



United Nations Development Programme

Project Document

Project title: Coastal Resilience Samoa	
Country: Samoa	Implementing Partner (GEF Executing Entity): Ministry of Natural Resource & Environment (MNRE)
Execution Modality: National Implementation Modality (NIM) with CO support	
Contributing Outcome (UNDAF/CPD, RPD, GPD): Sub-Regional Program Document (SRPD) for the Pacific Island Countries and Territories: <i>MCPD 2023 – 27 Outcome:</i> Planet - Output 1.3: Institutions and communities have improved capacities to protect and manage ocean and land ecosystems <i>Pacific UNSDCF 2023 - 27:</i> By 2027, people, communities and institutions are more empowered and resilient to face diverse shocks and stresses, especially related to climate variability impacts, and ecosystems and biodiversity are better protected, managed, and restored <i>Strategic Plan Outcome:</i> Resilience built to respond to systemic uncertainty and risk	
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Expected date of Mid-Term Review: August 22, 2027	Expected date of Terminal evaluation: May 22, 2029
Expected Operational Closure Date: May 22, 2030	Expected Financial Closure Date: November 22, 2030
Brief project description: Samoa is experiencing significant threats of ecosystem degradation and fragmentation due to unsustainable management, wide spread of Invasive Alien Species, and climate change impacts. Interactions of anthropogenic and climate threats creates the cycle of vulnerability that is reinforced as anthropogenic activities like unsustainable tourism and food production degrade natural ecosystems, reducing their capacity to mitigate climate impact. Thus, these sectors contribute to ecosystem degradation through deforestation, habitat destruction, unsustainable resource use, and pollution, which collectively threaten terrestrial and marine biodiversity, reduce ecosystem services, and undermine food security and livelihoods. The suggested project will ensure nature-positive development and reduce ecosystem degradation in Samoa by valuing nature and applying Nature-based Solutions (NbS) with specific application to food and tourism sectors. This Objective will be achieved through implementation of five project components that include (1) integration of nature values via Nature Capital Accounting	

(NCA) in key economic sectors through targeted economic, governance and financial interventions; (2) implementation landscape and seascape NbS in key ecosystems supporting the food and tourism sectors; (3) unlocking private sector capital and finance for NbS action in Samoa through PES and International Visitor Levee; (4) knowledge management, awareness, and gender-inclusive engagement to capture and share knowledge in relation to NbS and natural capital; and (5) a robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system to systematically 1

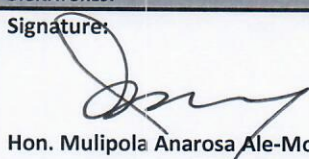
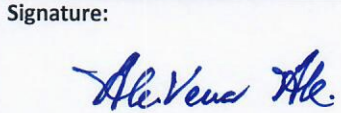
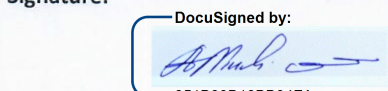
k progress, and ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the NbS models. The project will improve management of 46,184 ha of landscapes and 25,000 ha seascapes for biodiversity, sustainable food production, and tourism through integration of NbS; enhance management of two terrestrial and one marine Protected Areas covering 17,369 ha via integrated management planning and implementation; restore 5,000 ha of forest ecosystems of high conservation, economic, and adaptation value; mitigate 4,060,984 metric tons of CO₂e over 20 years through improved management of landscapes and forest restoration in the project districts; and directly benefit to 14,942 local people (estimated half of population of the target districts), including 48.7% females, and 51.3% males.

This project is a child project of the GEF 8 Blue and Green Island Integrated Programme and strategically contributes to the Programme by advancing nature-positive development through the integration of NCA and NbS in the food and tourism sectors, aligning with the broader program's objective to reduce ecosystem degradation and enhance resilience in SIDS, through sustainable economic strategies and as part of the BGI network to collect and elevate best practices on both NCA and NbS across borders.

FINANCING PLAN

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(1) Total Budget administered by UNDP		USD 2,346,482
(2) Total confirmed co-financing to this project not administered by UNDP		USD 35,766,900 ¹
(3) Grand-Total Project Financing (1)+(2)		USD 38,113,382

SIGNATURES:

Signature:  Hon. Mulipola Anarosa Ale-Molioo Minister of Finance Government of Samoa	Agreed by Government Development Coordination Authority	Date/Month/Year: 17-Feb-2026
Signature:  Hon. Ale Vena Ale Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Government of Samoa	Agreed by Implementing Partner	Date/Month/Year: 17-Feb-2026
Signature:  Aliona Niculita Resident Representative UNDP Samoa Multi-Country Office for Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa and Tokelau	Agreed by UNDP	Date/Month/Year: 17-Feb-2026

¹ Included UNDP in-kind co-financing, USD 25,851

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACEO	Assistant Chief Executive Officer	PUMA	Planning and Urban Management Agency
AESAP	Awareness and Engagement Strategy and Action Plan	R2R	Ridge to Reef
CBO	Community-Based Organisation	SAFPROM	Samoa Agriculture and Fisheries Productivity and Marketing Project
CCA	Community Conservation Area	SAMFRIS	Samoa Forest Resources Information System
CFR	Community Fisheries Reserve	SCS	Samoa Conservation Society
CIMP	Community Integrated Management Plan	SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Programme	SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
CSO	Civil-Society Organisation	SGP	Small Grants Programme
DEC	Division of Environment and Conservation	SISERP	Samoa's Invasive Species Emergency Response Plan
DMO	Disaster Management Plan	SLM	Sustainable Land Management
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	SMSMCL	Strengthening Multi-Sectoral Management of Critical Landscapes
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation	SOS	Samoa Ocean Strategy
GEFTF	GEF Trust Fund	SPC	Pacific Community (formerly known as South Pacific Community)
HCVF		SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program
IAS	Invasive Alien Species	SQS	Samoa Quarantine Services
ICCRIFS	High Conservation Value Forest Integration of Climate Change Risks and Resilience into Forestry Management in Samoa	SROS	Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa
IPLC communities	Indigenous peoples and local	SUNGO	Samoa Umbrella of NGOs
KBA	Key Biodiversity Area	TAG	Technical Advisory Group
LVG	Low-Value Grant	UNBCD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries	UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
MCR	Ministry of Customs and Revenue	UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment	UN SEEA	UN - System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA)
MOU	Memorandum of Agreement	USP	University of the South Pacific
MPA	Marine Protected Area	WHO	World Health Organisation
MPMC	Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet		
MWCSD	Ministry of Women, Culture and Social Development		
MWTI	Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure		
NAP	National Action Program		
NAPA	National Adaptation Program of Action		
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan		
NCA	Natural Capital Accounting		
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization		
NUS	National University of Samoa		
PA	Protected Area		
PB	Project Board		
PICTs	Pacific Island Countries and Territories		
PIF	Project Identification Form		
PPG	Project Preparation Grant		

II. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

Samoa is a Polynesian island nation in the South Pacific consisting of two primary islands: Upolu and Savai'i, spanning 1,115 and 1,700 km² respectively alongside eight smaller surrounding islands, culminating in a total land area of 2,935 km². The landscape is predominantly volcanic, with Upolu featuring a central ridge reaching up to 1,100 meters, and Savai'i boasting the nation's tallest peak, Mt Silisili, at 1,848 meters. The heartlands of these main islands are cloaked in dense primary and secondary forests, while the lower elevations, under 1,000 meters, display a diverse tapestry of agricultural lands, plantations (including palm, taro, cocoa, and banana), woodlands, grasslands, wetlands, residential areas, and urban centres. Samoa's population is estimated at 200,000², with 80% dependent on resources provided from the land and sea. An estimated 80% of the country lives in remote regions, with 23% of them living below the poverty line³.

The country resides within the bounds of the Polynesia-Micronesia Biodiversity Hotspot⁴. This region is recognized as one of the 34 global hotspots where remarkable biodiversity and endemic species face significant threats. Over the course of five million years, the unique geographic and evolutionary history of the Samoan archipelago has fostered the development of distinctive native plant and animal life. Samoa's natural heritage currently includes 540 indigenous plant species alongside approximately 500 invasive species, 64 indigenous land snail species with an additional 14 introduced varieties, 33 indigenous bird species complemented by four introduced ones, four indigenous reptile species and eleven introduced species, and three indigenous land mammal species with 13 introduced counterparts⁵. Consequently, introduced species constitute 48% of the Samoan flora, 81% of its land mammals, 12% of its reptiles, 18% of its land snails, and 11% of its bird population. The marine ecosystem around Samoa is equally diverse, boasting 890 coral reef fish species, over 200 types of corals, and several species of turtles, whales, and dolphins⁶. The coral reefs around Samoa are generally in a healthy state, with robust benthic cover and coral populations. However, fish populations are facing moderate to severe impacts, and predatory species like sharks are notably depleted, mirroring global trends.

Samoa's natural resources and rich biodiversity form the cornerstone of its geographical, cultural, social, and economic vitality. It provides the country with essential resources such as food security, freshwater, fuel, medicinal resources, and construction materials. The **food (agriculture and fishery) and tourism sectors** are critical pillars of Samoa's economy and national well-being. Agriculture and fisheries provide essential livelihoods for much of the rural population, ensuring food security and contributing to household incomes. The tourism sector, as one of Samoa's largest foreign exchange earners, plays a vital role in driving economic growth, creating employment, and promoting cultural heritage. These two sectors account for roughly 35-37% of Samoa's national GDP, highlighting their significant role in the country's economy. Together, the sectors support sustainable development and resilience, fostering social and economic stability while preserving Samoa's natural resources and traditional practices⁷.

As a small island nation state, Samoa relies heavily on the marine ecosystems it is surrounded by, with up to 90% of the population having resources from the ocean as their main source of protein⁸. Small scale commercial fisheries (where fish are sold at local markets) are estimated to generate US \$19 - \$20 m per annum for the economy. While subsistence fisheries as well as harvesting of other marine products for subsistence is valued at a further US \$19 - \$19 M. Larger scale commercial export of fish comprises of a large proportion of international exports, with the industry making up 28.4% of all exports in

² Samoa Bureau of statistics: Population and Housing Census 2021 Fact Sheet. Available at https://www.sbs.gov.ws/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Factsheet_Samoa_PHC2021-final.pdf

³Population estimate based on World Bank data 2021 estimate expanded to 2022 (<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=WS>) data on rural urban divide and poverty rate from Samoa 2nd NDC (2020) with data referenced to 2018 – the poverty rate is likely to now be higher following impacts of a number of natural disasters as well as COVID19.

⁴ Mittermeier, R.A., Robles Gil, P., Hoffmann, M., Pilgrim, J., Brooks, T., Mittermeier, C.G., Lamoreux, J. and Fonseca, G.A.B. 2004. *Hotspots Revisited*. Mexico City, Mexico: CEMEX.

⁵ James Atherton, 2008. Impacts of Invasive Species in Samoa: World Biodiversity Day; Conservation International Pacific Islands, Samoa.

⁶ Conservation International – Pacific Islands Programme, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme. 2010 *Priority Sites for Conservation in Samoa: Key Biodiversity Areas*. Apia, Samoa. 32pp.

⁷ <https://www.sbs.gov.ws/images/sbs-documents/Finance/GDP/2021/GDP-Report-March2021quarter.pdf>

⁸ Samoa Ocean Strategy (2020) 2020 – 2030 Integrated management for a healthy and abundant future of Samoa's ocean.

2018. Although this number has been rising, the value of exports fluctuates greatly due to global fish prices changing through time. In 2015 approximately 21% of all homes engaged in fishing, with 85% of this being inshore fishing only and 70% of households not selling their fish. Together the total value of Samoa's marine and coastal ecosystem services was estimated at US \$141.5 m in 2019. Marine ecosystems are also critical to the tourism and recreation industries, which together are estimated to generate US \$28.93 m – US \$84.54 m between local and foreign businesses, tourists, communities, and taxes per annum⁹.

Agriculture, once the heart of Samoa's economy, has seen a decline largely due to the devastating impact of Taro Leaf Blight, a lethal foreign fungus that nearly eradicated native taro varieties. The tourism industry in Samoa currently accounts for 25% of the country's GDP and employs 15% of the country's population directly, making it one of the largest industries in the country¹⁰. Majority of the accommodation, air transportation and food and beverage services within the country are indirectly linked to tourism¹¹. Before Covid-19, the industry was growing at a rate of 2 - 5% in expenditure per person per annum, however all incoming flights were halted from 2020 – 2022, which severely impacted the sector. The tourism sector plan for 2022 – 2027 outlines various strategies towards re-building the tourism economy after the destructive impacts Covid-19 had on the country's economy, which include: marketing campaigns, re-employment and training, wage subsidy schemes for tourism operators, fostering product development and creating grants to assist small business owners in rebuilding their companies, however this sector relies on the natural resources the country has to offer, which are being threatened across various physical processes induces by humans¹².

Samoa faces immense environmental pressures arising from its geography, climate and land and sea management practices. These elements have resulted in it being ranked 143 out of 185 countries in terms of its vulnerability (when key life supporting sectors are considered: food, water, health, ecosystem service, human habitat and infrastructure and the potential multiple hazards of climate change, and natural disasters)¹³. This score is linked to the high propensity of severe weather phenomena such as flash floods from high-intensity rainfall, cyclones and storms. Indeed, Samoa is liable to be hit by a Category 5 cyclone 1 in every 10 years and has been struck by seven Category 4 or 5 cyclones with peak wind speeds of greater than 58 meters per second since 1981. These events have significant impacts on Samoa's economy with it estimated that the Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Evan that hit Samoa in December 2012, cause damage and loss equivalent to about 28% of the 2011 GDP¹⁴.

This vulnerability is intensified by activities such as agricultural land clearing, unsustainable development and consumption, deforestation, soil erosion and fertility, and the destruction of vital coastal ecosystems, including mangroves and coral reefs. Furthermore, Samoa often faces extended droughts that stress both agricultural and potable water resources, leading to food insecurity. Climate change also brings about higher temperature extremes that occur more frequently as each year passes (see Root Causes, Threats, and Impacts section for details).

Root Causes, Threats, and Impacts

As was stated above, the key direct threats to Samoa's ecosystems and communities are (1) degradation of terrestrial and marine ecosystems having high conservation, economic, and climate adaptation value; (2) Alien Invasive Species (AIS); and (3) Climate Change Impact that exacerbate the anthropogenic threats. Let's consider the magnitude and driving forces of the threats below:

Degradation of terrestrial and marine ecosystems: Samoa has lost an estimated 70,737 ha (24% of land cover) of natural forest over the past two decades due to a range of drivers, including increased development, expansion of agricultural lands and pastures, shifting cultivation, logging, and other impact¹⁵. This rate of loss presents significant risks to the sustainability of Samoa's forests and the important ecosystem services they provide. **Conversion to agriculture has been a major driver of**

9 <https://www.undp.org/samoa/publications/enhancing-integrated-sustainable-management-safeguard-samoas-natural-resources>; <https://www.sprep.org/news/safeguarding-samoas-natural-treasures-terrestrial-biodiversity-monitoring-survey-2023-charts-a-sustainable-future>

¹⁰ UNESCAP Ocean Accounts Pilot Study – Sustainable Development of the Tourism Industry Brief

¹¹ IMF (2022) Samoa Climate Macroeconomic Assessment Program (CMAP) – Technical Assistance report.

¹² Ibid

¹³ University of Notre-Dam Vulnerability assessment ND-GAIN – data as of 2021 assessment available at <https://gain-new.crc.nd.edu/ranking/vulnerability>

¹⁴ IMF doc

¹⁵ Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (2023) National REDD+ Forest Reference Level 2023

forest loss with 16,906 ha attributed to land use conversion (particularly for crops such as taro and coconut).¹⁵ Just under a third of the land conversion, totaling 4,762 ha, is earmarked for subsistence farming, playing a crucial role in the community's food security. With the population expanding by 28,847 people during the same timeframe, the allocation amounts to merely 0.16 hectares per new individual in Samoa, significantly falling short of what's necessary to sustain food security needs. Logging accounts for 11,140 ha, urbanization accounts for 6,383 ha, grazing accounts for 3,554 ha, tree farms account for 3,176 ha and mining has impacted 258 ha.¹⁵ Uncategorized human impacts account for 24,558 hectares approximately.¹⁵ This outlines the pressures induced by humans on natural terrestrial ecosystems and highlights concerns surrounding the sustainable use of natural resources for Samoa's future. Poor livestock grazing practices especially on soft soils and near water bodies like rivers, have also led to increased amounts of soil erosion, loss of soil fertility, and sedimentation of rivers. Overgrazing removes vegetation cover, exposing the soil to erosion by water and wind. The eroded soil is carried into rivers, leading to sedimentation and water quality issues.

Mangroves are one of the eight main forest habitats found within Samoa, and are extremely critical due to their social, economic, and ecological value they provide to communities nearby. The market value of preventing the loss of mangrove forest loss in one year has been estimated between US\$74,075.6 and US\$99,219. Mangroves provide several key processes for coastal and river ecosystems by creating fish habitat and nurseries for fish populations, reducing coastal erosion by stabilising sediment they are planted on top and mitigating wave energy pushed in from storms, winds, and wave energy, as well as also sequestering carbon from the atmosphere and storing it in the ground below. With an estimated annual loss of 6.3% of national mangrove forest cover between 2010 and 2019, Samoa's three primary mangrove species are at risk of significant decline within the next 16 years if current trends persist. Good environmental management and rehabilitation programmes are needed to ensure the health of these forests and prevent degradation into isolated patches that do not provide their full suite of ecosystem services.^{Error! Bookmark not defined.}

The fishing sector in Samoa plays an essential role in food security and the economy. However, **unsustainable fishing practices**, such as overfishing, deplete fish populations, disrupt marine ecosystems, and damage coral reefs, which are critical habitats for marine biodiversity. The sustainability of fisheries relies partially on these mangrove areas as well as key inshore areas including coral reefs and sea grass beds. **Increasing levels of exploitation by fisheries** as well as impacts from land-based pollution and climate change, however, is impacting these habitats. While comprehensive data on the status and nature of change across Samoa's marine habitats is limited, specific studies indicate a decline in levels of coral cover and habitat quality.¹⁶ These impacts of unsustainable fishery are also being felt with regard to levels of fish catch with fisheries data showing a decline in production. Many coastal marine communities rely on specific habitats such as mangroves and coral reefs, any impact on these environments directly affects the fisheries that live within them. Reef fish is an essential part of Samoans' diet, overfishing occurs and causes substantial and detrimental effects to the coral reefs that surround the Samoan islands. Villagers are practicing extensive fishery which in effect, has profound consequences. The reefs around Samoa are in generally poor conditions because of man-made factors which include top-soil run off deforestation, construction, unsustainable fishing, and agriculture.¹⁷

The tourism sector in Samoa is heavily reliant on coastal and marine ecosystems, particularly beaches, coral reefs, and mangroves. At the same time, unregulated or poorly managed tourism activities often lead to habitat destruction and degradation. For instance, coral reefs are vulnerable to damage from boat anchors, snorkeling, and diving activities, as well as from pollution caused by increased human activity along the coast.¹⁸ Tourism-related infrastructure development, such as resorts and hotels along the coastline, brings the destruction of mangroves and other vital coastal habitats, leading to increased erosion and loss of biodiversity. Also, tourism leads to an increase in solid waste, sewage, and other forms of pollution, particularly in areas with limited waste management infrastructure. Additionally, tourism industry often places high demands on local water resources, particularly in hotels and resorts. This increased water use can deplete freshwater supplies and lead to competition between local communities and tourism operations, potentially stressing ecosystems dependent on freshwater sources. The development of infrastructure such as roads, resorts, and recreational areas lead to land

¹⁶ Ziegler et al (2018) Status of coral reefs of Upolu (Independent State of Samoa) in the South West Pacific and recommendations to promote resilience and recovery of coastal ecosystem – available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323724916_Status_of_coral_reefs_of_Upolu_Independent_State_of_Samoa_in_the_South_West_Pacific_and_recommendations_to_promote_resilience_and_recovery_of_coastal_ecosystems

¹⁷

https://ics.uci.edu/~wmt/courses/ICS5_W13/Samoa.html#:~:text=The%20reefs%20around%20Samoa%20are,fishing%20techniques%20utilized%20by%20villagers.

