

PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE)

Project Number (Quantum ID): 00103730

REPORTING PERIOD¹: January 2023 to December 2023

Signed and endorsed by:

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Project Summary Information	
Project Title	Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE)
Project ID	00103730
Project Duration	1 April 2017 to 5 December 2024
Location	Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Ladakh
CPD/UNSDCF/RPD/SP Outputs	UNDP CPD 2023-27, Output 3.2 Innovative solutions developed, demonstrated and upscaled at national and subnational levels for vulnerable communities and businesses to benefit from sustainable management of natural resources (land, water, air), chemicals and circular economy.
Gender marker	Gen 2
Implementing Partner	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
Total budget	USD 72,364,192
Donors (funding sources)	GEF
Budget (annual budget)	USD 1,391,991.74
Expenditure recorded for the reporting period	USD 776,021
Expenditure recorded for the total project	USD 9,641,899
Project Manager name:	Krishna Kumar

1. Executive Summary

¹ Periodicity of this project progress report will be determined based on online input; it can be used quarterly, half-yearly, or annually. Once the data from this tool is input into Quantum, one can generate multi-year, annual, or quarterly reports, as the system should be able to aggregate various periods as long as they have been reported. The minimum requirement for Project Board to meet at least once to review progress and risks is annual - per policy.

A brief analysis of key project results, achievements, and challenges, highlighting their contribution to the relevant CPD/RPD outcome/output. This could also be activity verification, beneficiaries' feedback, changes brought about by capacity development interventions, etc., depending on the type of intervention and guided by the objectives as per [monitoring policy](#) (track performance, analyze evidence, report on performance and lessons)

The project focussed on the consolidation of existing activities during the reporting period. During this period, successful activities and those that have shown triggers of potential impacts were consolidated to strengthen these before the project culminates during the next reporting period. In the six landscapes, the States had started some promising livelihood and conservation activities, which were strengthened, and new activities were avoided during the reporting period.

The project facilitated enhanced cross-learning and sharing between the landscapes and states: Some emerging results across states and landscapes were shared through exposure visits and cross-learning visits within the project landscapes among project teams, practitioners, policymakers and community members. This will further be consolidated through the knowledge material emanating from best practices across project landscapes.

The project also focussed on refining, value-addition and marketing of livelihood products. Promising nature-based products like ecotourism destinations, handloom, sheep and yak wool products, handicrafts, medicinal plants, traditional papers, horticultural produce etc. were promoted by the project across landscapes.

Continued engagements with institutions such as Biodiversity Boards/Council, Biodiversity Management Committees, panchayats have ensured improved awareness of conservation and ensured imbibing of several project activities at the village level itself. The village-level institutions, especially the trained nature guides, para-taxonomists, and youth volunteers continue to improve the surveillance system in context of human-wildlife conflicts and illegal wildlife trade.

2. Progress Review

a) Key results achieved

Highlight concrete results achieved/underachieved in the reported period, including progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment in the reporting period. If applicable, highlight achievements in digitalization and innovation. What implementation issues were highlighted

in the previous reporting period, and how were they managed?

- The project is poised to **achieve the overall targets envisaged** and, in some cases, overachieve the targets. As the project is nearing its conclusion, the project activities during the reporting period have **focused on institutionalisation and sustainability** of ongoing and past activities by **forging convergences and enabling upscaling** through host departments, other government line departments, and community-based organisations.

- **Technological interventions to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts** across project landscapes were piloted, continued monitoring of, and upscaled such as the use of **organic waste charring machines** to manage organic waste (piloted in Ladakh, replicated and upscaled in Sikkim), **ANIDERS** to reduce human-ungulates conflicts in agricultural fields through Forest/Wildlife Departments and/or other line departments/institutions.
- **Enhancement of capacities of frontline staff and community** members has been key to achieving project's various outcomes. The project's work on **institution building and their capacity enhancement** was furthered in the reporting period with Biodiversity Management Committees, panchayats, wildlife volunteers (Wildlife thopas in Ladakh, Himal rakshaks in Sikkim, Wildlife volunteer protection force in Uttarakhand), officials from Forest/Wildlife Departments.
- The project further supported **livelihood diversification and enhancement** through skill enhancement and material upgradations and forging of market linkages (eco-tourism, handicrafts and handlooms-based value chains, off-farm produce) to facilitate livelihoods that are aligned with habitat improvement and wildlife conservation in project landscapes. Several of these value chains are now being spearheaded by women from village communities and contributes towards augmenting gender equality in project landscapes.
- Improved **management of habitats** was supported in project landscapes through declaration and management of Biodiversity Heritage Sites, Medicinal Plants Conservation and Development Areas, and promotion of rotational grazing, restoration, and plantation in the landscapes.
- The project continued its efforts towards **documentation and knowledge dissemination** of biodiversity and related traditional knowledge systems. The first effort in Ladakh to document the butterfly diversity of Changthang, bioresource exhibition to document traditional ecological knowledge in Ladakh, celebration of environment-related days contributed to increased awareness for conservation in project landscapes.

b) Output progress

Progress reported against each output. Link to the last report submitted, and please mention the status of previously delayed outputs.

Output statement	Baselines Value type	Indicators	Annual Target	End of the project target	Status: On-track/ off-track / complete	Means of verifications and comment to substantiate the selected response
Output 1.1 Landscape level management	Baseline: Changthang WLS (22)	Indicator 1.1 Improved management effectiveness of protected		Target: Average increase by at least 30 points in METT from	On-track	The end-term assessment of METT score will be undertaken in

