

OPERATIONAL PHASE 8 (OP8) SGP COUNTRY PROGRAMME STRATEGY (CPS)

COUNTRY: MONGOLIA



Ulaanbaatar 2024

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACR	Annual Country Report
AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
ASGM	Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining
Aimag	Province in Mongolia
Bagh	Lowest Administrative Unit in Rural Areas of Mongolia
BIOFIN	Biodiversity Financing
CBOs	Community based Organizations
CCAs	Community Conserved Areas
COMDEKS	Community Development and Knowledge Management for Satoyama Initiative
CPD	Country Programme Document
CPMT	Central Programme Management Team
CPS	Country Programme Strategy
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ	German Society for International Cooperation
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
Khoroo	Lowest Administrative Unit in Urban Areas of Mongolia
Khural	Local Council
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NC	National Coordinator
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPA	National Protected Area
NSC	National Steering Committee
OP	Operational Phase
PA	Programme Assistant
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SGP	Small Grants Programme
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
Soum	County in Mongolia
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
USD	United States Dollar
WCS	World Conservation Society
WWF	World-Wide Fund for Nature

OP8 Financial Resources - SGP Country Programme (estimated US\$)¹

Total SGP Grants to date since Country Programme start date (2003)	USD 5,950,500
OP8 GEF Core Funds	USD 500,000 TBC
OP8 GEF STAR Funds	USD 300,000
Other funds (secured)	USD
Other funds (expected/to be mobilized)	USD

1. INTRODUCTION

The Eighth Operational Phase of the Small Grants Programme (SGP OP8) builds on 30 years of successful experience in empowering local civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) in designing and leading community driven initiatives that have enhanced household wellbeing, increased awareness and resilience regarding environmental threats, and generated global environmental benefits. With economic development pressures intensifying in many parts of the developing world and the associated rising inequalities, local communities, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged groups are becoming more and more marginalized, unable to cope with threats associated with ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change. Lessons learned and experience gained in previous SGP Operational Phases have demonstrated that integrated, landscape-seascape approaches are effective in mobilizing multiple stakeholder collaboration, linking local CSOs/CBOs with enabling partners and achieving mutually supportive livelihood and environmental outcomes at scale.

The objectives of the SGP OP8 is to engage local CSOs/CBOs in landscape-seascape approaches across the world, providing them access to knowledge and information, capacitating them through learning-by-doing, skills development, and delivering technical and grant assistance for interventions that enhance wellbeing and socioeconomic conditions and generate global environmental benefits.

The OP8 objectives reflect the key features of GEF Small Grants Programme 2.0, including new approaches to support youth, women and Indigenous Peoples, linking up with complementary mechanisms, such as the Microfinance Initiative and CSO Challenge Programme, cooperating with other GEF Agencies, and leveraging opportunities with GEF strategies, including the delivery of the GEF-8 Integrated Programmes. In addition, OP8 will facilitate opportunities for innovation and scaling up, catalyze multi-stakeholder alliances to test new approaches through CSOs, and leverage its dialogue platforms towards greater impact. OP8 will also align and contribute to the UNDP Strategic Plan (2022-2025).

2. COUNTRY PROGRAMME SUMMARY: Key results and achievements

Over the past 22 years of country operation the Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) in Mongolia has conducted its activities in close cooperation with local CBOs and NGOs in the following 13 provinces: Arhangai, Bayanhongor, Bulgan, Darkhan-Uul, Dundgobi, Gobisumber, Orhon, Selenge, Tuv, Hentii, Uvurhangai, Huvsgul and Zavkhan.

¹ The level of SGP OP8 resources is an estimated total of: (a) the GEF8 core grant allocation; (b) approved STAR resources; as well as (c) other sources of cost sharing & co-financing (country, regional and/or global levels). SGP countries with remaining OP7 balances that have not been pipelined will be expected to use these balances in line with the OP8 strategic approach in order to be coherent in terms of SGP programming and results expected.

Having reviewed the activities conducted and results achieved over the past 22 years of SGP operation in Mongolia, it concludes that the programme has already gone through the following three country-specific stages with the main activities mentioned in each stage and is now on the fourth stage:

Stage 1. Assistance in the formation of new CBOs (NGOs) and the start of creative attempts (2003-2004). Main activities: establishment of community-owned tree nurseries, community-owned fruits and fruit tree gardens, community groves, support to community forestry groups established, hand-made briquettes, fighting land degradation and soil erosion, pasture improvement efforts, conservation of some animal species like pray birds, etc.

Stage 2. Learning by doing and capacity building on conservation measures (2005-2008). Main activities: continued support on community gardens/fruit cultivation/tree nurseries, community forestry, community-based natural resources management, community bee-keeping, renewable energy and energy efficiency options, rehabilitation of degraded land and pasture, waste management and plastic recycling etc.

Stage 3. Advancement in creativity, conservation, community development and organization (2009-2016). Laying foundations for community tourism, continued support on community forestry, community conserved areas, fish breeding and conservation, marketing for some biodiversity products such as seeds, seedlings, fruits, juice, jam, fruit oil and felt items, experience and knowledge exchange among grantees, more renewable energy use options such as biogas and solar and water flow operated pumps, pasture management and combating desertification, CBOs networking and establishment of “Partnership for Development” GEF SGP grantees’ network.

Stage 4. Landscape level strategic and innovative activities (since 2017). The SGP Mongolia has started adopting the landscape approach from the first half of GEF OP6 and now this approach is fully adopted. By applying the landscape approach, there have been launched several important initiatives in agroecology, including bio humus and bio char production, using livestock manure, planting green manures to improve soil fertility, rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems and pasturelands with expanding community level bee keeping practices, development of special green zones as reserve pastures and growing green fodders to relief pressure on pasture.

As of July 2024, there have been implemented 477 GEF financed grant projects by rural communities and local NGOs with a total funding of USD 4,988,800 from the GEF. In addition to the above projects, the SGP Mongolia had implemented 22 COMDEKS community projects with a total actual funding of US \$ 512,982 during 2013-2015, 10 ICCAs GSI grants funded by the German Government during 2021-2023 with actual funding of \$ 512,982 and 9 community-based adaptation projects financed by the Australian Government in 2024 with a total funding of USD 199,996. It is to briefly note that the COMDEKS projects have brought a number of new concepts and understandings together with 20 indicators of resilience and assisted a lot in community conservation and development efforts in the country, having made community members well aware of the Satoyama Initiative and greatly contributed to understanding the importance of production landscapes for environment protection as well as of overall ecosystem functioning.