¹⁸ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X23003123>

degradation, deforestation, and soil erosion. As natural vegetation is removed, this can lead to increased runoff, contributing to siltation in rivers and coastal areas, which affects aquatic ecosystems¹⁹.

Invasive Alien Species (IAS): in Samoa, over 300 invasive species pose significant threats to forestry, crops, and the safety and livelihoods of Samoans. These species impact the environment and economy, necessitating strategic eradication efforts to minimize their effects. The presence of invasive species, exacerbated by climate change, underscores the conservation activities in Samoa. Thus, the devastating impact of invasive species on the environment, production systems (crops), and social values of Samoa has been witnessed in recent years particularly through invasions of taro leaf blight, the giant African snail (*Achatina fulica*), Myna species (*Acridotheres tristis*, *A. fuscus*) and Merremia vine (*Merremia peltata*). For example, *Merremia peltata*, although a native species has spread and become abundant and problematic in many areas due to forest disturbance: about 50% of the remaining lowland native forests are now dominated by *Merremia* vines. Both marine and terrestrial habitats in Samoa are at risk, primarily due to human-induced environmental changes such as land degradation, urbanisation, population growth and the knock-on effects induced by these forces. Land degradation formed by agriculture exacerbates nutrient run-off into river systems and coastal habitats, deteriorating water quality and therefore the health of habitats such as coral reefs and mangroves. This leaves coral habitats increasingly vulnerable to the spread of invasive species such as the Crown of Thorns Starfish (*Acanthaster planci*), a type of sea star notorious for its rapid consumption of hard coral, severely damaging coral reefs in a short span of time. This situation is further aggravated by the aggressive nature of these invaders, which not only degrade habitats but also displace native flora and fauna, leading to considerable economic losses. Another species, *Phytophthora colocasiae*, not only devastated Samoa's staple food source, but also decimated farmers' incomes from local and overseas markets: taro production in Samoa dropped by over 95% (Chan, 1995), and the export value fell from \$US 3.2 million in 1993 to only \$US 53,000 one year later (IPGRI, 2002)²⁰. IAS decrease diversity of natural Samoa's ecosystems and make them more vulnerable to the climate change impacts. The loss of biodiversity and degradation of ecosystems due to invasive species reduce the natural capacity of these systems to adapt to climate changes.

Climate Change Impact: As a SIDS, Samoa shares with other island nations the characteristics of being economically vulnerable and ecologically fragile because of its geographical location, isolation, limited resources, and exposure to global economic crises. Samoa and other Pacific Island Countries observed trends and variability in climate derived from long term climate data from the region: the mean island near-surface air temperature increased by between 0.3-0.8°C during the 20th century, and decrease in precipitation levels decreased by 49.28 mm for the same period. Recent studies and tracking of cyclones in and around the Samoa region has found that there has been an increase in the frequency of tropical depressions, gale wind forces, and tropical cyclones during the cyclone season from December to February²¹.

Climate change impacts are an added imposition on the inherent challenges Samoa already faces as a SIDS to achieve its sustainable development goals. The current impact of climate change on Samoa's biodiversity, ecosystems, and communities is significant and multifaceted. Samoa's unique ecosystems, including its coastal, marine, and terrestrial habitats, are under threat from rising temperatures, sea-level rise, ocean acidification, and increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. Rising sea levels contribute to coastal erosion, loss of land, and damage to coastal ecosystems such as mangroves and coral reefs. Ocean warming and acidification lead to coral bleaching and mortality, affecting the biodiversity that relies on coral reefs for habitat, food, and protection. Samoa has experienced variability in rainfall patterns, with intense rainfall events causing flooding and landslides, damaging terrestrial habitats and affecting the natural regeneration processes of forests. Samoa is increasingly vulnerable to extreme weather events such as cyclones, floods, and droughts, that cause direct damage to ecosystems and biodiversity, as well as longer-term degradation of natural habitats.

Samoa has experienced significant economic damages caused by several disasters in the past 20 years. Thus, two disaster events in Samoa in the early 1990s caused some of the largest losses and damages recorded in the region. The earthquake and subsequent tsunami in 2009 caused loss and damage (including property, crops, and livestock) equivalent to about 35% of GDP. In 2012, Tropical Cyclone Evan caused a similar size economic damage. No official damage report is available for the 2015 drought, however, there was a recognition amongst authorities that the drought caused high stress in agriculture, the power sector, and elevated wildfire risks. On average, Samoa's economic damage, including property, crops, and livestock, are estimated to be about 30% of GDP per disaster over the past four decades. Samoa could be trapped in a repeated disaster-recovery cycle, losing fiscal space and missing time windows for development. For example, due to repeated natural disasters,

¹⁹ <https://farandawayadventures.com/how-to-avoid-over-tourism-in-samoa/>;

https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2300&context=isp_collection

²⁰ <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/sam176258.pdfmana>

²¹ <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/napa/sam01.pdf>

the 2021 Article IV for Samoa projects GDP growth to be lower by 1.3% in the long run and fiscal and current account deficits to widen by 3.5% of GDP compared to a counterfactual without natural disasters.

Local communities already experience different climate impacts due to global warming and destruction and degradation of natural climate barriers and filters – healthy ecosystems, and these impacts are projected to exacerbate in the nearest 30-50 years, including loss of land due to erosion from the sea and extreme climate events (approximately 70% of the population resides in the coastal areas); flooding inundation of land and sedimentation; lack of water supply and poor water quality; increased health hazards and outbreak of diseases such as vector-borne diseases like malaria; destruction of crops; loss of heritage and land values; and damage to community assets, especially in coastal areas.

These impacts led the Pacific Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative (PCRAFI) disaster risk modelling to suggest that in the next 50 years, Samoa is at risk of incurring an annual average direct loss of USD 6.9 million and emergency losses of USD 1.7 million due to tropical cyclones (representing nearly 2% of GDP). The PCRAFI estimates a tropical cyclone loss exceeding 78 million USD, is to be expected. In the 50 years to 2015, Samoa experienced 56 events with total associated losses of USD 460 million.

Interactions of anthropogenic threats (Ecosystem Degradation, IAS) and climate impacts (Increased Frequency and Intensity of Extreme Weather Events, Rising Sea Levels and Ocean Acidification, Variability in Rainfall Patterns, and Droughts and Heat Waves) create the cycle of vulnerability that is reinforced as anthropogenic activities degrade natural ecosystems, reducing their capacity to mitigate climate impacts. **Key economic sectors, such as the food sector (agriculture and fisheries) and tourism**, as was discussed above, play pivotal roles in this negative process leading to deforestation, soil degradation, disruption of marine ecosystems, pollution, and overconsumption of natural resources, further weakening ecosystem health and increasing their own (sectoral) vulnerability to climate change. In turn, the exacerbation of climate change impacts further stresses these degraded ecosystems, making them and the communities that depend on them even more vulnerable. This vicious cycle highlights the need for urgent and integrated intervention strategies that address both anthropogenic activities and climate change impacts to enhance ecosystem resilience and reduce community vulnerability (see other details in the Annex 21. Climate and Disaster Risk Screening)

This is where valuing nature and application of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) offer a powerful means to interrupt the cycle of vulnerability created by the interaction of anthropogenic threats (specifically from food and tourism sectors) and climate impacts. By harnessing the power and resilience of nature, nature valuation and NbS can simultaneously address the root causes of environmental degradation, enhance ecosystem climate resilience, and reduce community vulnerability to climate change impacts (see more details in the Annex 23. Nature-based Solutions in Samoa).

Baseline Programmes in Samoa to address environmental threats

The Government of Samoa (GoS) is working hard to address the key threats for Samoa's ecosystems and communities through valuing nature and application of (NbS). These efforts however remain isolated within agencies tasked for environment and natural resource and are not fully integrated into Samoa's development approach and are not fully recognised as a key part of Samoa's development pathway. The existing actions are led by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) which has a mandate for planning and management of land, water, forestry, national parks and reserves, energy, meteorology, environmental protection, and urban planning. The MNRE have developed an Environment Sector Plan 2022-27, which sets out key strategic areas for action which aligns with the national level Samoa Pathway for development. The pathway includes: (1) Build Climate Resilience; (2) Effective Environmental Protection and Management Frameworks; (3) Enhanced Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources; (4) Sustainable Energy Development Enhanced. The plan builds on the implementation of the previous sector plan which had a number of successes including the 2 Million Tree planting Campaign, which planted 2,070,758 trees over the timeframe of the campaign 2015 – 2018. The current sector plan has an estimated budget of over US\$42 million over 5 years (majority of this finance will come from external project support, with the MNRE currently managing some 24 different ongoing development partner supported projects. Many of the targets of the environment sector also link closely with the work of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) has a mandate for agricultural and fisheries activities and as such as a strong overlap with regard to development of land management approaches.

The summary of the key activities for valuing nature and application of (NbS) in Samoa are summarized below:

Support to NCA and value of ecosystem services development: through the UN SDG Joint Fund Samoa has received support through the UN ESCAP in the development of its existing NCAs on Water, Energy and Waste (pilot accounts)²² and is currently being supported with the development of its State of Environment report and trialing of the development of Ocean Accounts. The existing finance for this is limited and does not have the capacity to drive wider integration or further account development. The value of ecosystem services has also been a part of the Samoa Ocean Strategy (SOS) but this block remains undeveloped due to limited data and insufficient policy (see details in the Annex 22. Nature Capital Accounting).

Efforts to roll out expansion of NbS: Samoa has a good initial experience in integration of NbS in the national policies and implementation of NbS projects. Thus, key policies such as the Pathway for the Development of Samoa (PDS) 2021–2026, National Environment Sector Plan (NESP) 2022–2027, and Samoa Climate Change Policy 2020 emphasize sustainable management of natural resources and integration of NbS into national development. Acts like the Lands Surveys and Environment Act 1989, Forestry Management Act 2011, and Water Resources Management Act 2008 support conservation, sustainable management, and restoration of ecosystems to provide social, economic, environmental, and adaptation benefits to the people of Samoa. The NbS projects in Samoa target different sectors and include some remarkable initiatives as the following:

- Establishment and management of protected areas such as Mauga o Salafai National Park and Lauli'I to Falevao Community Conservation Area, focusing not only on traditional conservation, but replanting and management of native forests to increase their adaptation and economic value for local communities;
- Implementation of community agroforestry programs, establishment of nurseries for seedling production, and large-scale tree planting campaigns like the Two Million Tree Planting Strategy (2015-2020) to provide economic, social, and adaptation benefits to communities via NbS;
- Watershed Management Plans (WMPs) developed and implemented for areas like Malololelei, Fagalii, and Lepa, with activities including forest replanting, nursery installations, and land management to protect and manage water resources sustainably. These initiatives include replanting of catchment areas and erosion-prone zones using appropriate local species and agroforestry systems to prevent soil erosion and improve water quality;
- Establishment of conservation areas and implementation of management plans in villages such as Vaovai, Poutasi, and Lotopue-Malaela, including mangrove and coral replanting, waste removal, and restocking of marine species to enhance productivity and adaptive capacity of coastal and marine ecosystems. More details on NbS projects are provided in Annex 23. Nature-based Solutions in Samoa.

Development of new financing mechanisms: the GoS and partners have worked to support the development of both Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) and introduce tax and other incentives to help address financing gaps and incentivise positive environmental actions. Two PES schemes have been trialled within Samoa, focused on actions to reforest and rehabilitate water catchments (Vaisigano Catchment) as well as support the rehabilitation of forest areas and development of agroforestry systems linked to payments for emissions reductions to offset emissions linked to seasonal workers schemes²³. PES is also initially reflected in Samoa's policy and legislation. Thus, Samoa's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2015–2020 encourages the exploration of PES, especially on lands under customary control, as incentives to reinforce community participation and commitment to conservation objectives. The Pathway for the Development of Samoa (PDS) 2021–2026 emphasizes the integration of ecosystem services into government planning and budgeting. The framework prioritizes effective environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources, including the implementation of PES as part of enhancing resilience and attractiveness to tourism. Additionally, the upcoming legislation - the Environmental Management and Conservation Bill and Soil Resource Management Bill - are set to include provisions for the valuation of ecosystem services and the implementation of PES schemes. The bills aim to formalize and enhance the legal framework supporting PES in Samoa (see details in the Annexes 21 and 22). Limits in levels of capacity, resources and clarity on the policy and potential regulatory framework for PES schemes and how these could link with potential financing sources, however mean that there has been limited action to broaden development of the schemes despite the potential for wider climate resilience and broader community benefits (e.g. rural jobs) from such schemes. These limitations are also linked to low levels of awareness of how different finance mechanisms could be mobilized and linked to deliver local impacts and thus increase interest from government and communities to develop coordinated approaches to the PES schemes.

²² <https://www.sbs.gov.ws/environment/>

²³ Samoa Conservation Society have been working on efforts to rehabilitate areas of *O le Pupu Pue* (OLPP) national park as well as to support communities in surrounding areas and have sort to develop the approach as a carbon offset project.

In terms of taxation, the MNRE has worked on the development of a Solid Waste Tax to address the impacts of solid waste on the country but faced challenges due to its impacts on inflation across the economy. The Samoa Tourism Authority (STA) proposed the implementation of a tourism levy for many years²⁴ and this is included within the Tourism Sector Development Plan 2022/3 – 2026/7 as a priority for actions within 12 months. Within this context it is proposed as a mechanism to create a fund that would assist the industry in future natural disasters and pandemics²⁵. The levy has significant potential as demonstrated by similar mechanisms in Palau, New Zealand and other island national and with the tourism sector forming a key element of the economy with over 180,000 visitors per year with an estimated value of over \$200m. Its reliance on and impacts on the environment are also noted although not fully quantified with an estimated USD 28 and 82 million of this value linked to key environmental services²⁶ and estimates of airline emissions alone being over 200,000tCO₂e per annum. Limited progress has however been made on development of such a levy with the approach facing a number of challenges.

These initiatives require close coordination across agencies, and the GoS has established a number of steering committees to improve coordination. These include the *National Environment Sector Steering Committee (NESSC)* which is the apex body for the Environment Sector, tasked with providing overall leadership and oversight of the sector wide programme. It is chaired by the CEO of MNRE with CEO of MOF as Deputy Chair. The NESSC is intended to meet on a quarterly basis although meetings have often been less frequent. Members include representatives from the public sector, private sector, NGOs, Academic Institutions, Small Grants Programmes and Development Partners. The *Agriculture Sector Steering Committee* under Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries; *Trade Commerce and Manufacturing Steering Committee* under Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour, *National Energy Coordination Committee* under Ministry of Finance; *Climate Resilience Steering Committee* under Ministry of Finance; *Transport Sector Steering Committee* under the Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure; and *Agriculture Sector's Working Group* on sustainability of natural resources and sector resilience to natural disasters and climate change also under Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries. These committees support coordination across the key agencies with mandate for support to local level development through local government and coordinating actions around Community Integrated Management Plans (CIMP) and District Development Plan (DDP) implementation.

MNRE leads several impressive nature-based adaptation projects aimed at sustainable management and conservation of natural resources to combat climate change impacts. One of the flagship initiatives is the Samoa Ocean Strategy (SOS), launched in 2020. The SOS aims to manage and protect Samoa's marine habitats, including seamounts, biodiverse coral reefs, mangroves, and oceanic basins, to ensure long-term ecological, economic, and cultural benefits. The strategy includes a commitment to protect 30% of Samoa's ocean by 2025, significantly increasing the area of fully protected ocean space. This effort in collaboration with Conservation International (provides essential technical assistance for the facilitation and design of the SOS) and the Blue Prosperity Coalition (focuses on building local capabilities for sustainable ocean management for SOS), aims on marine spatial planning, sustainable fisheries, and blue economy, and ensures the integration of science-based and community-driven approaches²⁷.

Over the past 10 years MNRE implemented at least two GEF projects that addressed ecosystem conservation and restoration as well as community and sectoral adaptation issues in Samoa based on NbS. Thus, UNDP/GEF Project "Economy-wide integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management to reduce climate vulnerability of communities in Samoa" 2014-2019 (GEF ID 5417) addressed integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management into national development planning and programming across all sectors, including measures to increase climate resilience of local communities. The project partially addressed Nature-based Adaptation through a variety of strategies aimed at enhancing the resilience of Samoa's communities and ecosystems to climate change and natural disasters, including integrated Watershed Management Planning ("Ridge-to-Reef" approach), restoration of degraded ecosystems, and climate-resilient agricultural practices to protect community assets and promote sustainable use of natural resources. Another UNDP/GEF Project "Enhancing integrated sustainable management to safeguard Samoa's natural resources" (GEF ID 10410) is focused on empowerment of local communities to safeguard Samoa's indigenous species, natural ecosystems and food production systems from Invasive Alien Species (IAS) and unsustainable land use practices. The project partially addresses Nature-based Adaptation by emphasizing the integrated management of catchments to safeguard indigenous species, and ensure resilience of natural ecosystems, and food production systems from Invasive Alien Species (IAS) and unsustainable land use practices.

²⁴ The concept was included within the National Tourism Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2012-17

²⁵ GoS (2022) Samoa Tourism Sector Plan 2022/3-2026/7 available at <https://www.mof.gov.ws/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Tourism-Sector-Plan-2022-2027.pdf>

²⁶ Other major value areas are identified as Subsistence fisheries USD18.5million (tala 50m), Commercial fisheries USD19.8million (tala 54m), and Coastal protection USD7million (19m).