ent strategies that integrate biodiversity, ecosystem services, climate mitigation, sustainable community resource use and socio-economic considerations are developed, discussed with stakeholders and supported. Output 1.2 Site specific participatory management plans for Protected Areas, and other Key Biodiversity Areas, including High Conservation Value Forests, Biodiversity Heritage Sites and biological corridors, and sustainabl	Govind Pasu WLS (25) Gangotri NP (35) Khangchenjunga NP (29) Seichu Tuan WLS (13) Shingba Rhododendron WLS (16)	areas and biological rich areas in alpine and sub-alpine landscape		current PAs baselines		the subsequent reporting period. However, during the mid-term assessment carried out in 2021-2022, an increase in METT scores was observed across all the project landscapes. The increase was attributed to a combination of improved institutional and frontline staff capacities through training and capacity building on ecosystem restoration, protected area management, species monitoring, mitigating human-wildlife conflict and illegal trade in wildlife. The updated management plans have been based upon data and research undertaken throughout the project. Community participation
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e natural resource use areas designed and tested under community governance, management and enforcement regimes. Output 1.3 Alpine meadows and sub-alpine forest restoration plans are developed and introduced to local communities to improve biological connectivity and habitat productivity. Output 1.4 Biodiversity participatory monitoring for Snow leopard and associated species is developed , tested						has been a key component leading to the increase of METT scores. Community governance institutions like Eco Development Committees have been empowered to work on issues like waste management and management of trails inside protected areas. They are also mobilizing resources by collecting user fees from visitors. The factors contributing to this increase include increase in community conservation awareness, frontline staff trainings, increase in budgetary allocations, human-wildlife conflict mitigation, improved participation of communities, improved surveillance, improved communication , etc.
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and adopted. Output 1.5 Lessons learned on biodiversity and multiple use landscape management approaches are developed. Output 1.6 Capacity development for key government staff and community members for long-term effective conservation of biodiversity developed and implemented.						The METT scores observed in the last assessment carried out between December 2021 and April 2022 were as under: - Changt hang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary: 22 to 61 (increase by 39 points) - Seichu Tuan Wildlife Sanctuary: 13 to 60 (increase by 47 points) - Govind National Park & Wildlife Sanctuary: 25 to 55 (increase by 30 points) - Gangot ri National Park: 35 to 64 (increase by 29 points) - Khangc hendzonga National Park and Biosphere Reserve: 29 to 69 (increase by 40 points) - Shingb a Rhododendron Wildlife Sanctuary: 16 to 60 (increase by 44 points)
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						METTScore: (http://essenceofhimal.com/secure.mis/viewmett.php) During this reporting period, continued focus on the project on capacity building of frontline staff, volunteer network, public communication in and around PAs, continued participation and cooperation of communities in conservation across all the six project landscapes. These have been detailed indicator-wise subsequently in this section. One such example during this period that will contribute to improved management of PAs was the first attempt at systematic documentation of butterfly diversity in Changthang landscape of Ladakh. A 20-
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						day butterfly survey of eastern Ladakh was conducted during August-September 2023 by team members of GoI-UNDP-GEF SECURE Himalaya Project, Ladakh. The Visual Encounter Survey was carried out in varied habitats and altitudes, to maximize the chance of spotting butterfly species within the surveyed locations in two phases during August-September 2023. A total of 39 species were recorded during the survey with photographic evidence, including discovery of an unreported species from the region (1.1A)
	Baseline: Limited institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring	Indicator 1.2 Improved institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring of		Target: Increase of institutional capacity as measured by a 50% increase in UNDP Capacity	On-track	Capacity enhancement of frontline staff, institutions: The project continued to

	of multiple use landscapes. UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline score of 18	multiuse landscape level plans as measured by UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard		Development Scorecard baseline value		enhance capacities of frontline staff and various institutions involved in wildlife and environmental conservation across the project landscapes. The village-level institutions of Biodiversity Management Committees are critical in this respect, especially to improve micro-level capacities and management. In Ladakh, the project in collaboration with Ladakh Biodiversity Council conducted an exposure visit of the Biodiversity Management Committees of the Changthang landscape to the State of Goa to learn from the best practices of Goa State Biodiversity Board (GSBB) and the Biodiversity Management
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						Committees (BMC) regarding functioning of Biodiversity Management Committees, preparation of good quality Peoples' Biodiversity Registers, management of Biodiversity Heritage Sites and implementation of Access and Benefit Sharing, among others. 3 BMC Secretaries, 3 BMC Chairpersons and 1 BMC Member participated in the said exposure visit. (4 male, 3 female) (1.2A). In Uttarakhand, various capacity Building Training Programs have been conducted for 29 Biodiversity Management committees of the landscape by the officials and expert of State Biodiversity Board. The 203 members
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						(Female 58) of BMCs have been participated in these capacity Building Training programs and developed knowledge products like PBRs, BCPs and action plans of their respective villages. This has led the BMCs to plan efficiently about natural resource management, protection, and conservation. Other knowledge products have also been developed for long term awareness generation among the communities 1.2B In Himachal Pradesh, training session(s) were organized for Panchayati Raj Institutions to facilitate mainstreaming conservation in development activities at local level. (Total participation 9;
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					M= 4, F= 5) 1.2C For the frontline staff of Forest/Wildlif e Departments, in Himachal Pradesh, a DGCA (Director General of Civil Aviation) certified drone pilot training course was organized for a total number of 10 (all male) Forest officials in collaboration with Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi and State Government in the month of March 2023. The course comprised of 2 days theory and 3 days practical field training. The trained staff are now DGCA certified drone pilots and have 10 years license of drone flying as per drone guidelines 20211.2D. In context of mitigating
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						human-wildlife conflicts in the project landscapes, in Himachal Pradesh, 3 short term training courses was organized for forest staff at H.P. Forest Academy, Sundernagar in the month of March 2023 on topics “Training on legal procedures for wildlife crime”, “Training of Forest staff for scientific documentation of wildlife data” and “Training on Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) in high altitude range lands (Causes and management)” in which a total number of 83 no’s of forest staff (4 Female and 79 male) were trained on the above mentioned aspects 1.2E Further, the project in collaboration with Wildlife Crime Control Bureau notified a high-level inter-agency
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						coordination committee by Himachal Pradesh Government at State Level to improve the interagency coordination for better coordinated efforts to tackle the important issues of wildlife crime and illegal trade in wildlife. The committee comprised of members from police, ITBP, Army, Airport authority, Railways, Postal Department, Enforcement etc. First High-Level Interagency Coordination Committee meeting held to control wildlife crime, poaching and illicit wildlife trafficking in Himachal Pradesh organized under the project in July 2023 1.2F In Uttarakhand, a one-day training program was organized on
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						combating human wildlife conflict in Govind National Park. The main objective of the training was to develop knowledge on human wildlife conflict and the capacity building of Rapid Response Team on keeping equipment and proper maintenance etc. In the workshop More than 30 participants, including the forest officer and front-line staff of Rupin, Supin, and Sankri, were participated. The activity will also augment the METT scores of the Protected Area 1.2G
	Baseline: Approximately 700,000 ha of alpine meadows under unsustainable grazing with average 75 livestock units/km²	Indicator 1.3 Reduced pressure and prevented degradation of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forests		Target: Reduced grazing pressure on 700,000 ha of alpine meadows by at least 20% (from 75 to 60 livestock units/km²) and prevented	On-track. However, as observed in the mid-term review, reduction in livestock numbers across the	The project has been engaging with various stakeholders to reduce pressure on the rangelands within the project landscapes. To reduce the

	and forests around villages lack sustainable management arrangements			degradation in around 10,000 ha of sub-alpine forest under community-based management resulting in projected 0.46-0.50 and 0.31-0.36 m tCO ₂ /30-year period sequestered and avoided respectively.	landscape s has been observed. This is a result of emigration and transitioning livelihood choices of the communities.	dependence of extractive biomass, rotational grazing model were developed in highly pressurized grazing areas in Lahaul-Pangi by fencing the affected areas and through community sensitization of local communities. (villages Covered: Chasak Bhatori, Hudan Bhatori (Pangi) and Tindi (Lahaul); area covered: 20 ha.) 1.3A A community fodder bank has been established through site development of wasteland by plantation of fodder species in Dharwas, Pangi spanning 5 ha. (1.3B) In Uttarakhand , approximately 90 ha of alpine areas are being restored by removing invasive species from Gidara Bugyal
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						(1.3C) The Van Panchayat of Bhangeli had also passed the resolution to practice rotational grazing in this alpine area. This has led to a reduction in the grazing pressure in this alpine zone. (1.3D)
	Baseline: Approximately 40,000 ha of alpine pastures and 2,000 ha of sub-alpine forests under continued degradation through overuse	Indicator 1.4 Extent of degraded alpine pastures/range lands and sub-alpine forests under sustainable management regimes		Target: 40,000 hectares alpine pastures and 2,000 hectares sub-alpine forests under sustainable regeneration regimes resulting in projected 0.16 - 0.18 and 0.42 – 0.05 m tCO₂ /30-year period sequestered and avoided respectively.	On-track	Improper waste management has been observed as a major threat across project landscapes in context of degradation of habitats and wildlife-dog conflicts. In Sikkim, interventions for managing free ranging dogs are underway. The Forest Department has adopted a multi-stakeholder approach to counter the dog problem supported by the project. Food waste disposal is one of the key factors that has led to an explosion in dog