SGP has made a considerable contribution towards restoring degraded lands and conserving many biodiversity species in the country in close consistency with creating sustainable livelihoods for rural poor communities. Supported by SGP, a significant number of community forestry practitioners have greatly contributed to the conservation of their surrounding forests and ecosystems, the protection of thousands of biodiversity species, and ultimately their own livelihoods and wellbeing. As of today, over 1200 community forestry groups have been established within the SGP geographical focus area. At the same time the community capacity has been

much improved to conserve nature and fight land degradation and desertification, using the seedlings produced by themselves and some other means like pasture regulatory measures, etc. The provision of ecosystem services and biodiversity conservation has mostly been achieved through the implementation of measures such as the promotion of community -protected areas, assistance in their rehabilitation, beekeeping that increases pollination of plants both in protected areas and production zones, planting and growing different types of fruit trees and conserving medicinal herbs, promotion of ecotourism and collectively administering community protected areas. Today, the SGP Mongolia is especially gratified for its great contribution to restoring bee-keeping in Mongolia as the number of bee colonies in the country has tripled the peak level recorded at the end of socialism (1990) as well as to rehabilitation and development of fruit plantations in the country. Community fruit gardens and community- owned tree nurseries initiated and supported by SGP have now become not only a new income- generating and livelihood-supporting activity but greatly contribute back to the development of communities themselves. SGP has also greatly contributed to networking and institutional development of grantee communities. There had been GEF SGP Mongolia Community Network in existence for over 6 years, which was transformed in 2014 into a national NGO named “Partnership for Development”, uniting many of the SGP grantee communities. The NGO now acts in close cooperation with SGP Mongolia to accelerate the development of grantee communities by mobilizing their internal resources. In the past, the SGP has supported many NGOs and made them closer partners who generously assist SGP in its different activities, including workshops, seminars, field trainings, study tours and M&E. Close partnership also helps them grow professionally. Cooperation between community groups, as well as among community members themselves, has been enhanced and strengthened more, following the adoption of an integrated approach at the landscape level. The significance of joint action or activities over an entire ecosystem is gradually being recognized by different communities.

3. COUNTRY PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

As stated in the previous section the SGP Mongolia in the past has acted to assist poor and marginalized rural communities in 13 out of 21 provinces and conducted activities mainly directed to the formation of CBOs and environmental NGOs, start-ups and learning by doing on numerous environment conservation measures, capacity building, awareness-raising, community development and further advancement in creativity. While the country programme has matured and advanced over the years, SGP Mongolia has recently shifted to a landscape-based approach, working with groups of communities preferably on strategic and innovative activities at a broader landscape level through the SGP-established networks, successful grantee partners and skilled NGOs.

The time now has come for SGP Mongolia as an experienced and advanced programme to recognize and emphasize a portfolio of *innovative, inclusive and impactful* projects that address global environmental and sustainable development issues in line with the SGP’s GEF OP8 aims and objectives that 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.

Although there are many critical environmental and development issues and problems faced by rural communities in Mongolia, this Strategy emphasizes the following 8 challenges as priorities within the two selected strategic initiatives in OP8 (Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species, and Sustainable agriculture) that can effectively be addressed by SGP with involvement of local communities and CSOs:

1. Loss of biodiversity.
2. Pasture depletion and overgrazing.

3. Improvement of surface water conservation and use and restoration of small water body ecosystems.
4. Mitigation of, and adoption to, climate change effects at community level.
5. Community-led best practices and approaches to sustainable agriculture.
6. Application of agricultural soil fertility improvement methods and technologies by farmer communities.
7. Rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems in consistency with the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.
8. Promotion of agroecology and innovations directed towards diversification of foods and livelihood means.

The current rapid deterioration and loss of biodiversity in the country are considered as a negative consequence resulting from different development-related influences and climate change effects. There are the last remaining populations of a few internationally threatened and endangered animal species in the country. But their biological resources have been facing increasing threats from the countrywide mining booms, industrial and other economic activities and rapid depletion of land and natural resources such as green masses, water, pasturing grounds, etc. In the recent past, ineffective control of illegal hunting has greatly contributed to a dramatic decrease in some of the rare and endangered wild animal species.

Over the last 30 years, pasture degradation has increased almost everywhere in Mongolia and pasture yields have decreased. Many experts claim that this is happening because traditional pasture use practices have been lost, while many herders add that a reduction in precipitation causes it. Both factors contribute, while the effects on pasture resources are multiplied by increased herd sizes and overgrazing. The decline in the quality of pastureland in Mongolia is of great concern. Climate change effects combined with some mismanagement practices greatly contribute to a dramatic decrease in pasture quality and, consequently in livelihood well-being through a reduction in livestock production. According to reports from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, 78 % of pastureland has been degraded, and another 20 % has a tendency towards degradation.

The drying up of water sources is progressing rapidly. As small rivers, springs, and lakes disappear, the concentration of livestock near the diminishing number of water points intensifies pasture degradation. Pasture yield and plant species diversity are decreasing. About 3,000 water sources, including 680 rivers and 760 lakes, were recorded as having dried up over the last 60 or so years.

Mongolia is severely impacted by desertification and climate change. Gobi Desert continues to expand northward, and more than 70% of Mongolia's land is degraded through overgrazing, deforestation and climate change effects. The average mean temperature has increased by more than 2°C, and climate models indicate that temperatures will continue to rise. More than 80% of the country's territory is defined as highly vulnerable to climate extremes. Climate-related disasters, including droughts, severe storms, and flash floods, with high social and economic costs (particularly for herders), have doubled in frequency.

Due to its relatively high altitude and continental climate, environmental issues related to soil erosion and land degradation more seriously affect the ecosystem and crop production in Mongolia. It is estimated that over the past 30 years, 30-50 tons of soil have been lost from each hectare of cultivated land due to wind erosion and inconsistent agricultural practices. Today, soil erosion loss of soil fertility not only influences agricultural production but induces the transportation of fertile topsoil, affecting the soil micro-and macronutrient cycles, thus leading to instability of the ecosystem function, scarcity of vegetation cover, and changes in biomass production.