²⁷ <https://www.mnre.gov.ws/samoa-secures-a-sustainable-future-with-new-ocean-strategy/>

Non-government, civil society and private sector actors are also committed to the long-term sustainable and climate-resilient development of the island nation. It is demonstrated by the early adoption of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council criteria of the country's tourism sector in 2014. In Samoa, several impressive nature-based adaptation projects led by NGOs have been implemented, focusing on community resilience to climate change impacts. The Community-Based Adaptation (CBA) portfolio in Samoa, supported by the UNDP and GEF, includes projects aimed at addressing coastal ecosystem vulnerabilities. This initiative has rolled out six projects across different communities in Samoa, focusing on adaptations to flooding and sea level rise, conservation of mangroves, ecosystems, and coral reefs, and other community-specific climate change mitigation efforts. These projects not only emphasize the importance of maintaining ecosystem services like erosion control, storm protection, and water filtration in the face of climate change but also involve local and national NGOs actively in their execution.²⁸

Barriers on the way to address key threats for Biodiversity and Local Communities

Despite these efforts, Samoa still faces significant barriers to address effectively the challenges posed by the ecosystem degradation, IAS, and climate change impact. The summary of the barriers is provided below:

Barrier 1: *Inadequate integration of ecosystem valuation and NbS in planning and decision-making at national and local levels, due to incomplete and lacking NCA modules, low capacity and awareness among authorities, and absence of NbS decision support tools based on NCA.*

Samoa has taken significant steps to recognize the threats to its unique biodiversity and there is increasing awareness of the value of ecosystem services in strengthening the country's response to climate change (through ecosystem adaptation) and environmental issues. These developments, however, remain relatively isolated within agencies responsible for natural resource management and have not moved to central agencies responsible for budget allocation. Thus, Samoa's existing NCA modules cover only a few sectors, such as waste, energy, and water that are still incomplete. Important ecosystems like mangroves, coral reefs, forests, and seagrass are not accounted for, limiting the comprehensive understanding and valuation of ecosystem services. Without complete NCAs, policymakers lack critical data on ecosystem services, hindering their ability to make informed decisions that balance economic development with environmental sustainability based on the financial and economic trade-offs, including NbS. Also, national and local authorities in Samoa have very limited capacity and awareness regarding the application of ecosystem valuation and NbS in their planning and decision-making processes. This gap leads to suboptimal utilization of available data and tools, resulting in decisions that do not fully consider the long-term benefits and trade-offs of ecosystem services and economic development. There is a lack of tailored decision support tools that integrate NCA data for effective governance and economic planning inclusive of NbS. The existing policy and legislative frameworks do not explicitly recognize or prioritize NbS, leading to a lack of clear guidelines and support for their implementation. Despite the thorough integration of ecosystem and/or nature-based elements within national documents like the National Adaptation Plans (NAP), National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP), and Climate Change policies, there is an absence of direct reference to NbS as a specific terminology. This gap suggests a potential lack of explicit focus or recognition of NbS's distinct value and principles, which affect targeted NbS implementation and advocacy efforts (see details in the Barrier 2 below). Also, there is a need for adaptation policies and frameworks to more systematically recognize and incorporate traditional knowledge and practices in NbS planning and implementation. These gaps hinder the effective use of NbS, which are crucial for enhancing ecosystem resilience, providing sustainable livelihoods, and protecting biodiversity.

Barrier 2: *Inadequate NbS integration in district development in Samoa to address developmental, climate, and environmental threats in food production and tourism sectors.*

This barrier is strongly associated with the Barrier 1 described above, including policy, capacity, and technical constraints that impede implementation of full-scale adaptation projects based on NbS, like the Ridge to Reef (R2R) approach. Despite multiple adaptation initiatives in Samoa that includes NbS, the scale of these initiatives is small limited to separate communities, Community Protected Areas, or a few hundred ha of ecosystem restoration initiatives. These "point" initiatives add very little to improve adaptation capacity of target ecosystems and communities and decrease their growing vulnerability to climate change. Effective NbS projects require active community participation. In Samoa, land tenure systems, which are predominantly customary, sometimes complicate implementation of such project depending on engagement of a few

²⁸ <https://www.adaptation-undp.org/projects/spa-community-based-adaptation-samoa>

communities. Ensuring community buy-in and navigating customary land rights are crucial for project success, but it is sometimes challenging. Samoa's vulnerability to climate change impacts, such as cyclones, floods, and sea-level rise, poses additional risks to NbS projects. Projects must be designed to be resilient and sustainable on the long run, which often increase complexity and costs. Scale up of NbS adaptation initiatives in Samoa need increasing support from private sector and investors that is currently lacking. The private sector often has the financial resources that could support the scaling up of NbS projects. Without their investment, projects often struggle to secure the necessary funding, limiting their scope and impact.

Barrier 3: *Low level of private sector investment in NbS in Samoa*

To preserve and restore ecosystems alone, the required investment globally is estimated at US\$300–400 billion per year, whereas only US\$52 billion is invested annually in such projects. Governments and philanthropic funding alone cannot close the funding gap; estimates suggest that through new nature and socially positive (NbS included) private sector investments the private sector could deliver more than half of the funding needed to achieve the SDGs²⁹. Within Samoa, however, there are extremely low levels of private sector investment due to the relatively small size of the economy and low levels of extractive industries. The most significant private sector is the service sector with the majority of this linked to tourism operations (accounting for about 25% of GDP). Despite this sector being heavily reliant on Samoa's natural assets for its business there has been limited reciprocal investment in supporting the preservation of those assets. Samoa lacks comprehensive policy frameworks to support PES, which are essential for creating market incentives for the private sector to invest in ecosystem services. PES schemes reward landowners or resource users for managing their land or resources in ways that provide ecological benefits, but without a policy framework, such schemes are challenging to implement. Financial mechanisms that could channel funds from key sectors such as tourism and food production into NbS are non-existent. Effective financial mechanisms, like green bonds or environmental taxes, are crucial for mobilizing private capital. There is a general lack of awareness and engagement from the private sector regarding the benefits and opportunities associated with investing in NbS. This includes a lack of understanding of the economic returns and social benefits that can be derived from such investments.

Barrier 4. *Limited awareness and knowledge of key stakeholders on NCA and NbS approaches and models, and lack of scale up mechanisms to disseminate and replicate successful NbS practices across Samoa.*

The Kiwa Initiative Capacity Needs Assessment for Implementing Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for Climate Change Adaptation (2023) specifically identifies the following knowledge and awareness gaps associated with implementing Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in Samoa and the broader Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs):

- *Lack of Awareness at the Local Community Level:* there is a notable lack of awareness about NbS among local communities. This gap is exacerbated by language barriers that complicate interactions with communities for awareness-raising and NbS project implementation;
- *Limited Awareness among Decision-makers/Political Level:* awareness of NCA and NbS is also limited at the decision-making or political levels. This lack of awareness extends to confusion between modern approaches to protected areas and customary protected areas, with insufficient awareness and knowledge at both the local village community level and among decision-makers. Decision-makers and private sector leaders often do not understand advantages of NbS adaptation in comparison with engineered solution adaptation;
- *Misinformation and Confusion:* the use of modern technology and social media, while reaching a wider audience, often also promote misinformation and confusion about NbS among people (e.g., criticism of NbS effectiveness, misinterpretation of scientific data on NbS, oversimplification of NbS success stories);
- *Limited Technical Knowledge and Skills:* there is a significant gap in technical knowledge, skills, and expertise to implement NbS initiatives, particularly in areas such as reforestation, urban greening, shoreline protection, natural resource management, biodiversity conservation, nurseries for terrestrial and coastal plants, agriculture, and fisheries. This includes a lack of formal upskilling of stakeholders with practical skills for NbS implementation, project management, and monitoring and evaluation.

29 <https://tripleline.com/insight/article/nature-based-solutions-for-combatting-biodiversity-loss-and-climate-change>

Consistency with national strategies and plans:

Addressing the above threats for ecosystems and communities and removing the barriers is reflected as priority in the number of Samoa's national strategies and plans developed for implementation UNCBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC, and sectoral development. Please, see Table 1 for details.

Table 1. Government Strategies and Plans that prioritize addressing the key threats for ecosystems and communities and removing the identified barriers

National strategy/plan	Project contribution to the priorities and agreements
Pathway for the Development of Samoa (2021/2-2025/6)	The pathway prioritizes securing the environment and action on climate change as well as a diversified and sustainable economy. It includes Key Strategic Outcome 4: Secured Environment and Climate – which has priority areas of: Build Climate Resilience; Effective Environmental Protection and Management Frameworks; Enhanced Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources; Sustainable Energy Development Enhanced.
National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), 2015-2020, modified 15 February 2022	Efforts to enhance climate resilience through ecosystem restoration and conservation practices contribute to the NBSAP's objectives of protecting and restoring critical habitats and endangered species. By integrating NCA and NbS into policy, management and business practices, NBSAP expects to promote sustainable use of natural resources. Enhancing national and local adaptation, NBS and biodiversity conservation capacities through improved information on the financial value of natural capital, options of NbS and increased finance, as well as its focus on knowledge management and learning for scaling up NbS integration, support the NBSAP's goals of building capacity and raising awareness among stakeholders about biodiversity conservation and climate adaptation.
Samoa National Environment Sector Plan (NESP), 2017-2021	The Samoa National Environment Sector Plan (NESP) 2022-2027 is a strategic framework designed to tackle several pressing environmental challenges, including ecosystem degradation, climate change, the implementation of Natural Capital Accounts (NCA), and the integration of Nature-based Solutions (NbS). The NESP aims to enhance the management and restoration of critical ecosystems, including forests, coastal areas, and marine environments. It emphasizes the importance of sustainable land and resource use practices to prevent further degradation, including NbS.
Samoa Climate Change Policy, 2020-2030	Enhancing climate resilience directly supports the core objectives of Samoa's Climate Change Policy, which prioritizes adaptation measures to protect communities, ecosystems, and infrastructure from climate change impact. Building technical and financial capacities among government agencies, communities, and the private sector for development of NCAs and implementing NbS aligns with the Climate Change Policy's focus on enhancing institutional and human resource capabilities to effectively respond to climate change challenges.
Samoa Ocean Strategy, 2020-2030	The Samoa Ocean Strategy (SOS), launched in 2020, includes a commitment to protect 30% of Samoa's ocean by 2025, significantly increasing the area of fully protected ocean space. This effort is in collaboration with Conservation International and the Blue Prosperity Coalition, focusing on marine spatial planning, sustainable fisheries, and blue economy, ensuring the integration of science-based and community-driven approaches, this approach is collecting valuable data on the nature / status of Samoa's marine environments and has also initiated work to value these assets ³⁰ .
Samoa's Aligned National Action Program to Combat Land Degradation And Mitigate The Effects Of Drought 2015 – 2020	The plan has the following strategic objectives: Strategic Objective 2 – to improve the conditions of priority affected landscapes and ecosystems, including agricultural lands, catchments and key biodiversity areas; and SO3 – to increase global benefits through improving the preservation of unique species and ecosystems.
Samoa National Disaster Management Plan (NDPM), 2017-2020	While not explicitly mentioning NbS by name, incorporates principles and strategies that align with the concept of NbS, particularly in its focus on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. While not explicitly stated, the Plan emphasizes a holistic approach to DRM suggesting an openness to incorporating ecosystem-based methods, which are central to NbS.
Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS)	Integrating NbS into Ridge to Reef management and promoting sustainable business practices is in line with the SDS's goal of sustainable economic development. SDS emphasises climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability.
Samoa Strategic Programme for Climate Resilience (SPCR), 2010	SPCR emphasises integrated solutions for climate resilience and prioritizes ecosystem-based adaptation measures.

³⁰ <https://www.mnre.gov.ws/samoa-secures-a-sustainable-future-with-new-ocean-strategy/>

Second Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) of Samoa, 2021-2030	Conservation and restoration of terrestrial and coastal ecosystems directly contributes to the enhancement of carbon sinks. Activities such as reforestation, mangrove restoration, and coral reef conservation increase carbon sequestration, helping to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions in line with Samoa's commitments under its NDC.
National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA), 2005	The plan has a few priority climate change adaptation areas of activity, namely: securing community water resources (ranked as 1); reforestation, rehabilitation and community forestry fire prevention (2); agriculture and food security sustainability (5); and establishing conservation programs in highly vulnerable marine and terrestrial areas of communities (8).
Agriculture sector plan, 2023-2027	The overarching goal is to increase food, nutrition and income security. Of the four End of Sector Plan Outcomes, the investments in the management of landscapes to improve resilience and the provision of their ecosystem services is fully in line with this approach as is support for agroforestry.
National Tourism Climate Change Strategy, 2021-2025	The underlying theme of the Strategy – 'Building resilience against climate change' – runs extensively throughout the document. It builds upon the National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) document which aims to provide strategic direction for the tourism sector in terms of increasing its resilience and capacity to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and will provide the basis for the Samoa Tourism Authority (STA) to make informed decisions and policies through clearly identified short and long term priorities in the area of climate change.
Tourism Sector Development Plan 2022/3 – 2026/7	The plan is heavily impacted by approaches to a recovery after the COVID 19 pandemic but also includes commitments to resilient and sustainable green growth.

Additionally, If the key threats to Samoa's environment are not addressed and the barriers to implementing Natural Capital Accounts (NCA) and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and are not removed, several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) could be significantly impacted:

- **SDG 1: No Poverty.** Ecosystem degradation and climate change can lead to the loss of livelihoods, particularly for communities dependent on agriculture, fisheries, and tourism. Increased poverty levels could result from reduced income and increased vulnerability to environmental shocks;
- **SDG 2: Zero Hunger.** Climate change and ecosystem degradation affect agricultural productivity, leading to food insecurity. Issues such as soil erosion, loss of fertility, and extreme weather events can significantly impact crop yields.
- **SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being.** Environmental degradation and climate change can increase the prevalence of diseases and health issues. Poor water quality, increased vector-borne diseases, and malnutrition due to food insecurity can all arise from degraded ecosystems.
- **SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation.** Ecosystem degradation affects the availability and quality of freshwater resources. Deforestation and poor land management can lead to sedimentation of water bodies, reducing water quality and availability.
- **SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.** The decline in natural resources directly affects economic sectors like tourism and fisheries, which are vital for Samoa's economy. Reduced biodiversity and environmental health can deter tourism and decrease fishery yields.
- **SDG 13: Climate Action.** Without addressing climate change impacts, Samoa remains highly vulnerable to extreme weather events, sea-level rise, and other climate-related challenges. Inadequate climate action can exacerbate these vulnerabilities, leading to more frequent and severe natural disasters.
- **SDG 14: Life Below Water.** Marine ecosystem degradation, such as coral reef destruction and overfishing, directly threatens marine biodiversity. This not only impacts food security but also the overall health of marine ecosystems.
- **SDG 15: Life on Land.** Deforestation, habitat loss, and biodiversity decline threaten terrestrial ecosystems. Poor land management practices and invasive species further exacerbate these threats, reducing ecosystem services that are crucial for human well-being.
- **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals.** Addressing these environmental threats requires strong partnerships between the government, private sector, and international community. Without collaborative efforts, mobilizing the necessary resources and expertise to tackle these challenges will be difficult.

III. STRATEGY

This project is a child project of the GEF 8 Blue Green Islands Integrated Programme (BGI IP) with the Programme's overarching objective *to facilitate nature-positive development and reduce ecosystem degradation in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) by valuing nature and applying Nature-based Solutions (NbS) with specific application to the food, tourism, and urban sectors*. Thus, the Project Objective is in line with the IP objective and is stated as the following:

- *To ensure nature-positive development and reduce ecosystem degradation in Samoa by valuing nature and applying Nature-based Solutions (NbS) with specific application to food and tourism sectors.*

The Project Objective is expected to be achieved through implementation of five general Strategies (Components):

- **Component 1:** Integration of nature in key economic sectors through targeted economic, governance and financial interventions;
- **Component 2:** Implement landscape and seascape level nature-based solutions in key ecosystems supporting the food (agriculture and fisheries) and tourism sectors;
- **Component 3:** Unlocking private sector capital and finance for action in SIDS;
- **Component 4:** Knowledge management, awareness, collaborative and gender-inclusive engagement to capture, utilize and share knowledge in relation to nature-based solutions and natural capital;
- **Component 5:** Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) to ensure effective project management.

Component 1: *Integration of nature in key economic sectors through targeted economic, governance and financial interventions* is designed to integrate the value of ecosystem services into the planning and budgeting processes of key economic sectors in Samoa, such as agriculture, fisheries, and tourism. This component involves developing economic, governance, and financial frameworks that recognize and incorporate the benefits of natural capital and nature-based solutions (NbS). Specifically, Component 1 will (a) complete and expand NCAs in Samoa (with Ecosystem Service Valuation as the first step of the process) to include critical ecosystems to ensure that the economic value of these natural resources is recognized and integrated into national economic planning; (b) produce decision support tools that incorporate NCA data and enable policymakers and sectoral managers to make informed choices about resource management and economic development, ensuring that NbS are effectively implemented and scaled; and (c) build the capacity of authorities to use NCA data and implement NbS ensuring that these concepts are effectively applied into planning and management practices, leading to sustainable resource use and enhanced resilience. Component 1 is expected to remove **Barrier 1: Inadequate integration of ecosystem valuation and NbS in planning and decision-making at national and local levels, due to incomplete and lacking NCA modules, low capacity and awareness among authorities, and absence of NbS decision support tools based on NCA**. This Component learns from and builds on successful and recommended practices applied in Samoa and abroad, including:

- Completing and expanding NCAs to include critical ecosystems ensures that the economic value of these natural resources is recognized and integrated into national economic planning³¹;
- Successful PES schemes in other regions have demonstrated the potential to mobilize private sector capital for conservation efforts³²;
- Building the capacity of authorities to use NCA data and implement NbS ensures that these concepts are effectively integrated into planning and management practices, leading to sustainable resource use and enhanced resilience³³.

Component 2: *Implement landscape and seascape level nature-based solutions in key ecosystems supporting the food (agriculture and fisheries) and tourism sectors* focuses on the implementation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) at the landscape and seascape levels to enhance the resilience and sustainability of key ecosystems that support Samoa's food production (agriculture and fisheries) and tourism sectors. This involves (a) integrating and implementing NbS priorities based on NCA modules into Community Integrated Management Plans (CIMPs) and Water Recourse Management Plans of target districts with focus on food production and tourism sectors; (b) developing and implementing Integrated Management Plans for Protected Areas (PAs), and (c) restoring key forest ecosystems having high conservation, economic, and adaptation value through community action and private sector partnerships. The NbS under Component 2 will be meticulously designed to

³¹ SPREP (2023). Improving data collection and management for informed decision making in the Pacific

³² World Bank (2021). Mobilizing Private Sector Financing for Nature-Based Solutions

³³ UNDP (2022). Effective Project Management for Nature-based Solutions

address a multifaceted array of socio-environmental problems in Samoa, including coastal erosion, flash flooding, soil degradation, depletion of fish resources, and degradation of terrestrial and marine ecosystems critical for sustainability of food and tourism sectors. By integrating nature into planning and management frameworks, restoring and conserving critical ecosystems, promoting sustainable practices, and ensuring livelihoods, social inclusion and cohesion, and gender equity, these initiatives will contribute to building resilient, sustainable, and equitable communities. The holistic approach not only directly addresses the drivers of ecosystem degradation in the food and tourism sectors, but also mitigates immediate environmental and socio-economic challenges and fosters long-term sustainability and resilience against future societal and environmental stresses. Component 2 is fully based on the input (NCAs and NbS tools) from Component 1 and designed to remove **Barrier 2: Inadequate NbS integration in district development in Samoa to address developmental, climate, and environmental threats in food production and tourism sectors.** The Component is based on the following successful practices:

- Integrating NbS into existing management plans ensures that ecosystem services are considered in decision-making, leading to improved management and conservation outcomes³⁴;
- Developing and implementing integrated management plans for key protected areas ensures that NbS practices are mainstreamed into conservation efforts, enhancing the ecological integrity and resilience of these areas³⁵;
- Restoring critical ecosystems through community action and private sector partnerships enhances their conservation, economic, and climate adaptation values, supporting sustainable development and resilience³⁶.

