects (aligned with ICCA indicator 15)		GBF Target 23	Mandatory GEF Core Indicator 1: People benefitting from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex. Indicator 16: Number of projects with focused interventions promoting gender equality and women's empowerment	3.1.2: Number of gender-informed and inclusive regulatory, planning and policy instruments for sustainable natural resource management	SGP Country Teams

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5	Number of documentation and knowledge management materials produced: minimum 5 (case studies on <i>Nalsabha</i> revival, HWC mitigation, TEK documentation; video stories; policy briefs) - aligned with ICCA indicator		GBF Target 21	Indicator 23: Number of knowledge exchange/sharing events with participation of local communities		SGP Country Teams
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**Country specific indicator**

% of ICCA projects contributing to national biodiversity targets (NBSAP 2025-2030) and NDC.

**Sub landscape coverage by district, Municipality and ward**

S.N	Districts	Municipalities	Ward no.	Total Wards
1	<b>KASKI</b>	Madi	2,3,4,8,9,10,11	7
2	<b>LAMJUNG</b>	Besishahar	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11	11
3	<b>LAMJUNG</b>	Dordi	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	9
4	<b>LAMJUNG</b>	Dudhpokhari	1,2,3,4,5,6	6
5	<b>LAMJUNG</b>	Kwholasothar	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	9
6	<b>LAMJUNG</b>	MadhyaNepal	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10	10
7	<b>LAMJUNG</b>	Marsyangdi	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	9
8	<b>LAMJUNG</b>	Rainas	8,9,10	3
9	<b>LAMJUNG</b>	Sundarbazar	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 districts</b>	<b>9 municipalities</b>		<b>75</b>

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## Annex

### **Annex B I: Baseline Assessment for the Madi-Marsyangdi sub Landscape (MMSL) for ICCA GSI Phase 2**