Where possible and appropriate, SGP will support Mongolia's ongoing efforts to fulfill its commitments to the SDGs and is committed to doing its best to contribute to every aspect of the SDG's objectives and achievements in sustainable agriculture.

Finally, as we all depend on healthy ecosystems for food and energy, water and biodiversity, it is time to promote innovations and apply agroecological principles in support of food diversification and livelihood improvements in rural areas.

3.1 Alignment with national priorities

Mongolia is a party to all the Rio Conventions. Hence, the SGP country programme needs to assist the country in fulfilling its international obligations and national environmental priorities, particularly those priorities, obligations and commitments associated with rural communities and CSOs. Table 1 presents Rio conventions and national planning frameworks relevant to SGP for delivering the programme in cooperation with CBOs and other CSOs.

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

Rio Conventions + national planning frameworks	Date of ratification /completion
GEF-7 National Dialogues	
UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	1 June, 1993
CBD National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)	10 July, 1996
Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS)	20 December, 2012
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	1 June, 1993
UNFCCC National Communications (1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd)	2001, 2010
UNFCCC Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA)	January, 2010
UNFCCC National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPA)	being developed
Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for Paris Accord	Amended and renewed in 2019
UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	22 August, 1996
UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAP)	4 June, 2003
Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	17 May, 2002
SC National Implementation Plan (NIP)	2006
Minamata Convention on Mercury	28 September, 2015
UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	2016
Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the UN SDGs	2019
Tumen river SAP	1999
Others (list) as relevant	

3.2 Gaps and opportunities

Although Mongolian environmental NGOs and rural community groups have some opportunity to contribute to meeting the country's environmental priorities one way or another by participating in SGP activities, there is a lack of knowledge and understanding of the very essence of international conventions, national commitments, and ways of contributing to the implementation of national priorities.

Overall, CSOs and rural communities in Mongolia are aware of the Rio Conventions. However, their knowledge and awareness are rather limited to media reports, news and some general information on the conventions and relevant national plans adopted for their national implementation. Therefore, firstly, the SGP assumes to improve their knowledge and understanding of international conventions and national commitments among communities and CSOs in sufficient detail so that they can further promote self-development and

meaningful involvement in the national implementation of the conventions and national plans. Secondly, the SGP needs to assist capable NGOs to grow professionally on national environmental priorities and international convention related themes and matters.

Proactive, successful and skilled grantee communities are provided with a good opportunity to be re-engaged in SGP activities to lead new community groups in grant implementation at the landscape level, based on their experience and peculiar “know-hows”.

3.3 OP8 strategic priorities of the SGP Country Programme

SGP Mongolia OP8 country programme priorities have been selected from among the suggested SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives. A short description of each of the selected country programme priorities is provided based on needs and opportunities at the country level. Potential for complementarity and synergy of the selected OP8 Strategic Initiatives with GEF, UNDP, and other projects and programmes has been identified in Table 2.

Table2. SGP Country Programme’s alignment with SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives and Country Priorities/Projects/Programmes

1	2	3
SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives	SGP Country Programme's OP7 Priorities	SGP Country Programme's complementarity with GEF, UNDP, and other projects and programmes (identify related projects/ programmes)
<i>Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species</i> Key objectives/focus: 1) Improve management effectiveness of protected areas through ICCAs and shared governance with government. 2) Improve community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches to sustainable agriculture, forestry, community tourism, etc.	SGP is committed to continue playing a leading and catalytic role in the development and strategic expansion of Mongolia's emerging Community Conserved Area system by identifying and registering all new and existing community conserved areas, including local sacred, holy and blessed places, working towards establishing a national network of CCAs to ensure the integrity of country's community landscapes/ ecosystems to ultimately secure the viability of the nation's globally significant biodiversity, while the country challenges the creation of a new legal framework that will establish a firm foundation for community conservation areas to become an effective part of Mongolia's NPA system. Specific community-led biodiversity- friendly practices and approaches to sustainable agriculture, forestry, tourism, etc. will be practiced.	SGP makes sure about complementarity of its grant activities with GEF funded and UNDP-implemented project named "Ensuring sustainability and resilience (ENSURE) of green landscapes in Mongolia" which intends to enhance ecosystem services in multiple landscapes of the Sayan and Khangai mountains and southern Gobi by reducing rangeland and forest degradation and conserving biodiversity through sustainable livelihoods. Another important UNDP project for full complementarity with its results was the global Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN), which has been a global partnership addressing the biodiversity-finance challenge in a comprehensive manner. There are two important national programmes supported by UNDP among others: National programme on protected areas and National Programme on biodiversity conservation.
<i>Sustainable agriculture and food security</i> 1) Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in vulnerable ecosystems (dry land). 2) Increase diversification and livelihood improvement 3) Remove deforestation from supply chain and expanded restoration of degraded lands.	SGP intends to continue working on agroecology in several targeted socio-ecological production landscapes throughout the entire SGP geographical focus area. Activities on agroecology include community bio-fertilizer production, community vegetation field and soil protection measures, promotion of green manures for soil structure fixing and other relevant innovative practices for increasing vegetative cover and soil organic carbon as well as for ensuring efficient use of natural capital in crop and livestock production systems to ultimately promote and recognize landscape management, using all possible community and livelihood-based options. SGP will look for innovative measures that contribute to the diversification of foods and livelihood means in vulnerable ecosystems and encourage community initiatives on expanded restoration of degraded lands and alternative measures leading to a reduction in tree cutting.	There are two important national programmes on Fruits and Vegetables, which can be supported by SGP. In the past SGP has given a lot of support to rural communities in promoting soil conservation and developing community fruit gardens. These and similar kinds of support will continue to contribute to sustainable agriculture and food security.