					populations in the high-altitude areas and to manage this problem, organic waste converters have been piloted in army camps. The Chief Secretary of Sikkim has also sent out letters to all military and paramilitary camps for strictly following sustainable waste management protocols 1.4A Further, a state level workshop was also organised with multiple stakeholders from the high altitude areas on solid waste management to come up with key action points 1.4B Following these action points. 2 organic waste converters were installed by Border Roads Organisation in two camps at Manul and Tamze as a result of a
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						successful pilot conducted by SECURE Himalaya. Solid waste management initiatives that were piloted in the trekking trail of Khangchendzonga National Park has been scaled up the Yuksam Gram Panchayat under the Swachh Bharat Mission programme to cover the entire village cluster. The waste from the national park is also now being managed at the Resource Recovery Center by the Panchayats 1.4C In the same context, in Ladakh, the Chumathang hot spring area (11 Ha) was declared as a litter-free through a consultative process involving multiple stakeholders and offices – Rural Development Department, Ladakh Pollution
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						Control Committee, Tourism Department, and local community members. Under the Chumathang Hotspring Waste Management Strategy developed by the Project, all tourists accessing this biodiversity site will now have to carry their waste back with them. Through this intervention, the Rural Development Department has started a waste collection service which was facilitated by a waste segregation workshop 1.4D Further, the project participated in the Himalayan Clean-up Drive organized by several Civil Society Organisations and line departments active in Ladakh (WWF, GoI-UNDP-
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					GEF SECURE Himalaya, Ladakh Pollution Control Committee, Department of Forest, Ecology & Environment, University of Ladakh, Snow Leopard Conservancy – India Trust, Wildlife Conservation and Birds Club Ladakh, SAVE Changthang). The drive was organized in the last week of May 2023, where the CSOs led clean-up of Sindhu ghat and Shey fish pond area. The waste was segregated to understand the source of the waste, including the brands from where the waste emanated that were found pervasive in the landscape 1.4E Preventing land degradation through afforestation/ plantation
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						was carried out in Uttarakhand, where a total of 2000 saplings of Walnut plant were provided to the local farmers of Gangotri Landscape for Plantation in their field. This has brought approximately 200 ha of area under sustainable natural resource management regime by planting walnut in degraded private land (1.4F). In Sikkim, soil moisture conservation activities were conducted in North Sikkim by the Forest and Environment Department to cover 35 Ha of area. Plantation activities were also undertaken in key areas 1.4G
	Baseline: High Conservation value forests lack proper	Indicator 1.5 Area of high conservation forests under improved management		Target (a) Reduced direct pressure on at least 60,000 ha covering at	On-track	Under the project, various areas of high-conservation importance have been

	manageme nt regimes			least 18 newly designated and managed key biodiversity areas, including 30,000 ha of HCVEs to ensure connectivity and species conservation resulting in projected avoided 1.38-1.47 m tCO₂ over 30-year period (b) Reduced direct pressure on at least 20,000 ha of moist and dry alpine areas and sub-alpine forests managed as Biodiversity Heritage Sites¹¹ resulting in projected avoided 0.46 – 0.49 m tCO₂ over 30-year period.		designated through various instruments such as Biodiversity Heritage Sites, Medicinal Plants Conservation and Development Areas, and management plans developed. In Ladakh, the community members, Biodiversity Management Committee, the panchayat of Chumathang village, along with the project resolved to declare Yaya Tso as Ladakh's first Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS) under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. The resolution was signed on 17th January 2023 after multiple rounds of consultations between the village stakeholders and the project to declare the high-altitude lake and its catchment as a Biodiversity
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						Heritage Site. Further, the project will facilitate the official notification of the BHS after taking this application up with the Ladakh Biodiversity Council. SECURE Himalaya has also proposed to subsequently develop a management plan for the BHS and pilot interventions to support conservation of this lake. The proposed Yaya Tso BHS will have an approximate area of 60 sq. km., which will also include the lake's watershed 1.5A Further, in the same landscape, multiple sites within the potential areas of Wari La and Taglang La identified for notification of Medicinal Plant Conservation and Development Areas (MPCDAs).
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						The sites identified were submitted to the concerned authority for final selection of the site to be notified. A team comprising of SECURE Himalaya staff, forest dept. staff and experts conducted a field visit to finalize one site of 200 Ha each amongst the proposed sites at Warila and Taglangla. Draft Project Proposals were prepared for both the areas to facilitate resource mobilization. The two sites are also proposed to be notified as BHSs. from the National Medicinal Plant Board 1.5B Across the project landscapes in Uttarakhand, comprehensive management plan of Action has been developed for two sites in Gangotri Landscape
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						and one site in Pithoragarh landscape have been proposed for declaring these as BHSSs . The primary assessment of the proposed sites have been conducted and reports are submitted for further action of the state Govt. This initiative shall bring approximately 600 ha area under sustainable Natural resource management 1.5B In Himachal Pradesh , the management plan for Chandertal Wetland has been approved by the State Wetland Authority and will further be submitted to MoEFCC for approval and securing the proposed grant/funding 1.5D
Output 2.1	Baseline: 0 (Currently	Indicator 2.1: Extent under		Target: At least 10,000	On-track	The project has

Participatory community-based village level micro plans developed for enhancing and diversifying livelihoods and improving natural resources management. Output 2.2 Pilot projects on sustainable community based natural resources management, and sustainable livelihood activities are supported. Output 2.3 New and enhanced value chain products and services providing ecologically sustainable	sustainable land management natural resources practices at the village level are absent or limited)	sustainable natural resources management practices		ha under sustainable natural resources management practices		undertaken activities to promote sustainable management practices across the landscapes. In Himachal Pradesh, assessment of economic valuation of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BDES) is underway. The assessment is being done for pilot sites Chandratal Wetland, Miyar Valley of Lahaul landscape and Seichu Tuan Wildlife sanctuary of Pangi Landscape. The interim report submitted for all pilot sites. Final report is awaited 2.1A In Uttarakhand, to provide climate resilience strengthen by facilitating the accurate weather information to the farmers 9 Automated weather station
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e livelihood are developed and implemented by local communities.					have been installed in Gangotri-Govind landscape. The activity has been carried in convergence of JSB project of UNDP. Total of 9 weather stations have been installed in the landscape. 2.1B To reduce dependency of communities on extractive biomass, in Himachal Pradesh under the Smart School Initiative to reduce fuelwood dependency, 26 Solar water heaters were procured and installed in schools 2.1C In Govind Landscape of Uttarakhand, 100 HHs (Women) have been provided the Electric cooking equipment for reducing the fuel wood consumption in the area. As per the estimate of
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						from HHs have resulted in 400 Kg of fuel wood consumption every day which is 146000 Kg of fuelwood annually. This biomass saving has been left in forest every year which helps in regeneration process of area 2.1D
	Baseline: Baseline to be established in YR1 during village micro-planning	Indicator 2.2. Average percentage increase in community incomes from sustainable livelihood, natural resource management and business activities (calculated for each community)		Target: 30% increase in average incomes from sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management and business activities (At least 40% of beneficiaries are women)	On-track	The project has worked across all its landscapes with community members and the Administration/ Government and entrepreneurs to augment communities' incomes by promoting sustainable livelihoods. In Ladakh , the project has been promoting community-led, community-facing, responsible eco-tourism in Rong valley of the Changthang landscape. Critically, to