Additionally, Component 2 of the project builds on several existing NbS initiatives, partnerships, and successful results in Samoa. Samoa has a solid foundation of NbS-oriented programs, such as the Two Million Tree Planting Campaign and the Samoa Ocean Strategy, which have enhanced forest conservation, marine management, and watershed protection efforts. Furthermore, Community Integrated Management Plans (CIMPs), developed and updated over the past decade, have been pivotal in guiding NbS priorities across multiple districts, promoting a holistic, ridge-to-reef approach (see details the Baseline Programs section). The project will strengthen and upscale these existing efforts by integrating NbS into district-level water resource and land management plans and supporting their implementation.

Component 3: Unlocking private sector capital and finance for action in SIDS aims to mobilize private sector capital and finance to support Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), particularly in Samoa. This component focuses on creating enabling policy frameworks and financial mechanisms to attract private investment into NbS initiatives, especially in the tourism and food sectors. Public funds alone are insufficient to address the extensive environmental challenges faced by Samoa. Mobilizing private sector investment is crucial to scale up NbS and ensure sustainable financing for conservation and resilience-building projects. Thus, the Component will (a) provide a policy framework is developed for Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) in the tourism and food sectors in Samoa; and (b) introduce the International Visitor Levy (IVL) for Samoa as a mechanism to mobilize tourism sector finance for NbS. The Component is based on the input from Component 1 and will contribute significantly to the implementation of Component 2. Component 3 is expected to remove **Barrier 3: Low level of private sector investment in NbS in Samoa.** The Component 3 approach is build on the following positive experience:

- Developing a robust PES policy framework can create a market for ecosystem services, incentivizing private investments in conservation and sustainable resource management. Tax breaks and subsidies further encourage businesses to adopt nature-positive practices³⁷;
- An IVL can provide a sustainable source of funding by leveraging the tourism sector's economic power. The funds collected can be invested in NbS projects, enhancing the conservation of natural resources that attract tourists, thereby creating a positive feedback loop³⁸.

To coordinate and facilitate implementation of the Components 1-3 the project will leverage the existing **National Environment Sector Steering Committee (NESSC)** to serve as the primary multi-stakeholder platform for cross-sectoral collaboration, particularly focusing on integrating NbS into decision-making processes in the **tourism and food sectors**. The NESSC, chaired by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE), already includes representatives from key ministries (including Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and Samoa Tourism Authority), the private sector, civil society, and development partners. By building on this established coordination body, the project will strengthen collaboration between central agencies and sectoral stakeholders, promoting the integration of ecosystem services and NbS in policy and planning

³⁴ UNEP (2022). Nature-based Solutions: Opportunities and Challenges for Scaling Up

³⁵ Frontiers in Environmental Science (2021). Nature-Based Solutions for Urban Climate Change Adaptation and Wellbeing

³⁶ UNDP (2022). Community-Based Adaptation and Nature-based Solutions

³⁷ World Bank (2021). Mobilizing Private Sector Financing for Nature-Based Solutions

³⁸ UNDP (2022). Nature-based Solutions Finance for NDCs; UNEP (2022). Nature-based Solutions: Opportunities and Challenges for Scaling Up

processes across sectors. This approach ensures that policy coherence is achieved without the need for a new coordination mechanism, optimizing the use of existing structures while enhancing their capacity to address environmental, tourism, and food production challenges. Thus, at the inception phase the project in cooperation with MNRE and other agencies will review and update the ToR and structure of NESSC to ensure effective intergradation of NCA and NbS into national and sectoral policies and plans.

Component 4: *Knowledge management, awareness, collaborative and gender-inclusive engagement to capture, utilize and share knowledge in relation to nature-based solutions and natural capital* aims to enhance knowledge management and raise awareness about NbS and NCA among local communities, decision-makers, and the private sector in Samoa. This component also focuses on promoting gender-inclusive engagement and sharing best practices to facilitate the replication and scaling up of NbS and NCA activities within Samoa and across the Pacific region. The project will engage in collective action, Knowledge Management (KM), and South-South cooperation with other BGI IP countries and the Global Coordination Project (GCP) through the established BGI IP platform, events, and other mechanisms for sharing best practices, lessons learned, and experiences. Specifically, Component 4 will facilitate knowledge exchanges and gender-inclusive learning with other BGI IP countries and relevant GCP initiatives, ensuring that innovative approaches to NCA and NbS are disseminated. Through the Components 4 the project will also contribute to 'collective bargaining for the SIDS' through BGI IP, by actively engaging with the established platforms and through the currently proposed regional node (SPREP) for sharing knowledge and negotiating common positions on climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development. Through this participation, Samoa will support the development of unified policy positions, amplify the voice of SIDS in international forums, and ensure that lessons learned from implementing NCA and NbS are integrated into broader regional strategies, thereby contributing to collective gains for the resilience of all SIDS. Specifically, Component 4 will take inputs from Components 1, 2, 3 and 5 and will (a) conduct awareness campaign on NCA and NbS among key stakeholders; (b) and develop and share gender-inclusive lessons and best NCA and NbS practices of the project among key stakeholders in Samoa and abroad. The Component will deal with the **Barrier 4. Limited awareness and knowledge of key stakeholders on NCA and NbS approaches and models, and lack of scale up mechanisms to disseminate and replicate successful NbS practices across Samoa.** The component is based on the following proved rationale:

- Conducting awareness campaigns helps to educate stakeholders about the importance of ecosystem services and the benefits of integrating NbS and NCA into development planning. This leads to increased support and participation in sustainability initiatives³⁹;
- Sharing gender-inclusive lessons and best practices ensures that successful strategies are replicated in other regions, enhancing the overall impact of the project⁴⁰.

Component 5: *Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) to ensure effective project management* will provide effective project monitoring framework for exercising of the project Adaptive Management and achieving sustainable project Outcomes. This Component will provide a foundation for the learning under Component 4 and will ensure effective and timely delivery of all project Outputs. Additionally, Component 5 will incorporate monitoring and evaluation processes that align with the GCP's broader objectives, fostering collaborative learning and adaptive management across all BGI IP countries.

The proposed project strategy was developed through a process of ongoing project development and consultation between February 2023 and April 2024 with most work occurring between October 2023 and March 2024. This more intensive period of engagement was initiated by an inception workshop held in Apia on November 21st which was attended by key representatives of government, private sector and civil society. This process was followed by a series of bilateral and group meetings held with key national stakeholders and especially representatives from MNRE. Consultations were also held with target districts to discuss project approaches with the final project approach approved by key national and local-level stakeholders at a well-attended validation workshop held in Apia on the 13th of March 2024. Further details of this process are found in the section on stakeholder engagement and Stakeholder Engagement Plan in Annexes 8 and 8a.

Project Implementation Approach:

The project acknowledges the ambitious scope of its activities, including developing new policy frameworks and financial mechanisms (e.g., Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) and International Visitor Levy (IVL)), and ensuring timely recruitment of staff. To address the challenge of a relatively short implementation period (4 years instead of standard 5 years), the following strategies will be adopted by the project team:

³⁹ SPREP(2023). *Improving data collection and management for informed decision making in the Pacific*

⁴⁰ <https://www.iisd.org/system/files/2024-01/gender-equality-social-inclusion-nature-based-solutions.pdf>

- Minimal inter-dependency of the project Outputs:** the project was design to have minimal inter-dependency of the Outputs, so majority of the Outputs can be initiated simultaneously from the project start. For example, Output 1.2 can start to work on the requirements for DTS for three existing NCA modules in parallel with delivery of the Output 1.1; capacity and needs assessment for Output 1.3 can start at the same time. Same for the Output 2.1 that already has some NbS and EbA in CIMP that can be implemented before the Plans are updated with more comprehensive set of NbS. Output 2.2 PA Management Planning can be initiated simultaneously as well with relevant feasibility studies. Ecosystem restoration process can be launched simultaneously based on the measures already integrated in CIMP (Output 2.3). Outputs 3.1 and 3.2 have no dependency on NCAs (Output 1.1.1) and can be initiated from the project start as well.
- Proactive planning of the Output delivery:** the most time sensitive Outputs (e.g., Outputs 1.1 (NCA modules), 3.1 (PES policy framework), and 3.2 (IVL mechanism) are positioned in the project Work Plan to be drafted/developed on the project Years 1-2 to allow significant time for review by the government agencies, discussion with stakeholders and official approval before the end of the project.
- Proactive project management planning:** the project will have an experienced Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) that will work on the ToRs starting the project inception phase and support delivery of the time-sensitive Outputs (e.g., 1.1, 3.1, and 3.2) (see the section VII Governance and Management Arrangements);
- Early Engagement and Consultations:** the project will leverage pre-existing consultations with MNRE and other stakeholders and partners, such as the preliminary work conducted during the PPG phase, to accelerate the policy development process. Many foundational consultations and technical reviews will have been initiated by MNRE and UNDP at the project inception phase, allowing the project to move directly into drafting, review, and implementation stages once launched. Same approach will allow fast review and consultations with the government for endorsement and implementation of developed policy and financial mechanism;
- Accelerated Recruitment Processes:** to avoid delays in staff hiring, the recruitment process for key personnel (e.g., project coordinator, CTA, technical experts) will be initiated during the inception phase using UNDP Consultants Roster to speed up the procedure, with preparatory work done by MNRE and UNDP before the formal start date. For example, the CTA can be hired at the project start through a short-term contract to develop Annual Work Plan, initial ToRs and agreements with service providers. This approach ensures that critical staff are in place shortly after project commencement.
- Phased and Parallel Implementation:** project activities for the Outputs will be implemented in a phased manner, starting with high-priority actions such as policy reviews (Output 3.1) and feasibility studies (Output 3.2) for financial mechanisms. Simultaneously, activities like data collection and community engagement can begin in parallel (fast-tracking process), allowing other activities and Outputs to proceed without waiting for sequential completion of earlier phases.
- Building on Existing Policies and Mechanisms:** the project will build on existing NCA, PES and IVL-related work, experience, and lessons from Samoa's previous comprehensive initiatives, such as the Vaisigano Catchment GCF project and the Samoa Ocean Strategy (SOS), which reduces the time needed for policy design and stakeholder buy-in. Utilizing these models allows the project to streamline policy/mechanism development and adaptation for the new context.
- Adaptive Management and Continuous Monitoring:** The project will adopt a proactive adaptive management approach, guided by a comprehensive M&E framework designed to enable timely identification of challenges and facilitate rapid responses. This approach involves continuous monitoring of progress on the project Outputs (monthly and quarterly), including regular reviews of timelines and resource allocation to ensure optimal efficiency. As part of this, the project team will prioritize flexibility in resource deployment and the acceleration of critical activities where feasible to expedite Output delivery. Additionally, the project team will integrate a feedback loop through partner and stakeholder consultations and quarterly progress assessments, allowing the project team to remain responsive to evolving circumstances and to enhance the likelihood of achieving project Outcomes within the specified timeframe. By embedding adaptive management at every stage, the project is positioned to overcome time-related constraints while maintaining alignment with its Objective.

Project Area

The project will be implemented across nine districts with a total area of 55,385ha and total population of 29,884 people (approximately 12% of Samoa's population) (see Table 2). Also, it will work in two terrestrial and one marine protected area – O Le Pupu Pu'e National Park, Mauga o Salafai Protected Area, and Safata MPA (MPA) (see Fig. 1).

Table 2. Project districts

	Districts	Area of interest	Area (Ha)	Population (2021)
1	Falealili 1 (West), Upolu Island	O Le Pupu Pu'e National Park (Terrestrial Protected Area)	11,760	3,575
2	Falealili 2 (East), Upolu Island	O Le Pupu Pu'e National Park (Terrestrial Protected Area)	2,796	1,383
3	Siumu, Upolu Island	Landscape (Ridge to reef)	5,492	2,551
4	Safata 1, Upolu Island	Safata MPA (MPA) / Landscape (Ridge to reef)	6,066	4,109
5	Safata 2, Upolu Island	Safata MPA (MPA) / Landscape (Ridge to reef)	3,621	3,211
6	Lefaga & Faleaseela, Upolu Island	Landscape (Ridge to reef)	7,137	4,488
7	Faasaleleaga 3, Savaii Island	Mauga o Salafai Protected Area / Tapueleele Watershed / Landscape (Ridge to reef)	4,992	3,780
8	Faasaleleaga 4, Savaii Island	Mauga o Salafai Protected Area / Tapueleele Watershed / Landscape (Ridge to reef)	3,524	3,690
9	Faasaleleaga 5, Savaii Island	Mauga o Salafai Protected Area / Tapueleele Watershed / Landscape (Ridge to reef)	9,997	3,097

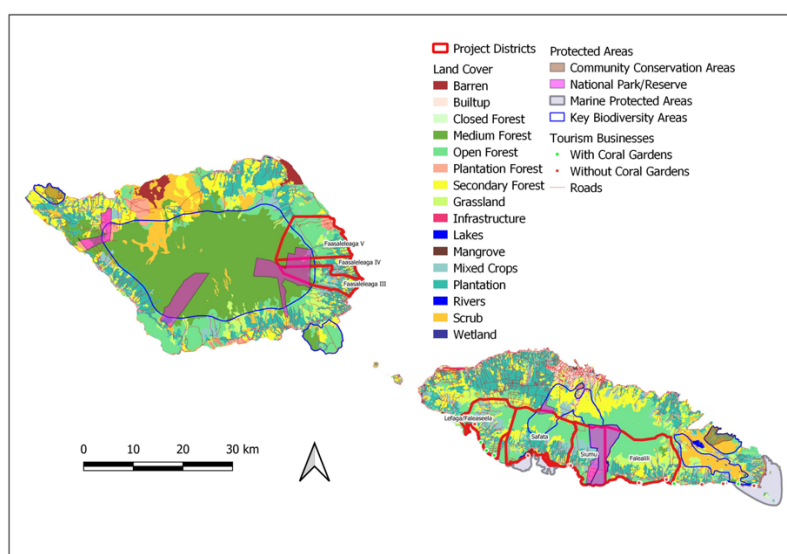


Figure 1. Project districts and target PAs

The project sites were selected based on the following:

- *Existing challenges and issues affecting society:* the communities in these areas face challenges associated with climate change, disaster risk, ecosystem/habitat degradation and biodiversity loss, water catchment

degradation from human activities. Most areas have steep topography which makes them vulnerable to landslides, erosion, flooding and cyclone damage, which already affects livelihoods of local communities. The selected National Parks have been degraded by past cyclones and affected by the expansion of IAS. The proposed project would look at purposeful nature-based interventions to address these issues and meet community livelihood or wellbeing needs;

- **Valuable landscape/seascape ecosystems and critical habitats:** The selected sites contain important ecosystems (e.g. catchments) that spread across larger land and seascape areas and cannot be managed separately or in isolation. In addition, some ecosystem goods and services are generated at the landscape/seascape level so will better enable NbS interventions across wider land areas. Applying the landscape approach will link the various sectors (e.g. forestry, water, agriculture, etc.) that would better support and contribute to the NbS to effectively address societal livelihood needs and improve environmental quality. Also, the sites include habitats for such globally endangered and threatened species as: the Tooth-billed pigeon (*Didunculus strigirostris*, CE), Mao (*Gymnomyza samoensis*, E), Samoan Flying Fox (*Pteropus samoensis*, V), Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, CE) and Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, E);
- **Existing programs and management mechanisms:** there are already existing nature-based oriented programs and projects targeting these areas and are implemented by the MNRE in collaboration with the local community. The main nature-based oriented interventions include: O Le Pupu Pu'e National Park (Falealili 2 (West) District; Mauga-o-Salafai (Faasaleleaga District, Savaii Island); Marine Protected Area (Safata District); Mangrove Protected Areas (Safata & Falealili Districts); Village Fisheries Reserves (Lefaga & Faleaseela District and Falealili Districts (1 & 2); and forest and catchment conservation (Faasaleleaga 2, 3 & 4). Management Plans are also in place as parts of these conservation initiatives. In addition, districts have already been consulted, strong community interest and commitment secured, and village committees and working groups subsequently established as focal points to support ground-level management and implementation. This is to the proposed project's advantage that it would only focus on up-scaling and strengthening of these existing areas and activities instead of having to start all over again;
- **Available baseline information** (e.g. key aspects of the physical environment, issues and challenges and existing or ongoing conservation interventions) are available for all sites to guide decisions on NbS priorities, management and implementation at least to maintain and ideally improve their ecological integrity and species diversity over the long term. The sites have also been assigned clear and measurable conservation and restoration outcomes and targets and are monitored and assessed on a periodic basis. All the nine districts have existing Community Integrated Management Plans (CIMPs) first developed in 2008 and revised / updated in 2018. The Plans commit the communities to enhancing their resilience in terms of livelihoods, infrastructure, environment and natural resources to climate change impacts using a holistic and integrated ridge-to-reef approach. These plans form the basis of the proposed interventions within the project and the identification and prioritization of NbS approaches. The prioritization of approaches will link these plans with the IUCN NbS Gold Standard (see more details about the profiles of project sites in Annex 24).

Project Theory of Change

The project Theory of Change (ToC) is based on the Results-Based Management Concept and depicted in Figure 2 and explained below:

Component 1: Integration of nature in key economic sectors through targeted economic, governance and financial interventions has the following three Outputs (direct project products and services):

- **Output 1.1.** Three existing NCA modules in Samoa (waste, energy and water) are completed and four additional ecosystem NCA modules (mangrove, coral reefs, forest and sea-grass) are developed and integrated into the Tourist Satellite Account and other national planning and budget frameworks;
- **Output 1.2.** National and local level Decision Support Tools are developed to integrate NCA modules into decision-making on NbS and economic development; and
- **Output 1.3.** Key national and local level authorities are trained on application of NCA for sustainable natural resource management and NbS planning.

The Outputs are designed to achieve the project **Outcome 1. Value of ecosystem services better integrated into planning and budgeting allocations** using the following logical pathway:

If comprehensive NCA modules are completed and integrated into the national planning framework (Output 1.1), if Decision Support Tools are created to integrate these modules into decision-making and natural resource management, including NbS (Output 1.2), and if key authorities and managers at national and local level have good capacity to apply these NCA modules and tools in decision-making process (Output 1.3), then the value of ecosystem services will be better integrated into national and local planning and budgeting allocations, and decision making on the natural resource management and NbS (Outcome 1). The **key assumptions** behind the Outcome 1 are the following: (1) the NCA modules provide accurate and reliable data that is reflective of the true economic value of ecosystem services; (2) Relevant authorities and stakeholders are willing to accept and utilize the NCA data in their planning and budgeting processes; (3) Decision Support Tools are user-friendly, accessible, and effectively tailored to the needs of policymakers at both national and local levels; and (4) authorities actively apply the knowledge and skills gained from training in their planning and budgeting processes. Component 1 plays a critical role in advancing the **GEF BGI IP Lever 1 – Governance and Policy** by embedding the value of ecosystem services into national and local planning and budgeting processes, **GEF BGI IP Lever 2 – Financial Leverage** (lays the groundwork for introducing **sustainable funding mechanisms** such as PES or eco-taxes, which directly leverage financial contributions from sectors that benefit from ecosystem services in Samoa), and **GEF BGI IP Lever 3 – Multi-Stakeholder Dialogs** (by fostering collaboration and dialogue among various stakeholders, including government agencies, local communities, the private sector, and international partners on NCA and NbS planning and budgeting).