Global ICCA Support Initiative (ICCA GSI Phase 2) (only applicable to ICCA GSI Phase 2 participating countries) (with BMUV IKI funding) 1) Work Package 1: Provide national level ICCA small grants. 2) Work Package 2: Provide legal and governance assistance to ICCAs. 3) Work Package 3: Network exchange and knowledge management for ICCAs.	There will be selected a priority landscape(s) by conducting a preliminary study with involvement of NSC members and experts. Formal procedures will follow to grant projects to community groups and CSOs within the selected landscape(s). With involvement of experts, NSC members and skilled grantee CSOs, the SGP in Mongolia is prepared to provide legal and governance assistance to identified ICCAs, where and when necessary. There will be facilitation of networking grantees and exchange of knowledge and best practices within the network during project implementation and thereafter to produce a number of knowledge products and recognition of best results and achievements.	
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	Noting the fact that the country programme has been maturing and has over 500 grants by now, it becomes a priority for SGP Mongolia to concentrate on capturing good knowledge and valuable lessons from the implemented projects and producing a range of knowledge products of different types to share with local communities and CSO groups from non-SGP areas in the country as well as with global communities. In this respect, the SGP will also act as an “Incubator” for several interested CSOs to grow professionally. SGP Mongolia is deeply interested in South-South cooperation with some neighboring countries and will consider exchanges on good practices.	While UNDP knowledge management documents are considered one of the main reference sources, the SGP country programme will closely work with UNDP advocacy on the production and dissemination of knowledge materials.
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	New efficient procedures will apply to results management by improving and speeding up extraction and collection of data and information from relevant sources, and data processing for better management purposes. Field monitoring and evaluation will be enhanced with the participation of local government officials, neighbor grantees, representatives of CSOs and NSC members.	Information for and activation of potential participants (local government officials, neighbor grantees, representatives of CSOs and NSC members) in monitoring and evaluation will be promoted.

4. OP8 PRIORITY LANDSCAPES/SEASCAPES & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Since its start in 2002, the SGP Mongolia has been operational for 22 years in the country and implemented 528 grants to assist poor and marginalized rural communities in 13 out of 21 provinces in close cooperation

with over 500 local CBOs and NGOs, covering about half of the total land area and more than 50 % of rural population. Over the past 22 years, SGP has acted within the initially established geographical focus area, having covered two more provinces (Huvsgul and Zavhan) in OP7, disregarding many requests made by community groups from other distant provinces. These two provinces had been added to the programme because of an assessment made before the start of OP7, following the rapid advancement of SGP in Mongolia over the thematic focus areas and programme diversification (Landscape approach, Strategic initiatives, Partnership and Innovation programmes, etc.). As a result of the assessment, there had been identified two basic needs to expand the geographic focus area with 2 more provinces. One was to concentrate more on the western part of the existing geo-focus area as it has inadequately been covered by SGP in the past, while the other suggests covering biodiversity-rich areas adjacent to this western part. With those taken into consideration and some other reasons identified during the discussions held with NSC members and other stakeholders, the entire Hangai-Huvsgul region with the inclusion of some narrow strips of surrounding areas in the south and west has been selected as the priority landscape which covers the western part of the existing geographical focus area together with globally important ecosystems of Huvsgul.

The fact that the SGP in Mongolia operates in such a large area compared to other countries is primarily due to the size of Mongolia's population. Today, Mongolia's total population is 3.4 million, half of which lives in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar. In other words, the remaining half lives in 21 rural provinces aimags, and considering that a significant proportion of them are in provincial centers and settlements, the number of rural herders and farmers is modest, compared to the rest of population living in cities and towns, in other words, a very low density of rural population.

4.1 Grantmaking within the priority landscape.

a) Process for selecting priority landscapes

Following the discussions and exchanges of views with NSC members and some other experts involved in SGP activities, the final decision was made that SGP in OP8 continues working in the same geographical area it worked in OP7. It is suggested by NSC members and many others that no expansion or no reduction is appropriate in the geographical focus area in OP8, considering the key criteria that apply to biodiversity significance, areas of high land/forest degradation, areas covered by international waters, high poverty/low human development index, areas with limited energy access, and presence of vulnerable groups and the fact that SGP has rich experience and good knowledge potential to work with new community groups at landscape level and many requests that are received from community groups seeking/requesting support from SGP.

b) Selected Landscape for OP8

As indicated above, this Strategy has selected the same geographic focus area the SGP Mongolia worked in OP7. The Strategy has been formulated to support local community activities to maintain and rehabilitate degraded ecosystems, fight loss of biodiversity and pasture/land degradation, restoration of small surface water bodies dried up over last 30 or so years, promote community applicable technology use and innovations for advancement in sustainable agriculture and use of agroecological principles in farming practices in different ecological landscapes partly covering forest mountain, steppe and Gobi Desert areas.

Map of GEF SGP Geographic Focus Area in OP8 is shown in Picture 1.



Picture 1. Map of GEF SGP Geographic Focus Area in OP8

The selected area has ecologically important landscapes that are categorized mainly by mountain forest and steppe ecosystems with a high biodiversity significance and well-developed river systems in terms of natural components. Regarding socio-economic conditions, the landscapes contain the country's main crop and vegetable farming and animal husbandry areas with medium level social networks by the country scale.

There is a range of nationally protected areas included in and adjacent to the priority landscape. The area is rich with over 600 types of medicinal and rare plants and animal kingdom with many species like bear, lynx, fox, wolf, Pallas wildcat, ermine, weasel, badger, deer, moose, antelope, boar, sable and ondatra, birds like swan, goose, crane, bustard, partridge, hazel grouse, wood grouse, quail, eagle hawk, vulture and buzzard and 18 types of fresh water fish. Pine and Larch trees are dominant in the landscape, other trees like cedar, birch, aspen, fir, silver fir and poplar also grow. The area is rich with wild fruit and berry bushes like strawberry, red currant, black currant, blueberry, black cherry, blackberry, sea buckthorn and raspberry.

Like in other parts of Mongolia, the weather is characterized by extreme variability and short-term unpredictability in the summer, and the multiyear averages conceal wide variations in precipitation, dates of frosts, and occurrences of blizzards and spring dust storms. Extreme weather events such as drought and dzud/a combination of heavy snow and extreme coldness/ have also increased in frequency and intensity. All these phenomena are attributable to or aggravated by climate change and will damage the livestock and other agricultural sectors in combination with rapidly increasing land degradation.