						forge market linkages, marketing media content creation was accomplished (set of two 5 min promotional videos, 10 short-video ‘reels’, 30 stills developed). The project forged market linkages with tour operators, travel agencies, and high-end hotels in Leh. Four properties/agencies are now carrying communication s materials and offering itineraries developed by the project – Jade House, Dolkhar Resort, Hotel Indus Valley, and Lena Ladakh. Through these collaborations, project is ensuring flow of tourists to these three villages. The project has also set up a heritage museum in Khatpu that hosts a mini-nature
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						interpretation centre, old cultural artefacts, etc. During the summer tourist season, the project facilitated 6 group bookings for Rong Valley from our partner agencies/ hotels in Leh. The groups engaged in the curated itineraries developed by the project – including culinary, adventure, and wildlife experiences. Responsible high-end tourists from different parts of the world including Italy, Austria, South Korea, Thailand and India were taken to Rong Valley for day activities and or night stays. A total of INR 41,500 was made from these bookings within the aforementioned period, all of which have gone to the community
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					members. Additionally, homestay equipment for 12 households (5 in Tarchit, 5 in Himya and 2 in Khatpu) were distributed and installed 2.2A Further, within the same landscape, the Project has been supporting the Administration of UT Ladakh in setting up the first Dark Sky Reserve of the country in Hanle village cluster over an area of 1073 sq. km. with twin objectives of (1) diversifying and improving livelihoods of local communities, (2) conservation of crepuscular wildlife by reduction of light pollution in the Reserve. Through co-financing, 25 community telescopes have been distributed to local community members (19 females, 6
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					males) and training provided to these community members Light management Plan developed and being implemented to mitigate light pollution 2.2C The project also promoted nature guide training in Himachal Pradesh where 3 nature guides trained under the project have received tourist bookings for nature activities like camping, hiking, biodiversity walk, etc. in the identified and selected treks and trails, resulting in an additional Rs. 15,000 earned in one month. 15 Home stays under the overall initiative have
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						generated income of Rs.5,71,000 during this ongoing tourism season 2.2C In Uttarakhand, a three-days refresher Nature Guide training program for youths was conducted. In the training a total of 10 youths participated. These youths are associated with OFPO formed for ecotourism and generating livelihood 2.2D In Sikkim, a one day workshop on sustainable birding in Sikkim was organised for the first time in the State by the Forest & Environment Department on July 5, 2023 with support of the project. The main participants at the workshop
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						were birders, bird guides, NGOs, eco-development committees, joint forest management committees, birding companies and conservationists along with Forest Department officials. There was special focus for participation from SECURE Himalaya project villages, such as Lachen, Yuksam, Dzongu, etc. The main objectives of the birding workshop was to assess the status of prevalent birding practices and steps needed to graduate to ethical birding; to ascertain the status of endangered birds and critical habitats; to
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					raise awareness about bird conservation and encourage participants to actively contribute to habitat preservation efforts; and to foster a sense of community among participants, enabling the exchange of experiences, knowledge and best practices. Various topics were covered by the guest speakers, local experts, ornithologists and conservationists 2.2E In Sikkim, an MoU with the State Rural Livelihood Mission for establishment of a fulfillment center was signed in the previous quarter. Following this the funds have been transferred to
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						the agency for setting up the center to be run by SHG members in a business model, sustainably with the profit from marketing of the SHG products, both locally and online 2.2F Similarly, in Uttarakhand, an office cum retail outlet have been supported to OFPO for conducting business and handling day to day business activities of Handloom & Handicraft, Ecotourism. The retail outlet had played a crucial role in business growth for 207 shareholder HHs in cooperative. Post inauguration of this facility the cooperative has recorded Rs. 4.00 Lakhs+ business in last one year. This business enhancement of community resulted in
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						dependency reduction of community on Natural resource and increase the income of the members 2.2G Further, an OFPO have been formed for in Govind area of Gangotri-Govind Landscape as an initiative for the members to conduct sustainable ecotourism activities in the landscape. Currently 47 shareholders are associated with this Organization and conducting home stay business along with Nature Guiding and adventure tourism. The activity has resulted in reducing the unorganized tourism and helping in conservation of Kedarkantha and Harkidoon alpine areas conservation with income enhancement opportunity to the community 2.2H
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	Baseline: 0 (currently training at the community level is limited and sector specific.) and limited effort at comprehensive training that integrates the multiple dimensions of managing resources across the different sectors and for multiple use.	Indicator 2.3. Number of community members trained, adopting community-based agricultural, agro-pastoral, natural resource management and livelihood activities		Targets: At least 2,500 community members trained and adopting community-based sustainable resource use, agro-pastoral, agricultural and other sustainable livelihood activities and receiving detectable conservation and livelihood benefits	On-track	The project has worked on various value-chains that have enabled communities adopt community-based sustainable resource use, agro-pastoral, and agricultural practices, along with improving and diversifying livelihood options. Through the larger handicrafts and handlooms activities undertaken, the project worked on sheep and yak wool value chain in the Rupshu area of Ladakh. The capacities of community members were augmented across various aspects of sheep and yak wool value chain,
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						including introducing new designs and processes, usage of newly introduced technologies and equipment, and equipping the local communities with knowledge and capacities around marketing etc. Various training was provided to 102 beneficiaries to improve the pre-processes involved in Sheep and Yak wool value chain. Alongside, exposure visits were conducted so that the community understands the market of indigenous wool across the country. At the Desi Oon Festival, community members actively
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						engaged in a meeting with the Central Wool Board during the Buyer-Seller meet. The purpose of this meeting was to deliberate on effective strategies for incentivizing shepherds and enhancing support for their produce. The project has enabled improvement in the value of these fibres, for example, value of sheep wool from Rs. 250/kg for raw wool to Rs. 12,000/kg for naturally dyed yarn produced 2.3A Similarly, in Lahaul landscape of Himachal Pradesh, consultations held with women artisans in Lahaul and initial assessment done for providing
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						trainings to SHGs and formation of Co-operatives. Advanced trainings on weaving and knitting, branding, packaging and marketing of products were provided to 163 Women in Lahaul and Pangi. Packaging material also provided to 2 village organizations under handlooms value addition. Craft Bazar was organized and 6 women participated with a total sale of Rs.30,000 2.3B In Sikkim, Nettle based products were finalised by a design firm through a market study. 4 nettle producer groups have been formed in the target villages for Dzongu.
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						Based on the products identified, a 45 days training from 6th Sept 2023 to 16th October on product making was conducted for 24 trainee women at Lingdem, Dzongu, North Sikkim. The training also focused on weaving in Lepcha stories, nature related motifs, etc. into the design. Simultaneously, harvesting of nettle from the wild was also done by the community in the month of December to generate a raw material base for the further processing. This shall be made into nettle yarn in the coming months using the machines installed in the previous year 2.3C
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						In addition to these, several other farm-based initiatives have also been piloted across several project sites. In Ladakh, to promote cultivation of oyster mushroom across three villages of Rong valley – Tarchit, Khartpu, and Himya – the project distributed 25 polyhouse units and mushroom spawn amongst 37 beneficiaries. Alongside, training was also provided on installation of the units in Tarchit. Further, a second and third round of hands-on trainings were held in these villages about cultivation of mushrooms, management of units, and harvesting of produces 2.3D In Himachal Pradesh, a three-days basic training
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						in food production including bakery for self-help groups were imparted to 26 women in Pangi 2.3E Additionally, packaging and branding support was also provided to SHGs under sea buck thorn value chain development 2.3E In Gangotri-Govind Landscape of Uttarakhand, 60 households have been supported beekeeping Initiative. The training has been provided and Bee Boxes distributed. This have resulted in providing the alternative opportunity of livelihood generation. In the first year of this initiative the farmers have not produce much amount of Honey, but they had saved Rs. 1.50 Lakhs by not taking the rented boxes for pollination of
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						apple from contractor <u>2.3G</u> Further, a 4-day exposure visit have been organized for 8 male homestay owners from Gangotri landscape to Rishikesh where a senior master chef has delivered the training about millet-based food preparation and presentation. The beneficiary has also learnt about hygiene maintenance in the kitchen. The exposure was conducted in convergence with Agriculture department Uttarkashi under ATMA project. This activity has resulted in Millet consumption in home stays and promotion of traditional crops which is crucial or Human wildlife conflict mitigation and organic farming
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					promotion 2.3H Additionally, the project also undertaken various other activities in context of sustainable resource use such as: in Uttarakhand, a two-day Training cum capacity building training program organized for Gangotri SECURE Bahuudeshiya Swayat Sahkarita (OFPO) Executive members on Business development and marketing in the month of January 2023. In the training program 21 members have been participated (Female 8 Male 13). The training imparted a skills which have resulted in business expansion of OFPO and provided enhanced income to the members of
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						the Organization. The Members have also sensitized towards enhancing the pasture management by adopting the rotational grazing practices for associated members. The third day of Extended Training was focused on institution development and Natural resources management. The members of OFPO taken the pledge to reduce the Natural resource exploitation reduction in the landscape and support the forest department in participatory management 2.31 Further, a 7-day design diversification training has been organised for 34 female artisans in Dunda village. The training was focused on quality improvement
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						and new design introduction to the artisans. During the training the female artisans have learnt 10 new designs with same material and available machinery. Post training the OFPO have also placed the order for newly designed products to procure and display for sell in the OFPO outlet 2.3J In Himachal Pradesh, a seven days exposure cum learning visit to Ladakh was organized for the community members of Lahaul-Pangi landscape in the month of March from 13-20 March 2023 in which 4 community members participated (1 male, 3 female) to learn various conservation and livelihood best practices 2.3K In Sikkim, 13 members from
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						Yuksam village participated at a paper-making workshop to Kumarappa National Handmade Paper Institute, Jaipur in September 2023. This activity is being undertaken by the Gram Panchayat in collaboration with Khangchendzonga Conservation Committee (KCC). KCC has been handholding the Gram Panchayat for setting up the paper recycling enterprise in the village as part of their zero-waste management initiative 2.3L
Output 3.1 Wildlife Agencies enforcement supported through intelligence have information on hotspots	Baseline: 0 (There is no coordinated program for community participation in surveillance and monitoring of wildlife crime)	Indicator 3.1. Number of community members actively volunteering in security monitoring and surveillance		Target: 200 community members actively engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions (At least 20% women) to serve as	On-track	The project has engaged with the community members to improve surveillance to deter illegal wildlife trade and to monitor human-wildlife conflict across several project