Component 2: *Implement landscape and seascape level nature-based solutions in key ecosystems supporting the food (agriculture and fisheries) and tourism sectors* has the following Outputs:

- **Output 2.1.** NbS priorities based on NCA modules (Output 1.1) are integrated in the CIMPs and WRM Plans and implemented to improve management of forest, coastal and marine ecosystems in partnership with private sector (food production and tourism);
- **Output 2.2.** Integrated Management Plans for Mauga o Salafai and O Le Pupu Pu'e PAs, and Safata District MPA are developed and implemented to mainstream NbS practices into the PA management;
- **Output 2.3.** Key forest ecosystems of high conservation, economic, and adaptation value restored through Community NbS Action and partnership with private sector.

The Outputs are designed to achieve the project **Outcome 2. Enhanced systemic and institutional capacity to implement NbS in key ecosystems at seascape and landscape levels, mainstreaming gender concerns and involving youth and vulnerable communities** through the following logical pathway:

If NbS priorities based on NCA modules are integrated into CIMPS and WRM plans in the target districts and implemented in the agriculture, fishery, and tourism sector through gender-inclusive approach (Output 2.1), if Integrated Management Plans for key PAs are developed and implemented to promote their sustainable management and NbS application (Output 2.2), and if key forest and mangrove ecosystems are restored through Community NbS Action and private sector partnerships (Output 2.3), then the systemic and institutional capacity to implement NbS in the target districts and adjacent landscapes and seascapes will be enhanced (via “learning by doing”) and applied at significant scale through gender mainstreaming approach, involving youth and vulnerable communities (Outcome 2). The key assumptions behind Outcome 2 are the following: (1) NbS priorities are effectively integrated into CIMPs and WRM plans, reflecting the true value of ecosystem services; (2) there is an active participation and collaboration from the private sector and local communities, including youth and vulnerable groups, in developing and implementing management plans and restoration efforts; (3) gender concerns are mainstreamed into all aspects of NbS implementation, ensuring that women and men benefit equally from the project; and (4) sufficient co-financing, technical, social and environmental safeguards support, and capacity-building are provided to ensure the success of NbS initiatives. Component 2 applies the **GEF BGI IP Lever 3 – Multi-Stakeholder Dialogs** by establishing processes and platforms for multi-stakeholder dialogues. By integrating NbS priorities into national and local planning frameworks, fostering cross-scale coalitions, and ensuring active participation from diverse stakeholders, the project creates an enabling environment for the successful implementation of NbS.

Component 3: *Unlocking private sector capital and finance for action in SIDS* has the following Outputs:

- **Output 3.1.** Key policy framework is developed for Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) in the tourism and food sectors of Samoa using tax breaks, nature-positive subsidies, certification, and public-private partnerships;
- **Output 3.2.** International Visitor Levy (IVL) for Samoa is developed and implemented as a mechanism to mobilize tourism sector finance for NbS.

The Outputs are expected to achieve the **Outcome 3: Increased financial flows to NbS from private sector** through the following logical pathway:

If a key policy framework for PES is developed (Output 3.1) and implemented for food and tourism sectors, and if an International Visitor Levy (IVL) is developed and implemented for tourism sector (Output 3.2), then these mechanisms will create economic incentives for private sector to invest in NbS and will allow to generate dedicated revenue streams for NbS,

and **then** businesses in the tourism and food sectors, as well as international visitors, will contribute financially to NbS projects; **therefore** financial flows to NbS from the private sector will increase, achieving Outcome 3. The key assumptions behind the Outcome 3: (1) the economic incentives provided through the PES framework are attractive enough to motivate private sector investment in NbS; (2) there is adequate institutional and social and environmental safeguards support to implement, monitor, and manage the PES schemes and IVL effectively; (3) revenue from the IVL is transparently managed and efficiently allocated to NbS projects, ensuring accountability and trust. Component 3 applies the **GEF BGI IP Lever 2 – Financial Leverage** by enhancing the capacity to mobilize financing through both domestic resources and private capital. By developing policy frameworks and financial mechanisms such as PES and IVL, the project creates economic incentives and generates dedicated revenue streams for NbS.

Component 4: *Knowledge management, awareness, collaborative and gender-inclusive engagement to capture, utilize and share knowledge in relation to nature-based solutions and natural capital* has the following Outputs:

- **Output 4.1.** Awareness campaign among local communities, decision makers, and private sector of Samoa on NCA, NbS, and key values of ecosystems for sustainable development;
- **Output 4.2.** Gender-inclusive lessons and best practices of the project are shared with other districts of Samoa and abroad through BGI IP/GCP Knowledge Management and Learning for replication and scale up of NCA approaches and NbS activities in Pacific; designed to achieve the **Outcome 4: Lessons and best practices of the project on NbS, NCA, ecosystem valuation, and gender mainstreaming are applied by other districts in Samoa and abroad** through the following logical pathway:

If an awareness campaign on NCA and NbS is conducted among target stakeholders (Output 4.1); and if gender-inclusive lessons and best practices on NCA and NbS are developed based on the project models and effectively shared among stakeholders in Samoa and Pacific (Output 4.2), **then** stakeholders will understand the importance and benefits of NCA, NbS, and ecosystem valuation and will be more likely to adopt and advocate for these practices in their respective areas, and **then** proven NCA and NbS strategies and methodologies will be available for other districts and regions to replicate and scale up; **therefore** lessons and best practices of the project on NbS, NCA, ecosystem valuation, and gender mainstreaming will be applied by other districts in Samoa and abroad, achieving Outcome 4. The **key assumptions** for achievement of the Outcome 4 are the following: (1) the awareness campaign and sharing of lessons are effectively communicated, reaching a wide and relevant audience; (2) there is strong engagement and willingness among stakeholders to learn from and apply the lessons and best practices; (3) there are effective platforms and networks in place for disseminating information and facilitating collaboration among stakeholders to apply the best practices. Component 4 significantly contributes to the **GEF BGI IP Lever 4 – Innovation and Learning** by promoting innovation and learning through technology options, collaborative business models, and institutional innovations. By raising awareness, sharing lessons, and fostering collaboration, the project shifts societal norms, increases stakeholder capacity, and creates new coalitions for sustainable change. This approach ensures the broad adoption and replication of NbS and NCA practices, driving systemic change towards environmental sustainability (see Knowledge section for other details).

Component 5: *Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) to ensure effective project management* has only one Output:

- **Output 5.1.** Participatory and gender-inclusive M&E system is implemented to measure the project effectiveness and tests the project Theory of Change, designed to achieve the **Outcome 5: Effective Adaptive Management of the project based on robust M&E framework** through the following pathway:

If an effective, participatory, and gender-inclusive M&E system is implemented, **then** diverse perspectives, including those of women and other marginalized groups, will be incorporated into the project monitoring and evaluation processes; **then** the M&E system will generate comprehensive and inclusive data on the project's progress and outcomes and these robust data will provide accurate and detailed insights into what is working well and what is not, according to the project's Theory of Change; **then** project team will have access to timely and relevant information needed to make informed decisions and will apply this information to make necessary adjustments and improvements to the project; **therefore** the project will benefit from effective adaptive management, guided by a robust M&E framework, ensuring that it remains on track and achieves its intended outcomes. The **key assumptions** behind the Outcome 5: (1) the M&E system effectively engages a wide range of stakeholders, ensuring that diverse voices and perspectives are included; (2) the data collected through the M&E system is accurate, reliable, and comprehensive, providing a true reflection of the project's progress and impacts; (3) project team has the capacity and willingness to utilize M&E data to make adjustments and improvements to the project. Component 5 is based on the **GEF BGI IP Lever 4 – Innovation and Learning** providing M&E framework to ensure effective learning through all project components.

The **Outcomes 1-5** are expected to achieve the **Project Objective** *to ensure nature-positive development and reduce ecosystem degradation in Samoa by valuing nature and applying Nature-based Solutions (NbS) with specific application to food and tourism sectors* via the following:

- **Integrating ecosystem service values** into planning ensures resources are allocated to protect and enhance natural ecosystems and implement NbS, promoting sustainability;
- **Enhancing systemic capacity** to ensure effective NbS design, implementation, maintaining ecosystem services vital for food and tourism sectors;
- **Increasing private sector investment** to provide the necessary funding for NbS, sustainable projects, driving nature-positive development;
- **Sharing and replicating best practices** to ensure successful strategies are adopted broadly, amplifying the impact of NbS initiatives;
- **Implementing adaptive management** is based on robust M&E ensures continuous improvement and effectiveness of NbS projects, sustaining nature-positive outcomes;
- All above implemented in tandem will lead to **the nature-positive development and reduce ecosystem degradation in Samoa.**

The key assumptions to achieve the project Objective are the following: (1) the natural ecosystems in Samoa are resilient enough to respond positively to NbS interventions and climate change impacts; (2) future climate conditions will not drastically undermine the effectiveness of NbS interventions and results; and (3) the economic environment in Samoa will remain stable enough to support sustainable development initiatives.

Project resilience to potential changes in economic and environmental drivers

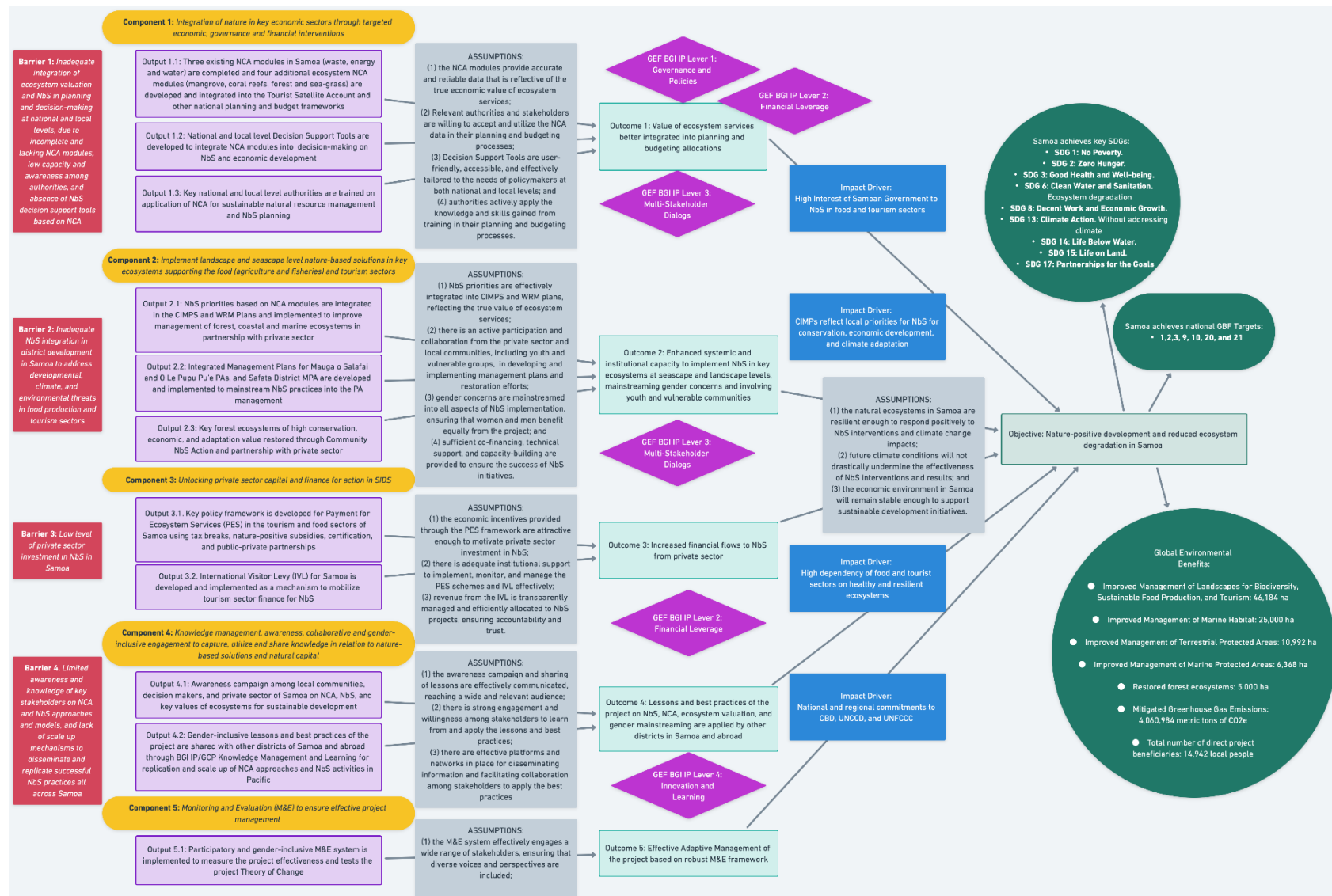
The design of the project ensures resilience to future changes in economic, environmental, and climate drivers through a comprehensive and multi-pronged strategy to ensure that Samoa is better prepared to face future changes driven by environmental degradation, climate change, and economic shifts, promoting long-term resilience across sectors and communities. The strategies can be summarized as the following:
which can be summarized as follows:

- **NCA and NbS Integration:** One of the key strategies is the inclusion of comprehensive NCA modules into Samoa's national economic planning. By assigning economic value to ecosystems and their services, the project ensures that natural resources are considered in policy and budget allocations, helping to balance economic development with environmental sustainability in any future scenario. Also, the project focuses on integrating NbS into key economic sectors such as food production and tourism. By restoring and managing critical ecosystems like forests, coral reefs, and mangroves, the project enhances resilience to climate impacts such as sea-level rise, increased storm frequency, and ecosystem degradation. This approach not only reduces vulnerability but also promotes sustainable development in critical economic sectors that rely on healthy ecosystems;
- **Private Sector Engagement:** the project addresses the challenge of insufficient investment in environmental resilience by unlocking private sector capital through mechanisms like PES, introduction of an IVL, and involvement of private sector in NbS projects. These mechanisms incentivize sustainable practices in the food and tourism sectors, ensuring long-term financial support for ecosystem conservation and resilience, preparing Samoa to future variability in development scenarios;
- **Community Involvement, Capacity Building, and Ownership:** the project heavily involves local communities in ecosystem restoration and other NbS activities and the development of management plans for PAs. This ensures that resilience-building efforts are grounded in local knowledge and address community needs, and encourage community ownership, increasing the sustainability of interventions in face of future stressors. Training and capacity-building initiatives further enhance local and national capabilities to implement and manage NbS under multiple future scenarios;
- **Robust Monitoring and Evaluation:** A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework is established to ensure adaptive management of the project. This includes monitoring progress and outcomes, allowing for adjustments as new climate, economic, or environmental challenges arise. To ensure effective Adaptive management the project design incorporates the following proactive measures:

- (1) the project is designed with **minimal interdependencies** between outputs, allowing multiple activities to proceed simultaneously. This ensures that delays in one area do not hold up progress in others;

- (2) the project proposes **phased and parallel implementation** strategies, particularly for data collection and community engagement activities. This allows various project components to advance simultaneously, accelerating progress without waiting for the sequential completion of earlier phases;
- (3) the project will **build on existing frameworks and coordination mechanisms**, results and deliverables of previous activities (e.g., ESV, NCA, NbS, PES, and IVL), and lessons learned from previous GEF and non-GEF projects. This reduces the time and resources required for stakeholder buy-in and delivery of the project Outputs;
- (4) the project is based on **flexible budgeting and resource allocation** to reallocate funds and human resources as needed. This allows the project to address emerging priorities or tackle unforeseen challenges, such as shifts in climate impacts or changing economic conditions;
- (5) the project incorporates climate risk screening to inform decision-making. Adaptive measures will be implemented based on ongoing assessments of climate risks, including adjusting project activities, modifying NbS interventions, or developing additional resilience strategies for communities facing increased vulnerability due to climate change.

Figure 2. Project Theory of Change



Alignment of the Project Strategy with GEF Focal Areas, BGI IP, and Kunming-Montreal GBF Targets

The alignment of the project strategy with relevant GEF 8 Focal Areas and BGI IP is explained in the table below:

Table 3. Alignment of the project with the GEF 8 Focal Areas and BGI IP

GEF 8 Focal Area, or IP	How the project contributes to the Focal Area, or IP
BD Objective 1. To improve conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of natural ecosystems (Goals A and B of the GBF): BD-1-1, BD-1-2, BD-1-3, BD-1-4, and BD-3-1	The project aims to increase the management effectiveness of marine and terrestrial areas (BD-1-1), restore degraded ecosystems (BD-1-3), and organize sustainable management of terrestrial and marine ecosystems in the project area (BD-1-2) (Component 2). By integrating ecosystem service values into planning and budgeting, the project ensures that conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems are prioritized in economic development (BD-1-4) (Component 1). Decision support tools and training help institutionalize sustainable practices, ensuring that ecosystems are managed in a way that maintains their health and productivity (BD-1-4) (Component 1). By mobilizing private sector investment and tourism sector finance, the project secures additional resources for ecosystem conservation and restoration activities (BD-3-1) (Component 3).
CC Objective (CCM) 1.4: Promote Nature-based Solutions with high mitigation potential	The project contributes to GEF 8 Climate Change (CC) Objective 1.4 by promoting and implementing Nature-based Solutions (NbS) that have significant potential to mitigate climate change. This is achieved through activities that enhance carbon sequestration, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve ecosystem resilience. Specifically, by valuing and integrating ecosystem services into planning and budget frameworks, particularly those related to carbon storage (e.g., forests, mangroves, seagrass), the project promotes conservation practices that enhance carbon sequestration (Component 1). Restoration activities focus on ecosystems with high carbon storage capacities; forests and mangroves are significant carbon sinks, and their restoration enhances their ability to sequester carbon (Component 2). Implementing NbS at a landscape and seascape level ensures that large areas are managed for their carbon sequestration potential, contributing to significant climate change mitigation (Component 2). The IVL generates funds specifically for NbS, including those with high mitigation potential, ensuring sustainable tourism practices that support carbon sequestration and emission reduction projects (Component 3).
BGI IP Component 1: integration of nature into development and fiscal policies and planning of key economic sectors	By developing and integrating NCA modules into national planning and budgeting frameworks, the project ensures that the economic value of ecosystem services is recognized and factored into policy and decision-making processes (Component 1). By incorporating NbS priorities into CIMPS and WRM plans, the project ensures that nature-based approaches are embedded in local and regional development plans (Component 2). The PES policy framework creates economic incentives for the private sector to invest in ecosystem services, aligning financial and fiscal policies with environmental sustainability (Component 3).
BGI IP Component 2: implementation of nature-based solutions at landscape and seascape level in key ecosystems supporting the tourism, food, and urban sectors	Training of authorities enhances their ability to implement NbS effectively, ensuring that ecosystem values are integrated into sectoral management (Component 1). Implementing NbS at landscape and seascape levels, such as restoring forests and mangroves, improving PA management, and sustainable management of productive landscapes and seascapes enhances the resilience and productivity of ecosystems that support the tourism and food sectors (Component 2). The IVL is expected to generate dedicated funds for NbS projects, ensuring that tourism revenues contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources (Component 3).
BGI IP Component 3: strengthening SIDS capacity, collective bargaining, and collective scaling up (and scaling out) for sub-regional and global impacts	Disseminating lessons and best practices on NCA and NbS fosters collective learning and capacity building among SIDS. Promoting gender-inclusive approaches ensures that scaling up NbS is equitable and benefits all community members, enhancing social resilience. Raising awareness about the benefits of NCA and NbS builds a strong case for collective action and support for environmental initiatives (Component 4).