There are considerable human influences on forest and steppe ecosystems in the region, including timber cutting, livestock overgrazing, forest fires, illegal poaching and logging.

c) OP8 Strategic Initiatives in the landscape

For better and clearer results in OP8, SGP Mongolia has selected only the 2 most important for Mongolia Global Strategic Initiatives, namely ***Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species and Sustainable agriculture and food security*** as the main strategic areas to work and achieve considerable

outcomes. In addition, two global **mandatory** strategic initiatives, namely ***Knowledge Management and Results Management, Monitoring & Evaluation*** have been selected to work on and make a difference. The SGP Mongolia is fully committed to doing its best for the efficient and fruitful implementation of the selected strategic initiatives, ensuring that poor and marginalized rural communities and rural civil society groups benefit as much as they can.

These Strategic Initiatives will be implemented in a closely integrated manner at the landscape level within the priority landscape for OP8. Over the coming 4 years, SGP intends to involve 80 new community groups in the programme. This objective is ambitious, but achievable, because of the landscape approach. Project proponents are asked to design their grant proposals to involve several community groups in one grant, because community groups in Mongolia are smaller in size and not many people make one group, as the country programme has already shifted into the landscape approach in OP7. Grant proposals are encouraged to be developed in a way that each grant is governed by a project implementation team comprised of representatives of participating community groups or led by experienced and professional NGOs or a successful SGP grantee community with project implementation skills. In terms of territorial coverage, it is suggested that one grant covers as much area as it can. This approach enables skilled NGOs or community groups to transfer their practice-based knowledge, experience and lessons learnt to many new community groups over the entire landscape or considerable portions of the landscape. Double-win or even triple-win (community land conservation, job creation, and poverty reduction) activities and community innovations will be considered more promising to increase grant benefits and achieve greater impacts.

The situation has changed a lot today. A series of opportunities have been provided to local communities. Bank services, including lending, are now closer to communities than before. There have been established local development funds in each soum. Markets are becoming accessible to communities. To be creative and successful in nature protection and livelihood improvement, communities need knowledge, management skills, technical “know-how” and technology application. In this sense, an approach that will integrate community activities with these three important subjects needs to be applied more than ever before.

4.2 CSO-government-private sector dialogue platforms

As many of the SGP grantees rapidly mature and develop in the country, their voice tends to influence others, including policymakers and planners. It is time for SGP Mongolia to organize its grantees and other communities to get involved in policy and planning dialogues with local governments. There are about 1700 nature conservation community groups officially registered in Mongolia. As of today, SGP Mongolia has worked with over 450 of them. During OP8, the SGP intends to initiate and facilitate two CSOs-local government-private sector policy and planning dialogue platforms in cooperation with networks, NGOs and private sector dealing with issues related to agroecology and biodiversity products.

As part of activities to achieve the objectives, there will be promoted a Community Education and Leadership Initiative intended to build and enhance the capacity of communities basically through lectures and trainings, improve their skills and knowledge of national and local policies, legislative acts, and environment and development challenges.

These dialogue platforms to be promoted at the local level aim to bridge local communities/CSOs to local policy development and planning, ensure their participation in planning, policy and strategy development processes, and enhance communications and cooperation for joint activities to implement sustainable development related goals (SDGs), local development plans and build on the trust and good working relations between communities and local governments.

4.3 Promoting social Inclusion, including gender equality and women's empowerment

According to the Social Watch, Mongolia has the best level of gender equality in East Asia and is among the few countries in the world that have reached a MEDIUM level of gender equality. Mongolia's 81 points rank her twelve points above the East Asia & Pacific average, which stands at 69. Despite this fact, and as it's done in the previous phases, SGP will continue engaging and targeting women with gender equality considerations in SGP activities in OP7. SGP will also support efforts to increase women's, youth's and disabled persons' access to management of ecosystem goods and services and ensure their empowerment and equal participation in project implementation, planning, decision making and governance processes by:

- Promoting active participation of women and youth in the project design, implementation and M&E;
- Mainstreaming gender in all relevant projects;
- Designating gender and youth focal persons in the NSC who look after gender considerations and youth involvement;
- Including gender and youth involvement review criteria in the project proposal template and project review sheet for the NSC;
- Supporting the networking, strengthening or creation of women, youth and disabled persons' associations and organizations and connecting them with regional and global networks;
- Producing knowledge and guidance materials in gender mainstreaming in community projects;
- Promoting youth leadership in SGP-supported activities;
- Proactively promoting women-youth-led projects;
- Creating an opportunity and window for youth to act as a group or network to realize their innovative ideas and initiatives; and
- Empowering youth representation and championing their involvement in national and global eco-competitions and negotiation processes.

4.4 Knowledge Management

The SGP has operated in the country for 22 years already and implemented 528 grants as of July 2024 in cooperation with CSOs, including CBOs. Over the above period, the country programme has produced many tangible results, and it is time to work more on producing different kinds of knowledge material for dissemination to those who are interested. Therefore, SGP strongly intends to apply a revolutionary approach to knowledge management with the production of a series of knowledge materials of the following types:

- Training videos;
- Videos on essential activities & popular themes (e.g. about SGP Mongolia)
- Infographics;
- Case studies;
- Photo essays;
- Fact sheets;
- Articles;
- Photo reports;
- Photos stories and
- How-to-tools.

As estimated and expected, at least 30 new quality knowledge products will be produced before the end of OP8. They will be disseminated through all possible channels and networks and, as appropriate, uploaded into the Innovation library of the global SGP website. SGP Mongolia will also continue creating both digital and physical libraries of knowledge products and community innovations.

SGP Mongolia has long been interested in South-South exchanges and will actively engage in cooperation with country programs of China and Central Asian Republics if opportunities appear. The country programme intends to promote activities such as knowledge fairs, peer-to-peer exchanges, and the use of demonstration sites.

In addition to the above-mentioned activities, there will be conducted the following country programme recurrent activities in accordance with the availability of resources:

- Maintain and regularly update the SGP soft photo library & SGP global database;
- Regular update the Country programme website & Power point presentation about SGP;
- Assist successful communities in reporting success events from around their region and producing knowledge materials;
- Use important meetings and national events as a key to reaching target audiences;
- Develop video documentaries/presentations on best practices and booklets on traditional knowledge;
- Organize study tours, and exchange visits with the involvement of local authorities, donors and government officials to flagship SGP grant results and products;
- Compile lessons learned on projects in the form of best practices;
- Participate visibly in high-profile events in support of resource mobilization;
- Compile materials and tools useful for community- level advocacy and outreach, especially with a focus on participatory techniques.