and pathways of illegal trade to organize targeted operations against wildlife crime. Output 3.2 Law enforcement agencies are provided with technical support and training to increase capacity for combating wildlife crime. Output 3.3 Community based surveillance, monitoring and wildlife crime and conflict prevention system developed and tested. Output 3.4 Mechanisms for partnerships on inter-state				deterrent to wildlife crime		landscapes. In Ladakh, an exposure visit for wildlife <i>thopas</i> or friends of wildlife was organized in September 2023 (volunteer group constituted by project under the Wildlife Protection Department). 14 out of 20 <i>thopas</i> from various villages of Changthang participated, where they were travelled to various parts of Ladakh (Shey – birding, Ulley – snow leopards, Tar – flora of region, Rong valley). Additionally, <i>thopas</i> have also been provided equipment and books related to wildlife under the project 3.1A In Uttarakhand, Long Range Patrolling and Short Range patrolling have been conducted in remote areas of Gangotri
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and transboundary cooperation for tackling wildlife crime and improving species conservation in Himalayan ecosystem are developed and implemented.						National Park of Gangotri Landscape. The activity was conducted in participatory method by involving local communities. The aim of the exercise is to keep monitoring wildlife activities and extract the data from the camera traps. A total of 579 records of snow leopards, Brown bear, Black bear, Red fox etc. spotting have been collected which have shared with CWLW and CF for further analysis and policy formulation for strengthening the conservation of wildlife 3.1B Further in the State, a village volunteer protection force has been supported with Multipurpose trekking pole to petrol in their respective areas and keep watch on wildlife crime and potential
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					HWC along with forest fire. A total of 35 VVPF members (all male) have been supported through this activity. They have also been provided a long day specialized training in incident reporting and action taking during the incident. This is contributing the project in achieving the target of wildlife crime control and HWC awareness generation among the communities 3.1C A cyber unit for combating internet – linked wildlife crime has been developed under the project at WCCB. Cyber-crime and cyber investigation are a highly specialised area wherein both investigators
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					and cybercriminals use sophisticated tools, technology, soft wares, hard wares, and internet. This is a highly dynamic crime which requires a dedicated team of techies to keep a track of the digital footprints of the criminals. India has the biggest number of cell phone users and known to be the highest user of internet data. With the growing penetration of internet, e-commerce & social media platforms, instances of wildlife cyber-crimes have exponentially increased. Privacy and anonymity provided by digital platforms have attracted the wildlife cyber criminals to exploit cyber
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					space for illegal wildlife trade. Virtual Private Networks (VPNs), Proxy Servers, TOR (the Onion Router), Darknet, Mobile Payment Services, Cryptocurrencies have helped the wildlife criminals to deal in wildlife contrabands on Cyberspace by being anonymous on the one hand and on the other hand have posed serious challenge to law enforcement to identify and bring the invisible traffickers to book. This development will help Wildlife Crime Control Bureau to develop capacity for scientific and professional investigation into organised
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						crimes and to assist the State, UT Governments and different law enforcement agencies. 3.1D
	Baseline: 0 (a number of trans-boundary plans exists, but coordination is limited)	Indicator 3.2. Number of international agreements for enhancing trans-boundary cooperation between China, Nepal, Bhutan and India		Target: At least 3 trans-boundary agreements effective and collaborative implementation	On-track	The trans-boundary cooperation with neighboring countries is already being undertaken by the Government of India as this the subject matter of MoEFCC and other relevant ministries of Govt of India, for instance Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Home Affairs. Affirmative actions taken by India on trans-boundary cooperation with neighboring countries. Government of India approved the proposal of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for signing an MoU with the Government of