The project contribution to the Kunming-Montreal GBF Targets is explained in Table 4.

Table 4. Project Contribution to the Kunming-Montreal GBF Targets

GBF Target	How the project contributes to the GBF Target
Target 1: Ensure that all land and sea areas globally are under integrated biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning addressing land- and sea-use change.	NCA modules and decision support tools will provide essential data and frameworks for incorporating biodiversity values into spatial planning processes. Training will ensure that authorities have the skills and knowledge to apply these tools, facilitating biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning (Component 1) The integration of NbS priorities into CIMPs and WRM will ensure that spatial planning at local and regional levels addresses biodiversity and ecosystem services. Management plans for PAs will incorporate biodiversity considerations into land and sea-use planning, enhancing conservation efforts (Component 2)
Target 2: Ensure that at least 30% of degraded freshwater, marine and terrestrial ecosystems are under restoration, ensuring connectivity among them and focusing on priority ecosystems.	Direct restoration activities will target key degraded ecosystems, including forests and mangroves, contributing to the goal of restoring at least 30% of these ecosystems. By integrating NbS into CIMPs and WRM, the project will ensure that restoration efforts are holistic and consider the connectivity between ecosystems (Component 2); The PES framework and IVL will generate financial resources dedicated to ecosystem restoration projects, ensuring sustainable funding for ongoing and future restoration activities (Component 3)
Target 3: Ensure that at least 30% globally of land areas and of sea areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and its contributions to people, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures	Developing and implementing integrated management plans for key PAs will ensure that these areas are effectively and equitably managed. Integrating NbS priorities into CIMPs and WRM plans will ensure that PAs are part of larger, well-connected landscapes and seascapes, enhancing ecological representativeness and connectivity (Component 2)
Target 9: Ensure benefits, including nutrition, food security, medicines, and livelihoods for people especially for the most vulnerable through sustainable management of wild terrestrial, freshwater and marine species and protecting customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.	NCA will provide essential data on the economic and ecological value of key ecosystems, informing sustainable management practices that ensure benefits such as food security and sustainable livelihoods for local communities (Component 1). Integrating NbS priorities into CIMPs and WRM plans and implementing them will ensure that wild species and ecosystems are managed sustainably, providing long-term benefits such as nutrition, food security, and livelihoods (Component 2); The IVL will provide additional funding for sustainable management projects that support livelihoods and food security (Component 3); Ensuring gender-inclusive approaches in management practices will help address the specific needs and roles of women in nutrition, food security, and livelihoods. Disseminating best practices and lessons learned will help replicate successful models, ensuring wider adoption of sustainable management practices among communities (Component 4).
Target 10: Ensure all areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, increasing the productivity and resilience of these production systems	NCA will provide essential data on the value of biodiversity in agriculture, aquaculture, fishery, and forestry, informing sustainable management practices that enhance productivity and resilience (Component 1); Integrating NbS into CIMPs and WRM plans will promote improved land use and marine practices, ensuring sustainable management of agricultural, aquaculture, fishery and forestry areas (Component 2);

through improved land use and marine use practices.	PES frameworks will incentivize sustainable agricultural, aquaculture, fishery and forestry practices, promoting conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The IVL will provide dedicated funds for NbS projects, supporting sustainable management practices in these sectors (Component 3)
Target 20: Ensure that relevant knowledge, including the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities with their free, prior, and informed consent, guides decision making for the effective management of biodiversity, enabling monitoring, and by promoting awareness, education and research.	NbS priorities and integrated management plans will explicitly incorporate traditional knowledge and practices, ensuring that these are central to the sustainable management of landscapes and seascapes. Restoration activities are designed and implemented in partnership with local communities, ensuring their traditional knowledge guides restoration efforts (Component 2); Awareness campaigns will highlight the importance of traditional knowledge and practices in biodiversity management, promoting broader recognition and respect. The project will actively document and disseminate traditional knowledge and practices, facilitating their integration into modern biodiversity management and NbS. The M&E system is designed to be participatory and inclusive, ensuring that traditional knowledge is incorporated into the project activities (Components 4 and 5)
Target 21: Ensure equitable and effective participation in decision-making related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities, and respect their rights over lands, territories and resources, as well as by women and girls, and youth.	The development of NCA modules and Decision Support Tools will potentially include inputs from indigenous peoples, local communities, women, and youth, ensuring their perspectives are integrated into economic and environmental planning. Training programs for authorities will emphasize the importance of inclusive decision-making processes, equipping them with the skills to engage diverse stakeholders effectively (Component 1); The integration of NbS into CIMP and WRM will ensure that indigenous peoples, local communities, women, and youth are actively involved in the planning and implementation of sustainable land and marine use practices. Developing integrated management plans for PAs will include respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities over their lands, territories, and resources. Restoration projects will be designed and implemented with the full participation of local communities, including women and youth, ensuring their needs and rights are considered (Component 2). NbS campaigns will highlight the importance of inclusive participation in biodiversity decision-making, promoting respect for the rights of all stakeholders. Documenting and sharing gender-inclusive and youth-inclusive lessons and best practices will ensure that successful strategies are replicated, enhancing participation and equity (Component 3)

Additionally, the project aligns with the **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)** by promoting land restoration, combating land degradation, and enhancing the resilience of ecosystems. Activities such as forest ecosystem restoration and sustainable land management contribute directly to Samoa's Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets.

Also, the project contributes to the **Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS)** by promoting nature-positive development through Nature-based Solutions (NbS), integrating natural capital into economic sectors, and enhancing ecosystem resilience, directly aligning with the ABAS goal of sustainable development and environmental protection for Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

IV. RESULTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Incremental Cost Reasoning and Expected Global Environmental Benefits of the project

Business as Usual Scenario (without GEF intervention)

Samoa is already engaged in efforts to manage its natural resources and address environmental threats through different strategies including NCA and NbS. There are programs like the *Samoa Ocean Strategy*, *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan* (NBSAP), *Samoa Climate Change Policy*, and others targeting environmental conservation, sustainable development and climate resilience. The baseline programs focus on ecosystem protection, community-based adaptation, tourism, and food security (see details in the Baseline Programs section). Despite these efforts, environmental degradation, inadequate policy integration, invasive species, and insufficient capacity are major challenges. Without the GEF funding, Samoa will continue to face ecosystem degradation, insufficient integration of NCA and NbS into key sectors, and a lack of private sector investments into ecosystem protection and climate adaptation. The implementation of environmental programs is likely to be hindered by gaps in ecosystem valuation, lack of integration of biodiversity concerns into broader development planning and budgeting frameworks, limited financial resources and involvement of private sector, and lack of integration with sectoral management and development. All that will make current level initiatives critical but incomplete. This scenario will limit the scale and effectiveness of existing NCA and NbS interventions.

GEF Project Increment

GEF strategies (described in the previous section) and funding will enable Samoa to go beyond the baseline by implementing integrated and large-scale NbS based on NCA modules to tackle direct threats for both terrestrial and marine ecosystems, which are essential for food security, tourism and climate adaptation. The GEF increment will allow (a) development of comprehensive NCA modules, that will empower decision-makers to include nature's value in national planning and budget frameworks; (b) implementation of complex and effective NbS addressing multiple societal problems at the large scale and benefiting to vulnerable districts and ecosystems of high conservation, economic, and adaptation values; (c) develop policies and financial mechanisms, including the introduction of PES policy framework and IVL, to incentivize private sector contributions to NbS, biodiversity conservation, and climate adaptation; and (d) build strong capacity to apply NCA and NbS by different groups of Samoa's stakeholders at national and local levels, facilitating better governance and decision-making in environmental, food, and tourism sectors. Thus, GEF will play a pivotal role in financing the incremental cost associated with achieving global environmental benefits that go beyond what national or regional investments would cover. GEF funding will ensure that Samoa can implement transformative actions with far-reaching impacts on biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and sustainable development.

Expected Global Environmental Benefits

The incremental GEF investment will deliver measurable global environmental benefits, such as:

- **Improved Management of Landscapes for Biodiversity, Sustainable Food Production, and Tourism:** 46,184 ha (excluding Protected Areas) through integration of NbS into CIMP and WRM Plans in the target districts, adoption of village by-laws for sustainable land use, and implementation of selected NbS practices for sustainable agriculture, forestry, and tourism;
- **Improved Management of Marine Habitat:** 25,000 ha through enhancing the management of marine habitats within a 1-kilometer distance from the shoreline, used for fishery and tourism, and covered by CIMP with integrated NbS and updated village by-laws, including designating specific zones where fishing and other extractive activities are regulated or prohibited; promoting and enforcing sustainable fishing practices such as gear restrictions, seasonal closures, and catch limits; community conservation of key marine habitats such as coral reefs, seagrass beds, and mangroves; and eco-friendly tourism practices that minimize environmental impact and support conservation efforts;
- **Improved Management of Terrestrial Protected Areas:** 10,992 ha of (5,019ha of O Le Pupu Pu'e, and 5,973 of Mauga o Salafai National Parks) through development and implementation of the PA Integrated Management Plans, including implementing best NbS practices for conservation and sustainable land use (e.g., ecotourism),

protecting critical habitats for globally threatened species such as the tooth-billed pigeon (*Didunculus strigirostris*) and the endangered mao (*Gymnomyza samoensis*);

- **Improved Management of Marine Protected Areas:** 6,368 ha of the Safata Marine Protected Area through development and implementation of the PA Integrated Management Plan, and implementing best NbS practices for protection of critical marine habitats and species (e.g., through ecotourism) including breeding sites for Green (*Chelonia mydas*) and Hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*);
- **Restored forest ecosystems:** 5,000 ha of forest ecosystems of high conservation, economic, and adaptation value identified through NCA development and NbS planning in the target districts;
- **Mitigated Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** 4,060,984 metric tons of CO₂e over 20 years through improved management of landscapes and protected areas, and forest restoration in the project districts⁴¹;
- **Total number of direct project beneficiaries:** 14,942 local people (estimated half of population of the target districts), including 48.7% females, and 51.3% males. The people will benefit directly from involvement in the project activities trainings, and support of NbS project; job creation and income generation as a result of the project; inclusive decision making and women empowerment in the nature recourse management; improved food security, improved ecosystem services, and better climate adaptation.

Project Outcomes

The GEBs will be delivered through achievement of 5 project Outcomes:

- **Outcome 1.** *Value of ecosystem services better integrated into planning and budgeting allocations:* at least seven NCA modules and at least two decision making tools embedded into national fiscal policies/economic accounts and implemented;
- **Outcome 2.** *Enhanced systemic and institutional capacity to implement NbS in key ecosystems at seascape and landscape levels, mainstreaming gender concerns and involving youth and vulnerable communities:* at least 15 'replication-ready' pipeline projects with measurable outcomes and targets to conserve biodiversity and ecosystem services developed and implemented in the project area (supported by site specific Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) or other relevant safeguards instrument); increased by at least 20% METT score for three target PAs with developed and implemented IMPs; at least 80% of beneficiaries and partners surveyed that report increased capacity to execute innovative NbS at seascape and landscape levels;
- **Outcome 3:** *Increased financial flows to NbS from private sector:* PES policy framework endorsed to integrate NbS into food production and tourist sector; at least US\$ 1,600,000 mobilized for NbS in tourism sector through IVL mechanism;
- **Outcome 4:** *Lessons and best practices of the project on NbS, NCA, ecosystem valuation, and gender mainstreaming are applied by other districts in Samoa and abroad:* at least 6 good practices and gender sensitive lessons learned identified, documented and disseminated by the child project; at least 60% of participating stakeholders are aware of the benefits of application of NbS and NCAs;

⁴¹ The project carbon mitigation potential was calculated based on the following inputs: (1) the current area of tropical forest in the project districts is estimated in 29,601 ha based on the analysis of the remote sensed data; the current area of mangroves in the project area is estimated in 110 ha; (2) the current deforestation rate in Samoa is 0.29% for tropical forest and mangroves based on the data between 2010-2020 <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/deforestation-rates-by-country>. Given the inputs, without the project the area of tropical forest in the project districts in 20 years will decrease to 27,930 ha and area of mangroves – to 103.8 ha. The project is expected to put a system of sustainable management based on NbS in the project districts, decrease the deforestation rate to zero, and maintain the current area of tropical forests and mangroves (Outputs 2.1-2.2) with the assumption that it will continue to be maintained over the 16 years after the project completion. Additionally, the project will restore 5,000 ha of tropical forest on degraded lands (Output 2.3), that are expected to be maintained over 16 years after the project completion as well. These inputs were put in the FAO Ex-Act Tool, version 9.3.3, and resulted in the total carbon gains of 4,060,984 metric tons of CO₂e over 20 years after the project start (See Annex 26. FAO Ex-Act Tool calculations of the project carbon gains). Given the lack of data on the area of seagrass and coral reefs in the project districts, these ecosystems were not take in the account for the project carbon gains.

- **Outcome 5: Effective Adaptive Management of the project based on robust M&E framework:** satisfactory project status by Quality Assurance report at the project mid-term and completion.

Project Outputs

The Outcomes will be achieved by the project through delivery of Outputs (direct project products and services) that are described below.

Component 1: Integration of nature in key economic sectors through targeted economic, governance and financial interventions

Outcome 1. Value of ecosystem services better integrated into planning and budgeting allocations

Output 1.1. Three existing NCA modules in Samoa (waste, energy and water) are completed⁴² and four additional ecosystem NCA modules (mangrove, coral reefs, forest and sea-grass) are developed and integrated into the Tourist Satellite Account and other national planning and budget frameworks

Under this Output the project will implement the following activities:

- 1.1.1. Complete Samoa's three existing NCA modules (waste, energy, water);
- 1.1.2. Build four new NCA accounting modules within the SEEA framework covering: mangrove, coral reefs, sea-grass, and forest;
- 1.1.3. Integration of these accounts with other national accounting elements to update a Tourism Satellite Account and other national planning and budgeting framework

This work will build on existing work done on NCA within Samoa, (for example the links within the Tourism Satellite Account between the value of natural assets to the industry and the impacts the industry creates through waste, energy use and unsustainable development activities), and the assessment and development work done as part of the SOS, including the marine spatial planning process, as well as work to assessment and report on the status of Samoa's forests within the recently submitted Forest Reference Level (FRL) as well as other supporting studies and assessments. Women stakeholders (50%) will be engaged in the NCA development and decision-making processes for integrating NCA data into national planning and tourism frameworks

Specifically, under **Activity 1.1.1** the project will conduct review of the existing NCA modules (waste, energy, water) for inconsistencies and will conduct additional up-to-date data collection on waste generation, energy consumption, and water usage across different sectors for the target project districts. The data will be validated to ensure accuracy and reliability of the accounts. Harmonization of the data with international standards, particularly the SEEA framework, will be completed.

Under **Activity 1.1.2** four new NCA accounting modules for mangrove, coral reefs, sea-grass, and forest will be created for the project districts. The accounts will be built based on the available data on mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass, and forests and generated data using remote sensing and GIS technologies to map and monitor the target ecosystems. Each module will have a set of indicators of ecosystem health and condition that will be used for assessment of the target ecosystems. Key ecosystem services provided by each ecosystem (e.g., carbon sequestration, fishery habitats, tourism value) will be identified and quantified through Ecosystem Service Valuation (ESV) process. Economic valuation methods to estimate the monetary value of ecosystem services for each target ecosystem will be applied. A combination of SEEA CF⁴³ and SEEA EA⁴⁴ accounting modules can provide useful measurements with respect to these priorities. The appropriate setting of a NCA system can guarantee measurement and monitoring over time of nature's support to human activities, which in Samoa is critical from both an economic and social perspectives. A protocol for continuous monitoring and updating of NCA modules will be established (see Fig. 3 for details).

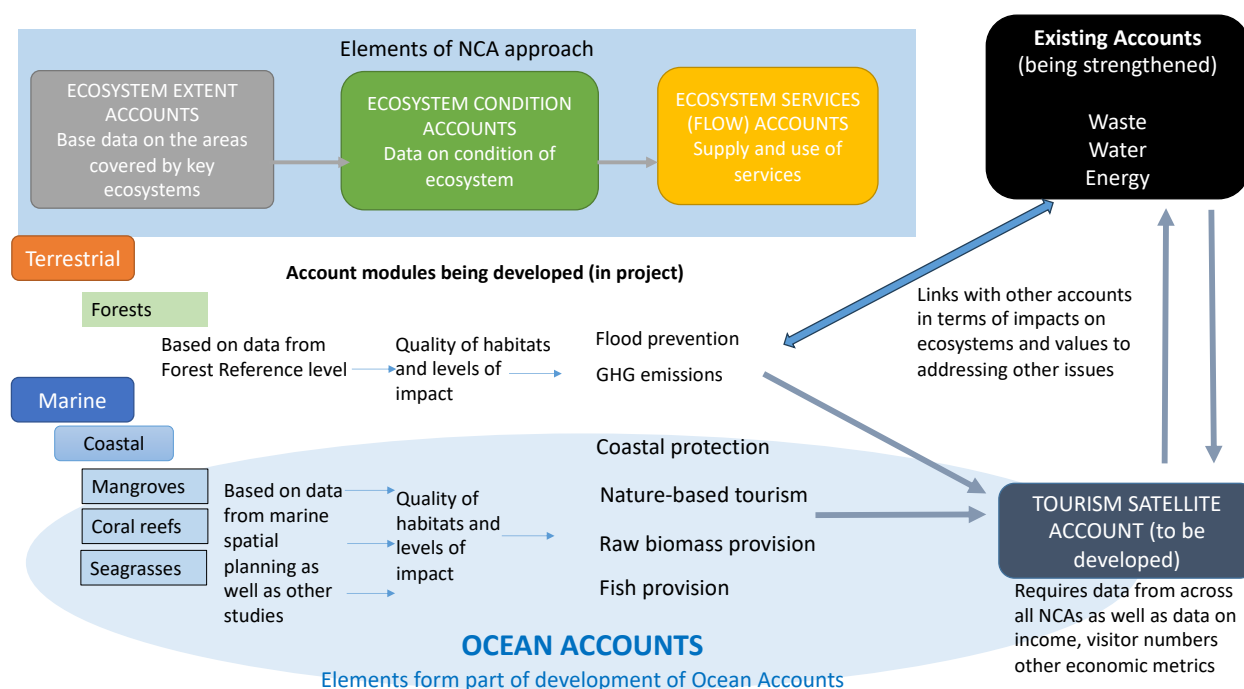
⁴² The data in the existing NCA modules will be validated to ensure accuracy and reliability of the accounts. Harmonization of the data with international standards, particularly the SEEA framework, will be done.