On innovative, inclusive and impactful projects:

To keep in touch with the current rapidly developing circumstances, communities need to be aware of modern technology, knowledge and best practices, etc. In this sense, SGP may also support a few innovative, inclusive, and impactful projects outside the OP8 priority area.

5. COMMUNICATION PLAN

The objective of SGP communication in this Strategy is directed at coordinating community conservation and livelihood improvement activities with that of other agencies and bodies for promoting effective cooperation between SGP and its stakeholders to enhance community landscape resilience and mobilize additional resources for the benefit of local communities, especially disadvantaged and marginalized ones.

This Communication plan will be implemented through the communication elements described below:

Advocacy. SGP Mongolia will engage in information dissemination, knowledge generation and supportive advocacy action to inform and influence legislative debates in the interest of rural communities, in particular the most disadvantaged and vulnerable.

Visibility. SGP will continue enhancing its visibility in accordance with new the GEF Communications and Visibility Policy adopted by GEF Council in 2023 as well as with close consistency with other guidance documents, where necessary. It is vitally important to raise the SGP visibility in the country higher than before for the benefits of poor and marginalized communities and local CSOs. Ensuring the full breadth and impact of SGP-funded activity is critically important to be visible and understood in the country to maintaining and accelerating conservation activities in support of goals related to biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution and other challenges.

Partnerships. Since SGP works in close collaboration with CSOs and local governments, the Communication Plan reinforces the need for nurturing existing partnerships, based on lessons learned and forge new ones to galvanize support for SGP.

Through strategic partnership and collaborative relationship, SGP Mongolia will optimize its comparative advantage in dealing with communities and CSOs for enhancing landscape resilience, improving livelihood potentials, and for providing an opportunity to promote a participatory approach to planning, implementation and monitoring of SGP grants. The following target audiences have been identified as most important for communications:

- Rural communities and grantees;
- Local people's representative bodies and local governments;
- Civil Society Organizations;
- GEF implementing agencies and other donors conducting similar activities;
- National Committees on environmental conventions;
- Organizations for Youth, Women and persons with disabilities;
- Conservation communities (scientific community, environmental academia and institutions, movements, NGO networks);
- National Steering Committee members;
- GEF National Focal Points;
- Mass and social media;
- Private sector.

6. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND PARTNERSHIP PLAN

The Resource Mobilization Plan will be realized in two basic ways, namely, attracting potential donor communities through successes of individual grants at the project level and overall achievements of SGP at the landscape or programme levels. In line with the Grantmaker + roles, SGP will allocate more time to assist and support grantees and those in need in their resource mobilization efforts during OP8. For this purpose, it is essential to assist them in connecting with potential funding sources, wherever eligible and possible. SGP Mongolia plans to work closely with two provincial-level funds, namely Local Development Fund and Soum Development Fund, both are operational in each soum, although they are heavily dependent on country's yearly rates of economic growth. Community groups and other project proponents in the countryside usually lack the proper skills and knowledge to write proposals. In OP6, SGP has assisted numerous communities in three provinces in writing and submitting proposals to the local development funds of respective provinces and will continue this practice in OP8 as one of the main activities to mobilize cash resources from local sources. There is another fund named "Employment Promotion Fund" functioning at the provincial level, which can also be a potential source for partnership.

It is predicted that the number of resources to be mobilized from communities and local sources, particularly in-kind resources, will be greater than those in the previous phases because of the landscape approach, covering as many community groups as possible in one grant and requiring more investment and labor from participants.

To realize advice given and requests made by NSC members and some other stakeholders, SGP is going to allocate more time in OP8 to assist communities in proposal preparation for submission to local funds and international funding institutions. The programme deems it necessary to continue making its efforts to closely

cooperate with potential international funding organizations such as the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), UNDP, WWF, World Conservation Society (WCS), The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and GIZ.

SGP Mongolia also finds a good time to develop cooperation with private sector. It considers partnership between community groups and the private sector to be a fruitful and useful activity in advancing development and achievements for both.

Although it is less probable for SGP to serve as a delivery mechanism on behalf of other donors due to the current limited number of projects and programme on environment and sustainable development in the country, SGP will continue seeking such an opportunity.

7. PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

To efficiently perform the “Grantmaker + roles”, more emphasis and priority will be given to helping communities and local NGOs develop proposals to access other donor and funding facilities by organizing a number of educational activities such as lectures, seminars, and brainstorming sessions to generate innovative project ideas, sharing best practices and experiences, offering an exploratory meeting to discuss their specific needs, and conducting project development workshops combined with training on relevant subjects and themes. Another important objective of SGP Mongolia in OP8 is to continue assisting the GEF SGP National Network, which has transformed into an official NGO named “Partnership for Development” in 2014, to make it a cooperative partner for grants and country programme non-grant costs. The network is prepared to participate in domestic bids and conduct different activities on a contractual basis.

Cooperation with the private sector is a newly emerging and important way to mobilize resources to achieve results at the landscape level. SGP will promote resource mobilization from the private sector, making them interested in best practices, successes, knowledge products and experiences, which would be a great value for them, especially for small business holders. A target scheme is worked out and given in Table 3.

Table 3. Target scheme on resource mobilization from donors and other funding facilities

No.	SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives selected in Mongolia	Agencies/organizations for Grantmaker plus & partnership opportunities
1	Community-based conservation of threatened systems and species	UNDP, WWF, World Vision International, WCS, TNC, GIZ, SDC
2	Sustainable agriculture and food security	Soum Development Fund and Local Development Fund, UNDP, private sector.
3	Knowledge Management (Mandatory)	Professional civil society organizations with qualifications and experiences on knowledge management and knowledge production
4	Results Management, Monitoring & Evaluation (Mandatory)	Local governments, CSOs, NSC

SGP resource mobilization targets will be achieved through intensive advertising of SGP activities, disseminating information on achievements and organizing knowledge events.

With emergence of the requirement for new approach to demonstrate SGP’s relevance in the context of decreased funding and reduced number of projects in OP8 and the fact that SGP works with low-capacity communities and organizations, there has been increased SGP’s Grantmaker+ role with first-hand objectives

to offer value-added activities to build capacity of communities and CSOs, foster greater impact, bridge gap between SGP projects and full-sized projects, facilitate dissemination and uptake of new technologies and approaches and to build social capital to increase resilience and impact.