						Nepal on biodiversity conservation, with a view to strengthen and enhance the coordination and cooperation in the field of forests, wildlife, environment, biodiversity conservation and climate change, including restoration of corridors and interlinking areas and share knowledge and best practices, between the two countries. During the reporting period, India took up the Presidency of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The SCO includes 8 member States including China and Nepal, latter being a dialogue partner of SCO. India has identified Snow Leopard under theme of Biodiversity Conservation
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						in the context of flora and fauna. As a part of this theme, exchange of ideas, best practices and knowledge related to snow leopard conservation and management is being promoted among SCO member States. India as President of SCO is fostering cooperation of member States towards Snow Leopard conservation. With member countries including China and Nepal. On July 4, 2023, the New Delhi Declaration of The Council of Heads of State of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was adopted. The New Delhi Declaration stated “The Member States intend to further develop cooperation in the fields of
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						politics and security, trade, economy, finance and investment, cultural and humanitarian ties to build a peaceful, safe, prosperous and environment-friendly planet Earth, achieving harmonious coexistence of Man and nature. Further, The Member States, noting the importance of cooperation in the field of environmental protection, ecological security, and prevention of the negative consequences of climate change, development of specially protected nature reserves and eco-tourism, agreed to declare 2024 as the SCO Year of Environment.” (The New Delhi Declaration of the Council of Heads of State of Shanghai
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						Cooperation Organization may be referred to in Documents SCO (sectsco.org). As may be seen, India's consistent endeavors at multilateral and bilateral forums have demonstrated efforts for conservation of environment and biodiversity, including snow leopards and their habitats.
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	Baseline: Baseline will be developed in Year 1	Indicator 3.3. Annual Number of human-wildlife conflicts leading to livestock and crop losses and retaliatory killings of wildlife		Target: At least 50% decrease in HWCs	On-track, site-level	The project has been engaging in the project landscapes through various means to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts in the region. In Ladakh , 8 ANIDERS have been installed in Gya-Meru village cluster and Hanle village cluster to assess long-term efficacy of ANIDERS in mitigating human-wildlife conflicts in agricultural fields from blue sheep (bharal) and Tibetan wild-ass (kiang). During the agricultural season of 2023, 50-75% reduction in crop damage from blue sheep has been observed across two agricultural seasons in the Gya-Meru village cluster. This intervention will now be upscaled by the Department of Wildlife
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						Protection, UT Ladakh 3.3A In Himachal Pradesh, a wildlife information management system (WMIS) and a mobile app for reporting of human wildlife conflict cases, submitting compensation claims, wildlife sighting, occurrence and data collection, this will help improve wildlife management and mitigating human wildlife conflict. Further in the State, one Predator proof corral pen has been constructed under the project in Pangi landscape in consultation with the community to prevent livestock loss (3.3B) .
Output 4.1. Project implementation	Baseline: 0 (A number of areas where policy	Indicator 4.1: Number of policy and regulatory mechanisms		Target: 3 policy recommendations officially		

achievements inform policy and legislative changes for conservation of high range Himalayan areas.	reform is required exists)	for improved management of high Himalayan areas provisioned		approved and implemented		
Output 4.2. Communication and gender strategies and awareness campaigns to increase awareness on conservation, sustainable resource use and reduction of wildlife crime, and mainstream gender in promotion of community-based conservation developed and implemented at national, state and local Level.	Baseline: 0 (A few best practice publications etc., but the project will make efforts for additional project specific lessons to be documented)	Indicator 4.2: Number of project best practices used in development and implementation of other conservation initiatives		Target: 10 best practices documented, disseminated and up scaled in non-project areas	On-track	In Uttarakhand , under the project various initiatives have been undertaken for Habitat restoration, Biodiversity conservation, Livelihood enhancement, Illegal wildlife crime control and gender inclusion out of which 7 initiatives have been selected and information collated for Publishing the Booklet to replicate in other areas. The Booklet designed and inaugurated in wildlife week through Hon'ble Governor of Uttarakhand. The booklet is available for public access and replicate the same in other landscape through ongoing Govt. schemes 4.2A