⁴³ <https://seea.un.org/content/seea-central-framework>

⁴⁴ <https://seea.un.org/ecosystem-accounting>

Under **Activity 1.1.3** the project team will integrate the new and existing NCA, including ecosystem service values, into national economic accounts using SEEA framework. For example, ecosystem values will be incorporated into the Samoa's Tourism Satellite Account. Additionally, NCAs will be integrated into the Samoa Development Strategy, National Environment Sector Plan, and sectoral plans for tourism, agriculture, and fisheries. By completing and developing NCA modules (waste, energy, water, mangrove, coral reefs, sea-grass, and forest), this output ensures that the value of ecosystem services is accurately reflected in national economic accounts. This integration will directly inform national fiscal policies and economic planning. The comprehensive NCA provides a robust foundation for developing policies that encourage both public and private sector investments in NbS. The valuation data from the NCA modules will be applied to inform integrated spatial landscape and seascape planning, including contribution to the Samoa's Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) process (outside of the BGI IP project framework), update of CIMP (Output 2.1), and spatial DST designed under Output 1.2.

Figure 1. Overview of proposed NCA approach and linkages with existing accounts



Project partners for this Output: the Output will be delivered by MNRE, SBS, and the Samoa Tourism Authority (STA) and coordinated through NESSC. The Ministry of Finance will facilitate efforts to incorporate NCA modules into Samoa's national accounts. Within SBS the Social & Environmental Statistics Division will be the primary focal points for NCA development, but the project will support close and enhanced coordination with the Economic Statistics Division, and National Accounts & Finance Statistics Division as part of actions to strengthen links between the NCA framework and the system of national accounts. MNRE will play a critical role as a data provider, a user for NCA reports and data, and a coordinator and facilitator of engagement with other agencies. STA will be a key partner as both a client for the information that will help to inform tourism management and development and a data provider through ensuring that collection of data on tourist numbers, activities, spending and levels of resource use are effectively gathered management and provided to the SBS. NESSC will play the key role for NCA integration in the government planning and reporting. Additionally, the upcoming legislation - the Environmental Management and Conservation Bill and Soil Resource Management Bill - are set to include provisions for the ESV, NCA implementation of PES schemes. The bills aim to formalize and enhance the legal framework supporting NCA and PES in Samoa.

Output 1.2. National and local level Decision Support Tools are developed to integrate NCA modules into decision-making on NbS and economic development

The Output is based on the input from the Output 1.1 – seven NCA accounts integrated into the Samoa’s planning and budgeting framework. The Output will provide key tools to integrate NCA and value of ecosystem service-based information and other environmental data sources with specific decision-making system within the national and local government. This innovative approach will link the NCA modules with the sectoral and district planning frameworks (such as CIMP, Watershed Management Plans, Community Fisheries Plans) via a set of user-friendly tools for the spatial decision-making. The project will consider the following NCA tools for development based on the positive experience from other countries:

- Integrated digital platform that compile and analyze NCA data, providing a comprehensive view of the economic value of natural capital and ecosystem services for tourism, agriculture and fishery sectors (similar to SEEA Explorer, or Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services (NCAVES);
- GIS-based tools that map and analyze spatial data related to natural capital and ecosystem services, supporting spatial planning and resource management in the target districts (like InVEST (Integrated Valuation of Ecosystem Services and Tradeoffs) or ARIES (Artificial Intelligence for Ecosystem Services);
- A tool that simulates different development scenarios and their impacts on natural capital, allowing policymakers to evaluate trade-offs and synergies in tourism, agriculture and fishery sectors (e.g., similar to GLOBIO (Global Biodiversity Model);
- Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) Toolkits based on NCAs to evaluate trade-offs of NbS versus hard infrastructure solutions.

Thus, this output focuses on creating user-friendly DSTs that integrate NCA data with spatial planning and decision-making frameworks based on cost-benefit analysis (GIS-based applications, scenario simulation models, CBA tools). Thus, DST will support national finance planning, and mobilizing domestic resources for NbS through informed decision-making.

The project will mainstream gender considerations into the Output by ensuring that the Decision Support Tools (DSTs) incorporate gender-sensitive data and analysis, enabling policymakers to evaluate the different impacts of NbS and economic development scenarios on women and men, and by involving women in the development, validation, and application of the tools at both national and local levels.

The key activities for this Output include the following:

- 1.2.1. Analysis of NCA and NbS Decision Support Tools available on the global market and selection a set of specific tools that can be applied in Samoa;
- 1.2.2. Design and develop a digital DSTs tailored to Samoa’s specific needs and NCA structure;
- 1.2.3. Validate the functionality and effectiveness of the developed DSTs;
- 1.2.4. Create manuals and guidelines for application of DSTs by relevant agencies;
- 1.2.5. Develop policies that mandate the use of DSTs in planning and budgeting processes.

Project partners for this Output: MNRE, NESSC, SBS, MOF, MAF, STA, District Governments, Research Institutions.

Output 1.3. Key national and local level authorities are trained on application of NCA for sustainable natural resource management and NbS planning

This Output is based on the inputs from the Outputs 1.1 and 1.2 and will ensure that national and local authorities are adequately trained to use NCA modules and DST for sustainable management and planning of natural resources use and NbS. The Output will include the following activities:

- 1.3.1. Identify the specific training needs and capacity gaps of national and local authorities regarding NCA and NbS;
- 1.3.2. Develop tailored training programs that address the identified needs and capacity gaps, including specific programs for agriculture, forestry, fishery, and tourism sectors;
- 1.3.3. Produce manuals, guides, presentations, and online resources to support the training programs;

1.3.4. Conduct a series of workshops and seminars in in the capital and project districts to ensure wide participation and buy in on the NCA modules and DSTs;

1.3.5. Set up training centers within existing institutions such as universities or government agencies and institutionalize the NCA, NbS, and DST capacity building programs for continuous implementation.

The target audience for this training program will include MNRE, SBS, MOF, MAF, STA, members of NESSC, and District Governments. The project will train at least 500 officers (at least 50% are women). The results of the training programmes will be regularly monitored through online and in-person surveys to gather feedback from participants and use this information to refine and enhance future training sessions.

Project partners for this Output: Universities, research institutions, existing business training centers, NESSC.

Component 2: *Implement landscape and seascape level nature-based solutions in key ecosystems supporting the food (agriculture and fisheries) and tourism sectors*

Outcome 2. *Enhanced systemic and institutional capacity to implement NbS in key ecosystems at seascape and landscape levels, mainstreaming gender concerns and involving youth and vulnerable communities*

Output 2.1. *NbS priorities based on NCA modules (Output 1.1) are integrated in the CIMPs and WRM Plans and implemented to improve management of forest, coastal and marine ecosystems in partnership with private sector (food production and tourism)*

At the district and village level there has been significant investment in working with Samoa's communities to identify priority development activities with a significant focus on adoption of NbS based actions. Recent review of CIMP's within the target districts identified initial NbS actions for some of the communities to address coastal erosion, flash flooding, river channel erosion and soil degradation. WRM Plans, however, have not been updated to integrate NbS into the district water management planning.

This Output will support integration of NCA modules (produced by the Output 1.1) into the CIMP's and WRM Plans of the target districts. At the first step, the project will produce National Guidelines for integration of NCAs and NbS into the district planning and provide trainings to the 9 target districts on the Guidelines. After that the project will facilitate the process of NCA and NbS integration into the district CIMP's and WRM Plans in fully participatory and inclusive process following the requirements of the Community Engagement Plan, including obtaining Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) where specified in the CEP (see Annex 9). Specifically, the project will not make a revision of CIMP's again, but will provide an Operational NbS Plans as annexes to the CIMP's that will allow to implement them at the target district scales. However, WRM Plans will be updated to integrate water management NbS into them (measures like rainwater harvesting, wetland restoration and conservation, establishment of riparian buffer zones, and floodplain management solutions). The project will also support the target districts to develop *village by-laws* (integrating FPIC) to implement CIMP's and WRM Plans based on Samoa's customary governance systems the Village Fono Act (1990).

Based on the CIMP's and updated WRM Plans supported by the village by-laws the project will support selected community projects to implement NbS activities in collaboration with private sector. The community projects will be supported through the project collaboration with the UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme (UNDP GEF SGP) via the low value grants (LVG) (size of the grants may vary between USD 5,000-18,000) to communities within target areas to support implementation of targeted gender positive NbS actions within their districts. This support will help the scaling up of small-scale communities' activities, that support the livelihoods and resilience of communities while also helping to protect biodiversity. Informed by the requirements of the ESMF, a SES screening assessment will take place as part of the for each community project as part of the NbS grant selection process for the identification of SES risks. Any identified risk will be incorporated into a site specific ESMP. The project will develop ecological baselines to monitor outcomes of NbS activities.

For all private sector (PS) entities applying to develop restoration projects through the under Output 2.1 and 2.3 with, the PMU will conduct due diligence through application of the mandatory UNDP Risk Assessment Tool (RAT)⁴⁵. The tool enables the PMU to collect information on the PS entity and helps to evaluate whether or not the Project

⁴⁵ <https://popp.undp.org/procedure/conducting-due-diligence-private-sector-entities>

is able to pursue a partnership with them. This RAT is a mandatory requirement for any type of partnership between UNDP and a private sector entity. While PS due diligence is not considered an SES risk in itself, SES risks can arise when it isn't carried out, or isn't carried out comprehensively. Therefore, special attention should be paid to complete it well in advance of the planned partnership.

UNDP guidance on due diligence for PS requires that prior to further engagement with target PS entities, the project Private Sector Specialist in coordination with the Chief Technical Advisor will undertake pro-active pre-screening. This pre-screening includes at a minimum ensuring that the partner does not fall under the exclusionary criteria set out in the UNDP Policy on Due Diligence and Partnerships with the Private Sector⁴⁶ and to also assess whether the company is involved in a high-risk sector and if it is involved in any significant controversies. If a potential partner falls under the exclusionary criteria the entity isn't eligible to participate in Project activities which helps to avoid potential SES risks. If the potential partner passes the pre-screening, the full due diligence is then undertaken once the potential partner has expressed an interest in engaging with UNDP. Assuming the potential partner clears this screening, once the partnership negotiations have advanced to the stage where there is a clear indication of interest to collaborate on both sides and the programmatic content for the partnership has been broadly defined and articulated in a concept note, the full due diligence should be undertaken. For the sake of transparency and to manage expectations, it is important to make it clear to a potential partner at an early stage in discussions that UNDP undertakes due diligence of its private sector partners and that we cannot commit to a partnership until such due diligence has been completed.

The project will support the following NbS initiatives in the target districts: establishment of Community Based Conservation Areas to protect ecosystems of high biodiversity conservation, economic, and adaptation value; establishment and maintain buffer zones along rivers and springs to decrease erosion; establishment of agro-forestry plantations; protection of mangroves, coral reefs, and seagrass beds; elimination of IAS from important ecosystems; conservation and climate-smart agriculture practices; small scale eco-tourism projects implemented by communities. To achieve maximal effectiveness of community NbS initiatives, the project will leverage co-financing, expertise, and technical support from private sector (agriculture, fishery, and tourism) via Privat-Public Partnerships (PPPs). All community projects will be monitored on monthly basis to practice adaptive management and solve problems. Overall, through implementation of this Output the project will improve management of 46,184 ha of landscapes and 25,000 ha of seascape in the target districts.

The project will mainstream gender considerations in the Output by ensuring that both women and men from the target communities are equally involved in and benefit from the planning, decision-making, and implementation processes of NbS initiatives, and by prioritizing gender-positive NbS actions that promote women's leadership, participation, and equitable access to resources and benefits from the projects.

Thus, the following set of activities will be implemented for this Output:

- 2.1.1. Create comprehensive guidelines for integrating Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) into district planning;
- 2.1.2. Organize and conduct training workshops for stakeholders in the 9 target districts on the National Guidelines;
- 2.1.3. Using the guidance provided in the ESMF Community Engagement Plan (CEP), engage communities in participatory planning sessions to integrate NCA and NbS into the district CIMP and WRM Plans;
- 2.1.4. Using the guidance provided in the ESMF CEP, assist target districts in developing village by-laws to implement CIMP and WRM Plans based on Samoa's customary governance systems under the Village Fono Act (1990);
- 2.1.5. Guided by the required site specific social and environmental screening results, identify and select community projects to implement NbS activities, focusing on gender-positive actions and community priorities;
- 2.1.6. Collaborate with the [UNDP GEF SGP](#) to disburse low-value grants (USD 5,000-18,000) to support selected community projects;
- 2.1.7. Set up a monitoring framework to track the progress and effectiveness of NbS initiatives, including cost-benefit analysis over time, and socio-environmental impacts.

⁴⁶ <https://popp.undp.org/policy-page/policy-due-diligence-and-partnerships-private-sector>

Project partners for this Output: Village Fono (Traditional Village Councils), District Development Committees, NESSC, environmental NGOs, UNDP GEF SGP, local farmers and fishers, local SMEs in tourism, agriculture, and fishery sectors.

Output 2.2. Integrated Management Plans for Mauga o Salafai and O Le Pupu Pu'e PAs, and Safata District MPA are developed and implemented to mainstream NbS practices into the PA management

Under this Output The project will work with Mauga o Salafai and O Le Pupu Pu'e PAs, and Safata District MPA to integrate them into the district economic and NbS models. For that the project will develop Integrated Management Plans (IMPs) for the target PAs covering 10,992 ha of terrestrial and 6,368 ha of marine and coastal ecosystems having high conservation, economic and adaptation value. The IMPs will be developed based on the NCAs produced under the Output 1.1 and in integration with districts CIMP and WRM Plans updated with NbS under the Output 2.1. The CIMP will consider the PAs not as just the “islands of biodiversity”, but the core areas of the district sustainable development and adaptation models connected by buffer zones, biodiversity corridors, OECMS, and transition zones in the functional PA network in the production landscape and seascape.

Additionally, the project will support the PAs with a training program on the Integrated PA Management, protection, monitoring, and collaboration with other land users in the landscape. The PAs will be provided with essential equipment, tools, and support to implement required NbS, including planting native tree species to restore natural forest cover, controlling and eliminating invasive species, community-based ecotourism, establishment and management of no-take zones to allow coral recovery, seagrass, and mangroves recovery.

Also, under this Output the project will conduct a feasibility study to identify economically viable and innovative sources for additional funding of the PAs, such as ecotourism, carbon credits, Payment for Ecosystem Services, Social Responsibility Programs of private sector, Private-Public Partnerships, etc. (will be conducted in strong cooperation with UNDP BioFin initiative). A few feasible financing models will be integrated into the PA management in the target PAs to ensure their financial sustainability in the district economic models. It is expected that the management capacity (METT) of the target PAs will increase by at least 20% by the end of the project.

The project will mainstream gender through the Output by ensuring the inclusion of women in IPM development, training programs, decision-making processes, and implementation of NbS practices in the target PAs, while also promoting gender-equitable access to benefits such as ecotourism opportunities and sustainable resource use, and integrating gender-sensitive indicators into PA IMPs.

Thus, the following specific activities will be implemented for this Output:

- 2.2.1. Perform comprehensive baseline assessments of the PAs to gather data on biodiversity, ecosystem services, and socio-economic conditions, including developed NCA modules (Output 1.1) and relevant district CIMP and WRM Plans for adjacent areas;
- 2.2.2. Develop IMPs for the target PAs using a fully participatory and inclusive approach following the requirements of the ESMF CEP, integrating data from baseline assessments, NCA modules produced under Output 1.1, and updated CIMP and WRM Plans (Output 2.1);
- 2.2.3. Provide required training, equipment, and tools to PAs staff for IMPs implementation and NbS;
- 2.2.4. Support selected NbS initiatives by the Target PAs;
- 2.2.5. Conduct a feasibility study to identify economically viable and innovative funding sources for the PAs;
- 2.2.6. Develop and integrate feasible socially and environmentally assessed financing models (e.g., ecotourism, carbon credits, Payment for Ecosystem Services, CSR programs, PPPs) into the PA management.

Project partners for this Output: Mauga o Salafai and O Le Pupu Pu'e PAs, and Safata District MPA; MNRE, MAF, NESSC, Village Fono (Traditional Village Councils), District Development Committees, Local communities, SMEs in tourism, agriculture, and fishery sectors.

Output 2.3. *Key forest ecosystems of high conservation, economic, and adaptation value restored through Community NbS Action and partnership with private sector*

This Output will be delivered in strong coordination with the Outputs 2.1 and 2.2 through collaborative approach of local communities, PAs, government agencies and private sector in the target districts. Specifically, the project will directly support restoration of the forest ecosystems having high conservation, economic, and adaptation value prioritized by CIMPs, WRM Plans, and PA IMPs. Similar to the Output 2.1, the restoration activities will be supported in collaboration with the UNDP GEF SGP via the low value grants (LVG). The following restoration activities will be supported:

- Reforestation of slopes with native and climate-resilient tree species to prevent soil erosion and enhance carbon sequestration;
- Removal of IAS from high value forest areas with natural restoration of native forest ecosystems;
- Enrichment planting in degraded forest areas to increase tree density and ensure proper maintenance and care;
- Restoration and fencing of forest in the buffer zones of springs and wetlands to protect them from soil erosion and contamination.

Overall, the project is planning to restore at least 5,000 ha of native forest vegetation under the Output through fully cooperative and inclusive approach with local communities, private sector, PAs, and local government. To achieve maximal effectiveness of restoration initiatives, the project will leverage co-financing, expertise, and technical support from private sector (agriculture, fishery, and tourism) via Privat-Public Partnerships (PPPs).

The project will mainstream gender considerations in the Output by ensuring that both women and men have equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from forest restoration activities, promoting women's leadership in community NbS and restoration actions, and supporting gender-equitable access to resources and decision-making roles in partnerships with the private sector.

The following activities will ensure delivery this Output:

- 2.3.1. Identify priorities for forest restoration activities based on CIMPs, WRM Plans, and PA IMPs;
- 2.3.2. Conduct workshops to build capacity among local communities on forest restoration techniques;
- 2.3.3. Develop the restoration projects in cooperation with local communities, PAs, and private sector and support their implementation through collaboration with the UNDP GEF SGP via the low value grants (LVG);
- 2.3.4. Set up a monitoring framework to track the progress and effectiveness of restoration initiatives.

Project partners for this Output: Village Fono (Traditional Village Councils), District Development Committees, environmental NGOs, UNDP GEF SGP, NESSC, local farmers and fishers, local SMEs in tourism, agriculture, and fishery sectors; Mauga o Salafai and O Le Pupu Pu'e PAs.