Conducting diverse activities directed to setting up institutional and financial support mechanisms to increase impact nationally and globally and developing the capacity of local and national civil society stakeholders, SGP's Grantmaker+ mechanism will function to assist communities and CSOs with non-grant services such as capacity building, knowledge management, improving policy, networking and helping them with preparation of proposals to donor, government and other funding facilities.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

The UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards have been applied for the identification of risks during the preparation of this Strategy and did not identify any significant environmental and social risks associated with the proposed Strategy. In general, the Strategy will greatly contribute towards improving the resilience of community landscapes, reducing land degradation and maintenance of ecosystem quality through which local communities will improve livelihood potentials and well-being. However, a few risks have been identified that may result in the implementation or success of the strategy. The risks identified have been described in Table 4.

Table 4. Description of risks identified in OP8

Describe identified risk	Degree of risk (low, medium, high)	Probability of risk (low, medium, high)	Risk mitigation measure foreseen
Negligence or inadequate understanding of the importance of agroecological measures (bio-fertilizers, wind protection belts, etc.) by some communities	Medium	Medium	This issue will be addressed through organizing field demonstrations-showcases of innovations, trainings and study tours to educate and convince communities and local government and other stakeholders within the landscapes.
Inadequate legislative acts on community protected areas and community landscapes	Medium	Medium	Work closely with central and local governments for their support to grantee communities. Immediately start with creating CSO-government policy and planning dialogues at both national and local levels.
Local stakeholders' individual interests inhibit viable cooperation and local decision-makers are not well aware of the importance of agroecological measures and community protected areas.	Low	Low	This problem will be resolved through conducting broader awareness-raising activities among those who need it. Workshops and meetings will be used to educate or convince stakeholders and decision-makers. Awareness-raising, convincing and other required activities will be conducted in close cooperation with the GEF SGP Grantees' network.
Climate risks (frequent droughts, low precipitation and	Medium	High	Overall, the OP8 CPS is designed to enhance community landscape resilience in

temperature rise, etc.) may lead to re-distribution or even loss of biodiversity and reduce the food supply and livelihood potentials of communities.			the long run. However, potential risk reduction measures against worsening climate change effects will be taken at the level of individual projects during their implementation, considering the specifics of projects and levels of threats.
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These risks and the mitigation measures will be continuously monitored throughout the implementation of the CPS and updated during the CPS Annual review for adjustments on the degree of risk or of probability, removal or adding new risks with appropriate mitigation measures identified.

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

9.1 Monitoring approaches at project and country levels

The present M&E Plan will closely monitor the OP8 CPS indicators and targets set in Table 7 in the next section (9.2. SGP results framework) of this Strategy. For monitoring purposes at the programme level these indicators will be tracked to measure actual results against the CPS targets and that process will provide systematic and periodic information on progress towards the targets which will be reported to CPMT through the Annual Country Reports (ACR). Evaluation at the programme level will be done through individual project evaluations, using progress and final reports, the information collected through field monitoring and other sources such as studies, reviews and interviews with stakeholders. Monitoring and evaluation results will then be used to determine the impact of interventions, assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of this Strategy and to identify appropriate adaptive management measures as well as potential sources for developing knowledge products. Both monitoring and evaluation will be participatory, involving local officials, representatives of local associations and non-grantee communities and other relevant stakeholders at the landscape level.

Landscape-specific project level M&E has been designed so that prior to its approval, each project will have to identify the specific landscape strategy outcome(s) to which it will have to contribute and monitor the corresponding indicators. Progress towards the outcome will be updated using the grantees' progress reports and field monitoring records. Additionally, the individual project will have an indicator system aligned with GEF SGP OP7 indicators. Individual project M&E Plan is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. M&E Plan at the Project Level

SGP Individual Project Level		
M&E Activity	Responsible Parties	Timeframe
Participatory Project Monitoring	Grantees	Duration of project
Baseline Data Collection	Grantees, NC	At project concept planning and proposal stage
Two or Three Project Progress and Financial Reports (<i>depending on agreed disbursement schedule</i>)	Grantees, NC, PA	At each disbursement request
Project Workplans	Grantees, NC, PA	Duration of project

NC Project Proposal Site Visit (as necessary / cost effective)	NC	Before project approval, as appropriate
NC Project Monitoring Site Visit (as necessary / cost effective)	NC	On average once per year, as appropriate
NC Project Evaluation Site Visit (as necessary / cost effective)	NC	At end of project, as appropriate
Project Final Report	Grantees	Following completion of project activities
Project Evaluation Report (as necessary / cost effective)	NC, NSC, External party	Following completion of project activities
Prepare project description to be incorporated into global project database	PA, NC	At start of project, and ongoing as appropriate

Project monitoring and evaluation will be organized and led by the NC during project site visits with the involvement of the grantee organization, community leaders and members, representatives of local government, SGP local consultants and some members of NSC, when they are available. After the monthly field monitoring and evaluation plan is approved by UNDP Resident Representative designated official, the NC informs those who will be invited for participatory monitoring. When M&E starts, each participant is given M&E record papers which are completed and returned to the NC at the end of the process for further consolidated analysis and documentation. Each grant is visited at least twice for M&E purposes.

A detailed description of the country- level M&E Plan to monitor the implementation of the CPS, with reference to the targets and indicators set in Table 7 within the selected landscape, is given in Table 6.

Table 6. M&E Plan at the Country Programme Level

M&E Activity	Purpose	Responsible parties	Budget source	Timing
Country Programme Strategy elaboration	Framework for identification of community projects	NC, NSC, country stakeholders, grantee	Covered under preparatory grant	Start of OP8
Annual Country Programme Strategy Review	Learning; adaptive management	NC, NSC, CPMT	Covered under country programme operating costs	June, every year
NSC Meetings for ongoing review of project results and analysis	Assess effectiveness of projects, portfolios, approaches; learning; adaptive management	NC, NSC, UNDP	Covered under country programme operating costs	Two meetings per year. Each with time allocated for M&E and adaptive management.