Output 4.3 Percentage of participating households aware of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits						In Ladakh , an assessment study was carried out to ascertain the efficacy of piloting of ANIDERS to mitigate HWC; the results were shared with the Wildlife Department and will facilitate in upscaling of this intervention 4.2B
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	Baseline: Baseline to be established in Year 1 through microplanning process	Indicator 4.3: Percentage of participating households aware of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits		Target: 50% of participating households have good awareness of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits	On-track	To facilitate in documentation of bioresources and traditional ecological knowledge for developing the People's Biodiversity Register, the project organised a village-level Bioresource Exhibition-cum-competition for three villages in Changthang landscape of Ladakh (Tarchit, Khatpu, Himya) in collaboration with Biodiversity Management Committee of Hemya Panchayat. Around 100 villagers from the three villages participated, which was first such event organized by a Biodiversity Management Committee in Ladakh 4.3A The project developed a decentralized, village-level mini-nature
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					interpretation centres (NICs) alongside a heritage museum in Khatpu village of Rong valley. This has come up alongside the project's interventions in the region to promote responsible, high-end tourism, and features as one of the experiences for tourists 4.3B The Kalaktartar region in the Hanle village cluster of Ladakh is one of the last remaining habitats for the Tibetan gazelle (<i>Gua</i>) in India. To reduce the impact of tourist activities in the region, two signages were designed and installed, deterring the offroad movement of vehicles in the region and improve and conserve the habitat of Tibetan gazelle,
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					Tibetan wolf, Tibetan wild ass, among others, along with the rangelands accessed by the local community for livestock grazing 4.3C To facilitate in improving awareness of communities from the project landscapes, the project celebrates environmentally important days across the project landscapes: In Ladakh: (1) World Wetlands Day was celebrated along with Department of Wildlife Protection and Wetland Authority of Union Territory of Ladakh with students from Changthang. The celebrations were organised alongside a Winter Bridging Programme being organised by a
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						local youth group called SAVE Changthang. 70 students belonging from various villages of Changthang engaged in an early morning birding session, which was followed by a theoretical session orienting student on the importance of wetlands and its conservation, the linkages of wetlands with conservation of wild animals, climate change mitigation, water security, and the local cultures of Ladakh 4.3D. (2) Ozone Day Celebration: 10 students from SAVE Changthang student organization were taken for an early morning birding exercise in Shey Marshes followed by theoretical sessions on the importance of Ozone layer, climate change
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						issues and conservation 4.3E (3) Himalayan Bird Count and World Migratory Bird Day 2023: celebrated the World Migratory Bird Day 2023 and 2nd Himalayan Bird Count on 13th May 2023 with school children from Lamdon School, Moravian Mission School, and Mahabodhi School of Leh. The celebrations were jointly organised by SECURE Himalaya and Wildlife Conservation and Bids Club of Ladakh with support and participation from WWF, Nature Conservation Foundation, and Snow Leopard Conservancy – India Trust. More than 90 school children participated in a birding trip in and around marshes of
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						Chuchot and Sindhu Ghat where they learned sighting and identifying birds. 34 birds were observed and documented on eBird, a widely used citizen science platform to document birds 4.3F (4) The Ladakh Biodiversity Council and the GoI-UNDP-GEF SECURE Himalaya Project celebrated International Day for Biological Diversity 2023 on May 22nd at Chumathang Hot Spring. The celebration included a two-day cleanliness drive, a natural history tour, a meeting with stakeholders, an awareness programme and a waste segregation workshop. On May 21st and 22nd, 94 volunteers participated in a cleanliness drive along the
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						hot springs. The collected waste was segregated and transported to the nearest segregation unit with the help of the Rural Development Department. Dustbins for dry and wet waste and signages on "dos and don'ts," "no littering," and "about the hot spring" were also installed in the hot spring area. The Hon'ble Councillor of Kungyam also visited the village to interact with the villagers. On May 22nd, the IDB celebration began with a natural history tour of Chumathang led by the SECURE Himalaya team. Sixteen students from the 7th and 9th grades of the Higher Secondary School, Chumathang, participated in
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						the tour. The students observed 10 species of birds and 15 species of flora, mostly medicinal plants, within a 1 km² area. This initiative was a collaborative effort of the Ladakh Biodiversity Council and the GoI-UNDP-GEF SECURE Himalaya with the Hon'ble Councillor of Kungyam, Ladakh Pollution Control Committee, Department of Rural Development, Department of Tourism, and Border Roads Organisation. Further, the project also celebrated the International Day for Biological Diversity with Indian Army in Lukung, overseeing the Pangong Tso Lake, and involved documentary screenings and awareness talks for public
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						4.3G (5) SECURE Himalaya along with Indian Army, on occasion of International Day for Biological Diversity, showcased biodiversity of the Changthang region through photo- exhibition, documentary screenings, and awareness talks at Lukung Army Camp overseeing the Pangong Tso Lake 4.3H. (6) Snow Leopard Day: On the occasion of Snow Leopard Day on 23rd October, the project in collaboration with Department of Wildlife Protection, launched a multi-modal awareness campaign wherein FM radio messages and newspaper advertisement s to promote awareness for snow leopard conservation
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						were broadcasted/p ublished 4.3I In Himachal Pradesh, International Snow leopard Day celebrated in Lahaul Landscape with participation of 133 Women and school Children. Male-38 Female-95. Key activities involved quiz completion, school children rally and awareness activities 4.3J In Uttarakhand: (1) Wildlife Week celebration organized for awareness of local communities and stakeholders in this week celebration more than 200 people participated and learned about landscape conservation, About project and wildlife conservation 4.3K (2) The Mission LiFE
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						events have been organized in Gangotri-Govind landscape focusing on biodiversity conservation and habitat restoration. A total of 10 events have been organized in which more than 300 (50% women) community members and tourists made aware about the conservation efforts 4.3L

Data sources and references (can be prepared as an annex with details)

Means of verification will require evidence, links, reference, photos, transcripts from exit interviews, feedback surveys, call center reports, phone verification, etc. All methods and means used to collect and report on the results should be described, and links prepared for future reference, spot checking, and verification by independent teams when necessary. It also means that the same expectation will apply when third-party monitors are used.

If the data source involved meetings, then details of meeting participants and matters discussed and agreed actions should be documented as part of the evidence/data source.

3. Communications, visibility, and partnerships

Please provide URLs specific to this project (for example, project websites, social media sites, media coverage, etc.) as far as this is applicable. Note that some of these links would be the evidence and data sources for point no. 3 above.

On partnerships, record if new co-financing (cash contribution, parallel co-financing, or in-kind) has been generated as committed in the project (applies to Vertical Funds projects)

- India's first Dark Sky Reserve, conceptualized during preceding reporting periods saw on-ground incremental activity, including training of Astro-ambassadors in astro-tourism along with providing same number of community-telescopes (26 individuals). This initiative is being implemented through a collaboration between Administration of UT Ladakh (through Department of Wildlife Protection with support from SECURE Himalaya), Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bengaluru, and Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/indias-first-stargazing-site-for-tourists-ready-in-ladakh/articleshow/97898111.cms>, <https://www.undp.org/india/stories/starry-eyed-snow-leopards-0> (additional links of media articles shared as annexure).
- World Wetlands Day was celebrated in Ladakh by SECURE Himalaya in collaboration with Department of Wildlife Protection and SAVE Changthang (Youth group) on 2nd February at a winter-bridging programme for various students of Ladakh: select media links: https://twitter.com/DIPR_Leh/status/1623199350007697411, <https://twitter.com/GulistanLadakh/status/1623529765641789442>
- Yaya Tso (high-altitude lake situated at an altitude of 4800 metres amsl) was resolved to be declared as Ladakh's first Biodiversity Heritage Site. This was done in collaboration with Ladakh Biodiversity Council, Chumathang Biodiversity Management Committee, and Chumathang Panchayat: select media links: <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/yaya-tso-to-become-ladakh-s-first-biodiversity-heritage-site-11675183595974.html>, <https://ladakh.nic.in/yaya-tso-to-be-proposed-as-ladakhs-first-biodiversity-heritage-site/>
- Representatives from 4 Biodiversity Management Committees from Changthang landscape, Ladakh Biodiversity Council, and SECURE Himalaya participated in an exposure visit to Goa, organized with support from Goa State Biodiversity Board (GSBB), and met with senior representatives of GSBB and Biodiversity Management Committees from several rural regions of Goa: select media links: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/goa/ladakh-biodiversity-council-delegation-visits-canacona/articleshow/101678045.cms>, <https://twitter.com/goanewslink/status/1677676464173629441>, <https://www.thegoan.net/goa-news/ladakh-biodiversity-team-visits-key-canacona-sites/101209.html>.
- Himalayan Bird Count / World Migratory Bird Day: Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of UT Ladakh celebrated the second edition of Himalayan Bird Count with students from Ladakh: <https://www.dailyexcelsior.com/lq-ladakh-attends-himalayan-bird-count-world-migratory-bird-day-celebration/>, https://twitter.com/lq_ladakh/status/1657693309845016576
- Black-necked crane conservation and involvement of local youth of Changthang landscape: <https://www.undp.org/india/stories/song-wetlands-protecting-black-necked-cranes-ladakh-india>.
- The project celebrated the International Day for Biological Diversity with Indian Army in Lukung, overseeing the Pangong Tso Lake, and involved documentary screenings and awareness talks for public. This was done in conjunction with Government of India's Mission LiFE initiative: <https://indusdispatch.in/army-govt-civil-society-pledge-to-protect->

[environment-of-ladakh/](https://www.voiceofladakh.in/2023/05/army-ladakh-ut-joins-hands-on-intl-day-of-biodiversity/), <https://www.voiceofladakh.in/2023/05/army-ladakh-ut-joins-hands-on-intl-day-of-biodiversity/>.

- The project facilitated in devising of a multi-stakeholder waste management strategy at Chumathang hot springs with Tourism Department, Rural Development Department, Ladakh Pollution Control Committee, and Biodiversity Management Committee of Chumathang: <https://indusdispatch.in/mehboob-stresses-on-proper-management-cleanliness-of-chumathang-hot-springs/>.
- On the occasion of Snow Leopard Day on 23rd October, the project in collaboration with Department of Wildlife Protection, launched a multi-modal awareness campaign wherein FM radio messages and newspaper advertisements to promote awareness for snow leopard conservation were broadcasted/published: <https://epaper.10net.in/view/366/ladakh-edition>.
- Coverage in daily newspaper on the birding workshop conducted in Sikkim: <https://www.sikkimexpress.com/news-details/stakeholders-deliberate-on-way-forward-for-sustainable-birding-in-sikkim>
- Coverage in local media of the workshop on solid waste management in Sikkim: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=sjG2YZH28zk>
- Report on the RRC at Yuksam village in Sikkim: <https://sbmgramin.wordpress.com/2023/04/18/rrc-keeps-khangchendzongas-forests-spotless-litter-free/>
- Livelihood enhancement is a major opportunity for forest department through which the community participation can be mobilized in wildlife and its habit conservation. To achieve this goal the SECURE Himalaya Project and NMPB funded project of seabuckthorn are collaboratively working for establishment of NTFP based value chain development in the landscape. Under this initiative Rs. 1.20 crores are being spent on the entire value chain over a period of three years (Uttarakhand): [Sec3A](#)
- The promotion of ecotourism and home stay business in the landscape three MoUs have been developed with Make my trip, D K Travels and Home stays of India agencies. This shall provide the sustainable income for the beneficiaries of project in home stay business (Uttarakhand): [Sec3B](#)
- The awareness generation is a crucial activity to reach in larger masses. The local print media have been engaged in publishing articles, news and other form of information about project achievements, events and mass awareness news (Uttarakhand): [Sec3C](#)

4. Project risks and mitigation measures

Define key challenges and issues noted, whether new/recurrent/persistent. Describe new risks identified and propose ways to correct a course of action and agreed with responsible members to address these and the timelines. Describe if escalation is required for Project Board or other mechanisms

- Across all project landscapes, fund flow, especially in the context of a short working season in these locations remains a risk for efficacious implementation of project activities. Continuous dialogue between the Centre and states was facilitated to ease issued around fund flow.
- The community members involved in project activities are also involved in their other livelihood works and the time period for work is limited in the landscape. For village-based activities of project, the village community members are also engaged in other forms of, for instance the 'General Reserve Engineer Force (GREF)' of Border Roads Organisation. To

provide opportunities across the village strata, the scheduling of training workshops and consultative meetings was done in a manner to accommodate the schedules of these potential beneficiaries.

- *Out-migration remains a major feature of society in project landscapes, especially amongst the youth in several project landscapes, which may lead to potentially reaching out to only the community members living in the village. Meetings are regularly held with youth groups and participation from them is ensured in activities such as those related to illegal wildlife trade surveillance, those linked to value chains such as eco-tourism and wool fibres, etc.*
- *Several value chain activities such as seabuckthorn value development are a new forest produce-based livelihood initiative. The community presently does not have adequate capacities to carry out the activities on their own for the initial years. Therefore, for example in Uttarakhand, the Forest Department has engaged an agency to provide hand-holding support in marketing and promotion for the Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO).*
- *In Sikkim, the last quarter was greatly affected due to the Teesta disaster that impacted a large part of the landscape. Some of the areas in the project landscape remain cut off because the road reconstruction. This has delayed activities such as nettle-based livelihood, installation of stoves in the villages, as well as waste converters for the army camps considerably.*

Risk register must be attached as an annex to the report.

5. Lessons Learned

Document any lessons that will be applied to address challenges or improve the implementation pace. Outline any good practices, as applicable.

- *Army wet waste is speculated to be one of the major reasons for the explosive growth in the populations of free-ranging and feral dogs. Organic waste charring (OWC) machines to curb organic waste emanating from army encampments – based on the success of pilot by SECURE Himalaya in Ladakh, Sikkim recently replicated this, and OWC machines were installed by Border Roads Organisation in two camps. This is in addition to the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh directing procurement and installation of ~25 machines across armed forces camps in Ladakh. This intervention is an effective way to curb this issue across similar landscapes with cold temperatures.*
- *Multiple stakeholders are often involved in the management of any area of project landscape. Multi-stakeholder waste management interventions by the project across project landscapes have resulted in sustainable solutions to manage the waste in critical habitats for wildlife, involving institutions such as Biodiversity Management Committees, Rural Development Department, waste karamchaaris, etc.*
- *Many of the project landscapes are expansive and have limited presence of frontline staff. To alleviate this, and to involve local communities in conservation efforts, the project has engaged with youth members of the community across project landscapes to improve monitoring of wildlife and surveillance in context of illegal wildlife trade. This has been made*

possible through Wildlife Thopas in Ladakh, Himal Rakshaks in Sikkim, Village Volunteer Protection Force in Uttarakhand.

- Further, to involve youth in conservation efforts, citizen science education was promoted, for example, birding is being taken up en masse by the youth of Ladakh. Regular bird surveys are now part of the Wildlife Department's calendar. To facilitate documentation of the data generated through citizen science systematically, open-source platforms (eBird) for bird documentation was promoted and has now become the norm for hobby-birders and for systematic scientific surveys in Ladakh.*
- The project has amalgamated promoting astro-tourism with wildlife conservation in Hanle village cluster in Ladakh with the establishment of India's first Dark Sky Reserve. The concept of dark sky reserves has garnered high amounts of media and citizen curiosity and more such reserves are being developed in the country. Dovetailing wildlife conservation has led to a high number of people improving their awareness of conservation, and contributed to improved attitudes of local communities towards wildlife.*

6. Way Forward

Based on the above, following key issues which need to be addressed/prioritized for next reporting period

- The project is working in remote landscapes of the country characterized by challenging terrain, harsh weather and marginalized communities. To strengthen conservation mechanisms, the project is implementing a landscape-based approach by mainstreaming community participation in conservation, creating opportunities for alternative and augmenting existing livelihoods, and enhancing the capacities of managers and frontline staff in addressing the larger issue of illegal wildlife trade.*
- The project will continue to work towards the sustainability of the activities undertaken emanating from the ongoing development of Sustainability Strategy and Exit Plan (SSEP) through interfacing with host Forest/Wildlife Departments, other line departments, community-based organisations (CBOs), and civil society organisations (CSOs).*
- Further, to facilitate cross-learning and dissemination of best practices observed in the project, these are being formally documented and will be shared with relevant stakeholders during the upcoming reporting cycle.*

Priority actions for the project and other teams before the next reporting cycle.6

Issue/observation	Action to be taken	Responsible	Timeline

7. Annexures

Provide links to the sources of evidence (based on entries described in Q2 and 3)