Annual Country Report (ACR)	Enable efficient reporting to NSC	NC presenting to NSC	Covered under country programme operating costs	Once per year in June
Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) Survey (based on ACR)	Enable efficient reporting to CPMT and GEF; presentation of results to donor	NC submission to CPMT	Covered under country programme operating costs	Once per year in July
Strategic Country Portfolio Review	Learning; adaptive management for strategic development of Country Programme	NSC	Covered under country programme operating costs	Once during OP8

SGP intends to conduct a baseline assessment at the beginning of OP8 and an ex-post assessment towards the end phase to see the actual impacts of SGP interventions, particularly regarding landscape diversity and ecosystem protection, biodiversity, knowledge and innovation, governance and social equity and livelihoods and well-being.

This M&E plan will significantly contribute to establishing a landscape-based innovative approach for continuous improvement in the planning and implementation of individual projects and ensure the right directions in supporting local community activities to maintain and rebuild landscapes by collecting and disseminating knowledge and experiences from successful actions for replication and up-scaling and developing sound biodiversity management and sustainable livelihood practices in the target landscapes through periodic review of this Strategy, country Portfolio and results of individual projects.

9.2.CPS Results Framework

The expected results of this CPS will be measured with the indicators (Column 2, Table 7) against the SGP Country Programme's OP8 Priorities specified on the 4 Strategic Initiatives (Column 1) in close consistency with the listed goals of the SDGs, UNDP CPD outputs and OP8 SGP Programme Goal a twice (midterm & at the end of OP8).

Table 7. Results Framework of SGP OP8 Country Programme Strategy

Alignment with SDGs: - Goal 1. End Poverty in All Its Forms Everywhere - Goal 2. End Hunger, Achieve Food Security and Improved Nutrition and Promote Sustainable Agriculture - Goal 5. Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls - Goal 11. Make Cities and Human Settlement Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable - Goal 13. Take Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and Its Impacts - Goal 15. Protect, Restore and Promote Sustainable Use of Terrestrial Ecosystems, Sustainably Manage Forests, Combat Desertification, and Halt and Reverse Land Degradation and Halt Biodiversity Loss
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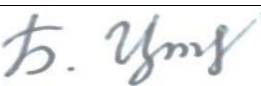
Synergy with UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD): - Output 1.4. Increased community participation in managing natural resources for enhanced resilience of ecosystem and livelihoods - Output 1.7. Livelihood quality and sustainability of resource-dependent rural communities increased		
OP8 SGP Programme Goal: <i>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.</i>		
1.OP8 SGP CPS Strategic Initiatives	2.OP8 Indicators and Targets (Identify relevant targets for the CPS and relevant targets for the)	3.Means of verification
<i>Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species</i> Key objectives: 1) Improve management effectiveness of protected areas through ICCAs and shared governance with the government. 2) Improve community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches to agriculture, forestry, community tourism etc. SGP is committed to continue playing a leading and catalytic role in the development and strategic expansion of Mongolia's emerging Community Conserved Area system by identifying, registering all new and existing community conserved areas, including local sacred, holy and blessed places, working towards establishing a national network of CCAs to ensure the integrity of country's community landscapes/ecosystems to ultimately secure the viability of the nation's globally significant biodiversity, while the country challenges the creation of a new legal framework that will establish a firm foundation for community conservation areas to become an effective part of Mongolia's NPA system. Specific community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches to sustainable agriculture, forestry, tourism, etc. will be practiced.	120,000 hectares of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (GEF core indicator 4.1) 5 of community-based protected area/ conserved area designations and/or networks strengthened	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
<i>Sustainable agriculture and food security</i> 1) Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in vulnerable ecosystems (dry land;) 2) Increase diversification and livelihood improvement.	10,000 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)

3) Remove deforestation from supply chain and expanded restoration of degraded lands. SGP intends to continue working on agroecology in several targeted socio-ecological production landscapes throughout the entire SGP geographical focus area. Activities on agroecology include community bio-fertilizer production, community vegetation field and soil protection measures, promotion of green manures for soil structure fixing and other relevant innovative practices for increasing vegetative cover and soil organic carbon as well as for ensuring efficient use of natural capital in crop and livestock production systems to ultimately promote and recognize landscape management, using all possible community and livelihood-based options. SGP will look for innovative measures that contribute to diversification of foods and livelihood means in vulnerable ecosystems and encourage community initiatives on expanded restoration of degraded lands and alternative measures leading to reduction in tree cutting.	<i>5,000 hectares of degraded agricultural lands restored (hectares) (GEF core indicator 3.1)</i> <i>3 linkages and partnerships for sustainable food production practices (such as diversification and sustainable intensification) and supply chain management (esp. SMEs)</i> <i>At least 25 small-holder farmers supported towards the achievement of national Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets</i>	Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database Country Programme Review Socio-ecological resilience indicators for production landscapes (SEPLs)
Monitoring & Evaluation + Knowledge Management 1) Administer new M&E strategy in country programme and project design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms. 2) Capture knowledge and lessons from projects and activities. 3) Continue improving and strengthening capacities of CSOs/CBOs. 4) Conduct more exchange visits to promote technology transfer, knowledge acquiring and replication of good practices. New efficient procedures will apply to results management by improving and speeding up extraction and collection of data and information from relevant sources, and data processing for better management purposes. Field monitoring and evaluation will be enhanced with participation of local government officials, neighbor grantees, representatives of CSOs and NSC members. Noting the fact that the country programme has been maturing, it becomes a priority for SGP Mongolia to	<i>2 projects administering results management modalities in programme design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms.</i> <i>Frequency of updating SGP database for effective data collection, management and analysis supporting gains in programme performance and learning. Bi-Monthly</i> <i>At least 4 exchange visits among SGP</i>	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database Country Programme Review

concentrate on capturing good knowledge and valuable lessons from the implemented projects and producing a range of knowledge products of different types to share with local communities and CSO groups from non-SGP areas in the country as well as with global communities. In this respect, the SGP will also act as an “Incubator” for several interested CSOs to grow professionally.	<i>grantees to help transfer knowledge, replicate technology, tools and good approaches.</i>	
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10. NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE ENDORSEMENT

National Steering Committee members:

Dr. Amgalanbaatar. S	
Dr. Baigal-Amar. T	
Dr. Batkhishig B	
Mr. Batkhhishig P	
Mr. Boldbaatar	
Ms. Erdenechimeg B	
Ms. Khishigjargal Kh	DocuSigned by:  642722217E344DA...
Ms. Munkhjargal. Ts	
Ms. Tsend-Ayush. B	
Ms. Tserenlham Ts	