Component 3: *Unlocking private sector capital and finance for action in SIDS*

Outcome 3: *Increased financial flows to NbS from private sector*

Output 3.1. *Key policy framework is developed for Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) in the tourism and food sectors of Samoa using tax breaks, nature-positive subsidies, certification, and public-private partnerships*

Samoa is a SIDS that has been heavily impacted by natural disasters with the World Bank noting that natural disasters such as cyclones on average impact 40% of Samoa's population and reduce GDP by 46%. Similarly, the country's tourism-based economy was heavily impacted by COVID19. These issues further impact the capacity of the GoS to effectively finance and support investments in maintaining critical ecosystem services. These ecosystem services however have a significant value for Samoa with the country's marine and coastal resources alone conservatively estimated to be worth the equivalent of between US\$ 73 million to US\$ 127 million annually⁴⁷ – a highly significant value to a country with a GDP of US\$ 844 million and population of just over 200,000. This value comes from the

⁴⁷ Ram-Bidesi et al. (2021) Samoa Marine Ecosystem Service Valuation report – available at https://www.samoaocean.org/files/ugd/47d1fd_8c9c6bf133484855a7f3ffc46d547bef.pdf

range of services offered with the value to tourism being one of the most significant at US\$ 28 -82 million⁴⁸. This value is, however, poorly recognized in government spending and has also attracted almost no private sector investment.

The current Output will address these limitations by development of a strategic policy roadmap (or framework) for private sector investment in Payment for Environmental Services (PES) and support NbS economic and adaptation models in the country. Thus, under the Output the following activities will be implemented:

- 3.1.1. Review existing policies, regulations, and legislative frameworks related to ecosystem services, tourism, agriculture, and fishery in Samoa to identify the entry points for the PES integration based on developed NCAs (Output 1.1);
- 3.1.2. Review and analysis of experience of PES schemes of the GCF project in Vaisigano catchment project as well as lessons from the work by the SCS in O le Pupu Pue (OLPP) National Park;
- 3.1.3. Applying strategic environmental and social assessment (SESA) approaches, develop a comprehensive PES policy framework (a roadmap) tailored to the tourism and food sectors, incorporating tax breaks, subsidies, certification, and PPPs. The framework will also take a broad approach to adequately understanding the environmental and social implications of PES (directly, indirectly and cumulatively) as directed in the ESMF (Annex 9);
- 3.1.4. Organize consultations with key stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector representatives, NGOs, and local communities, to gather input and build consensus on the PES framework;
- 3.1.5. Facilitate official approval of the PES framework policy (roadmap) by the Government of Samoa through consultation meetings with lawmakers.

As the result of the Output, Samoa will have an official PES policy framework that will drive development of the PES legislation in the country, including for tax breaks, nature-positive subsidies, certification, and public-private partnerships to encourage private sector to invest in NbS for disaster impact mitigation, climate adaptation, and ecosystem protection.

The project will mainstream gender through the Output by ensuring that the development of the PES policy framework includes gender-sensitive provisions, promotes equal opportunities for women and men to participate in and benefit from PES schemes, and encourages private sector investments that support women's leadership and employment in tourism and food sectors linked to ecosystem services.

Project partners for this Output: MNRE, SBS, MOF, MAF, STA, SRS, NESSC; tourism, agriculture, and fishery enterprises.

Output 3.2. *International Visitor Levy (IVL) for Samoa is developed and implemented as a mechanism to mobilize tourism sector finance for NbS.*

Establishment an International Visitor Levy (IVL) has the potential to support ongoing NbS action and drive further private sector investment in NbS through matching funds as well as provide an emergency fund to support tourism sector recovery after a high impact event (such as a cyclone or health epidemic). The concept of an International Visitor Levy (IVL) for Samoa has been initially explored by MNRE and STA as a potential mechanism to generate funding for sustainable development and conservation efforts, particularly focusing on Nature-based Solutions (NbS). However, a formal IVL has never been developed for Samoa yet. The country will use positive experience of New Zealand's International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL), which charges most international visitors a fee to fund tourism infrastructure and conservation projects, and serves as a successful model for replication⁴⁹. This Output is based on the MNRE and STA experience and includes the following activities:

- 3.2.1. Conduct a comprehensive feasibility study to assess the economic, social, and environmental impacts of introducing an IVL. This study should evaluate the potential revenue generation, the cost of implementation, and the acceptability among tourists and stakeholders;
- 3.2.2. Applying strategic environmental and social assessment (SESA) approaches, develop the necessary legislative and regulatory framework through consultations with government and tourist sector to support the implementation

⁴⁸ Other major value areas are identified as Subsistence fisheries USD18.5million (tala 50m), Commercial fisheries USD19.8million (tala 54m), and Coastal protection USD7million (19m).

⁴⁹ <https://www.samoatourism.org/articles/17/the-samoa-international-visitors-survey-report>

of the IVL. This will include drafting and enacting a law that define the levy structure, collection mechanisms, and the specific use of funds;

3.2.3. Establish (or identify) the administrative structures required to manage the IVL. This involves setting up systems for levy collection, financial management, and monitoring. Coordination between different government departments, such as tourism and finance, is crucial here;

3.2.4. Start with a pilot phase to test the IVL system and make necessary adjustments based on feedback. Once the system refined, roll out the levy nationwide.

Implementation of IVL in Samoa is expected to bring at least US\$ 500,000 mobilized for NbS in tourism sector by the end of the project.

The project will mainstream gender considerations in the Output by ensuring that the feasibility study, legislative framework, and implementation of the IVL include gender-disaggregated data and analysis, ensure equitable benefits for both women and men in the tourism sector, and promote women's participation in decision-making and the administration of funds mobilized for NbS projects.

Project partners for this Output: MNRE, MOF, STA, SRS, NESSC; tourism enterprises.

Component 4: *Knowledge management, awareness, collaborative and gender-inclusive engagement to capture, utilize and share knowledge in relation to nature-based solutions and natural capital*

Outcome 4: *Lessons and best practices of the project on NbS, NCA, ecosystem valuation, and gender mainstreaming are applied by other districts in Samoa and abroad*

Output 4.1. *Awareness campaign among local communities, decision makers, and private sector of Samoa on NCA, NbS, and key values of ecosystems for sustainable development*

The Output focuses on conducting a wide-spread and effective awareness campaign among local communities and decision-makers in the project districts on NCA modules and NbS for biodiversity conservation, sustainable economy, climate resilience and adaptation. This Output will include the following indicative activities:

4.1.1. Development of the Project Communication Strategy and Campaign Materials: create informative and engaging materials such as brochures, posters, videos, and infographics that explain NCAs and NbS for biodiversity conservation, economic development, climate resilience and adaptation, and the importance of ecosystem conservation given their adaptation, livelihood, and conservation values; ensure materials are accessible and understandable to a non-technical audience, and available in local language;

4.1.2. Community Awareness Workshops and Seminars: organize interactive workshops and seminars in local communities to discuss the concepts of NbS for economic development, biodiversity conservation, climate resilience and adaptation; include practical examples and local case studies to demonstrate the relevance of these concepts to the project districts;

4.1.3. Awareness Sessions for Local Leaders and Decision Makers: conduct specialized training sessions for district officials, community leaders, and decision-makers to deepen their understanding of NbS environmental and adaptation concepts and their application in policy and planning;

4.1.4. School and College Engagement Programs: implement educational programs in schools and colleges to introduce young people to NbS adaptation and ecosystem conservation; encourage student participation in environmental and adaptation projects and competitions related to these themes, as well as in the project activities, e.g., in forest restoration;

4.1.5. Media Campaigns: utilize local radio, television, newspapers, and online platforms to disseminate information about the campaign; produce and broadcast short documentaries or interviews with experts and local practitioners in the field of NbS; leverage social media channels to reach a broader audience, using hashtags, interactive posts, and online challenges to engage users; share success stories and testimonials from individuals or communities that have successfully implemented sustainable practices;

By implementing these activities, the communication and awareness campaign will not only educate and engage the local communities and decision-makers in the project districts, but also foster a deeper understanding and

commitment to environmental sustainability and conservation practices in the country. The total audience to be involved in the awareness campaign is estimated in at least 15,000 local people (estimated half of population of the target districts), including 48.7% females, and 51.3% males. This Output will be delivered in strong coordination with the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (Annex 8), and Community Engagement Plan⁵⁰ as a part of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (Annex 9). Community Engagement Plan (CEP) aims to identify which outputs and activities will require specific engagement with indigenous Samoan communities or Samoan owned entities and provides guidance on the objectives and principles for those engagements.

The project will mainstream gender considerations in the Output by ensuring that the communication strategy and campaign materials are designed to address the specific needs and perspectives of both women and men, with a focus on empowering women to participate in NbS and NCA-related activities, and by promoting gender-equal participation in workshops, leadership training, and school programs to ensure both genders benefit from and contribute to sustainable development efforts.

Project partners for this Output: MNRE, MESC, STA, NGOs, Traditional Village Councils, local communities, Local Radio and Television Stations, Newspapers and Online Platforms.

Output 4.2. *Gender-inclusive lessons and best practices of the project are shared with other districts of Samoa and abroad through BGI IP/GCP Knowledge Management and Learning for replication and scale up of NCA approaches and NbS activities in Pacific*

Under this Output the project will conduct semi-annual lessons learning sessions with the project partners to formulate the project lessons and develop best practices on NCA and NbS applications, and ecosystem restoration and protection. The lessons and best practices will be applied for improvement of the project strategies (adaptive management) and disseminated among other districts of Samoa (and internationally) for effective learning and replication of successful approaches with an intention to speed up the sustainable development and climate adaptation efforts and deliver national GBF targets in Samoa.

Under this Output the project will develop and implement the Knowledge Management Strategy and Stakeholder Engagement Plan to ensure participatory, inclusive and integrated implementation of the project activities in accordance with NbS adaptation concept and principles. The project will practice the following approach to the Knowledge Management and Learning: (1) **Stakeholder Engagement:** engaging a wide range of stakeholders, including local communities, government agencies, and experts, to gather and share knowledge; (2) **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Implementing a robust monitoring and evaluation system to track progress, assess impacts, and adapt strategies as needed (Output 4.1); (3) **Documentation and Dissemination:** documenting best practices, lessons learned, and success stories. Disseminating this information through various channels like workshops, publications, and online platforms; (4) **Capacity Building:** conducting training and workshops to build local capacity in NbS adaptation, economy, and ecosystem protection; (5) **Collaboration and Networking:** encouraging collaboration and networking among various stakeholders to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences.

To ensure that the Knowledge Management is gender inclusive the project will develop and implement a **Gender Mainstreaming Strategy** (see details in the Annex 10. Gender Analysis and Action Plan). This strategy will address gender-specific impacts of ecosystem degradation, climate change and leverage the unique contributions of all community members in NbS activities. So, the project will conduct a detailed gender analysis to identify the different needs, roles, vulnerabilities, and strengths of women, men, and other gender groups in the context of the project area related to NbS. Based on the gender analysis the comprehensive strategy will be developed to outline specific objectives, activities, and indicators to ensure gender equality is integrated into each project output, addresses barriers to gender equality and leverages opportunities for enhancing the participation and benefits of all gender groups in Samoa. The project will organize training sessions for project staff, partners, and stakeholders on gender mainstreaming practices, the importance of incorporating gender equality in climate adaptation and biodiversity conservation efforts, and gender-sensitive data collection, analysis, and reporting to monitor progress towards gender equality objectives. The project will appoint gender focal points within the project team and among partner organizations to oversee the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy and to provide guidance on gender issues. The Gender Mainstreaming Strategy will be update annually and monitored through the Output 5.1.

50 Community Engagement Plan (CEP) aims to identify which outputs and activities will require specific engagement with indigenous Samoan communities or Samoan owned entities and provides guidance on the objectives and principles for those engagements. See details in the Annex 9 ESFM

Through Output 4.2, the project will engage in collective action, KM, and South-South cooperation by actively sharing gender-inclusive lessons and best practices on NCA and NbS with other BGI IP countries and the Global Coordination Project (GCP). The project will participate in regional knowledge-sharing platforms, webinars, and conferences organized by the GCP, contributing to collective learning across SIDS (via SPREP as the currently proposed regional node). In addition, project best practices and lessons will be documented and disseminated through joint KM strategies, ensuring the replication and scaling-up of successful approaches in other BGI IP countries. This collaboration will enhance adaptive management and foster a network of exchange, accelerating progress toward shared GBF and climate adaptation goals.

Thus, the key activities for the Output are the following:

- 4.2.1. Create a comprehensive strategy for documenting, sharing, and managing knowledge on NCA and NbS practices and discuss it with key stakeholders;
- 4.2.2. Create a comprehensive gender strategy to ensure gender equality is integrated into all project outputs and Knowledge Management; conduct training sessions for project staff, partners, and stakeholders on gender mainstreaming practices;
- 4.2.3. Roll out the strategy through designated activities such as documentation, workshops, and online platforms in the framework of the BGI IP and GCP;
- 4.2.4. Conduct semi-annual sessions and events with project partners to discuss project progress, and extract lessons learned, and best practices;
- 4.2.5. Compile and document the outcomes of lessons learning sessions, focusing on successful NCA and NbS applications and create informative materials such as reports, brochures, and online content to share best practices and lessons learned;
- 4.2.6. Organize workshops in other districts, conduct webinars and participate in international conferences to share best practices and lessons learned from the project among BGI IP child projects and GCP; support of the project team participation in Global SIDS platforms and frameworks, such as the SAMOA Pathway, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, Business for Nature and Task Force for Nature-related Disclosure.

Project partners for this Output: PMU and all project partners and stakeholders; BGI IP

Component 5: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) to ensure effective project management

Outcome 5: Effective Adaptive Management of the project based on robust M&E framework

Output 5.1. Participatory and gender-inclusive M&E system is implemented to measure the project effectiveness and tests the project Theory of Change

Under this Output the project will develop and implement a participatory and gender-sensitive M&E framework in accordance with the Results-Based Management (RBM) approach practiced by UNDP, GEF, and BGI IP. For the M&E, the project will use standard UNDP approaches and procedures and the following groups of indicators:

Output Indicators will be used to measure delivery of the project Outputs (the project's products and services) and monitor routine project progress on monthly and quarterly basis. Collection of information on the Output indicators will be performed by the Project Management Unit (PMU) and represented in the project Quarterly and Annual Reports;

Outcome Indicators in the Project Results Framework (PRF) will be used to indicate the progress toward and achievement of the project Outcomes (e.g., capacity, management, or behavioral changes happened in result of use of the project Outputs by target groups of stakeholders). Collection of information on the Outcome indicators will be performed by the PMU and key partners, or might require hiring of consultants. Project progress against Outcome indicators will be reflected in the Annual, Mid-Term and Terminal Project Reports, GEF Core Indicator Framework updates, and Mid-Term Review and Terminal Evaluation Reports.

Impact Indicators will be used to measure changes in the ecosystem health and extent, climate resilience of communities, carbon sequestration, progress towards GBF Targets, and community livelihood as a result of NbS adaptation, ecosystem restoration and improved protection. Additionally, through co-financing the project will monitor the populations of the following key species in the project area: the Tooth-billed pigeon (*Didunculus*

strigirostris, CE), Mao (*Gymnomyza samoensis*, EN), Samoan Flying Fox (*Pteropus samoensis*, VU), Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, CE) and Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, EN).

Social and Environmental Risk Indicators will be used to assess impact of the project activities on gender equality and involvement of women in sustainable aquaculture development as well as to monitor potential social and environmental risks that may be produced by the project. The ongoing data collection on the social and environmental risks indicators will be quarterly carried out by the PMU in cooperation with project partners. The project will establish a simple Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) in the project area.

The information and data received through the project M&E will be applied for the project adaptive management and learning. At the last year the project will produce a robust Exit Strategy to ensure sustainability and ownership of the project Outputs. The M&E activities is described in the M&E Plan section of the ProDoc.

Under Output 5.1, the project will engage in collective BGI IP action by aligning its participatory and gender-inclusive M&E system with the GCP and other BGI IP countries. The project will contribute data and insights to the GCP's regional monitoring framework and participate in joint reviews and adaptive management processes to ensure cross-country M&E exchange. M&E findings from Samoa will be shared through regional forums and platforms facilitated by the GCP, allowing other BGI IP countries to benefit from Samoa's experiences and best practices, thereby strengthening the overall impact of the BGI IP. The PIRs, the MTE and the TE will include a review and reporting of the GAP and relevant gender dimensions of the project.

The key activities are the following:

- 5.1.1. Validation of the monitoring framework for the project at the Inception phase;
- 5.1.2. Undertake monitoring of the project in relation to the results, safeguards, gender, community engagement plans, stakeholder engagement plans, and Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM);
- 5.1.3. Regular update of safeguards, gender, community engagement plans, and stakeholder engagement plans and approaches;
- 5.1.4 Prepare quarterly and annual progress reports for sharing among partners, GEF and government and non-government entities
- 5.1.5 Presentation and communication of project results and impacts through regular Project Board Meetings and through other media such as websites and social media
- 5.1.6 Conduct mid-review, make adjustment and adapt as required to ensure achievement of project outcomes
- 5.1.7 Conduct terminal evaluation and disseminate findings.

Project partners for this Output: PMU and all project partners and stakeholders; BGI IP

Partnerships:

The success of a project of this nature hinges on dynamic, strategic and multi-sector partnerships across a number of government ministries, agencies, NGOs and local communities. Hence, at the core of the project’s strategy is to identify and engage all relevant partners and stakeholders within the project as well as form a network that can catalyse further change. As such the project will be implemented in strong coordination and collaboration with other relevant programs and projects in the country to ensure (1) **Resource Optimization**, including funding, expertise, and manpower, to avoid duplication of efforts and obtain co-financing; (2) **Knowledge and Experience Sharing** to enhance the effectiveness of each project, leading to more innovative and well-rounded solutions; and (3) **Synergy in objectives** to amplify their impact, making it easier to achieve these shared objectives on a larger scale. Specifically, the project will directly collaborate with the following initiatives in Samoa:

Table 5. Key partner projects for the BGI IP child project⁵¹

Project/Program	Objectives/Focus	How the BGI IP Project will collaborate with the partner
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51 The Government of Samoa through MNRE has stressed the intention to utilize remainder GEF8 STAR funds for a project that will augment the NbS work in the country with CIMP’s as carrying vessels of the solutions (source: verbal communications between UNDP MCO and MNRE, June 2024)

UNDP/GEF Project “Enhancing integrated sustainable management to safeguard Samoa's natural resources”, 2018-2025 (GEF ID 10410)	The project is focused on empowerment of local communities to safeguard Samoa's indigenous species, natural ecosystems and food production systems from IAS and unsustainable land use practices. The project partially addresses Nature-based Adaptation by emphasizing the integrated management of catchments.	The project team was consulted to avoid duplication with the BGI IP project during PPG; The BGI IP Project will apply relevant best practices and lessons learned from the UNDP/GEF Project related to the Nature-based Adaptation
World Bank Project “Enhancing the Climate Resilience of Coastal Resources and Communities”, 2018-2025	The project aims to support coastal communities in Samoa in enhancing their resilience to climate variability and change through Implementation of Priority Adaptation Measures (measures derived from revised Coastal Infrastructure Management (CIM) Plans and other community planning frameworks, focusing on participatory prioritization of disaster risks and adaptation options	The project was reviewed to avoid duplication with the BGI IP project during PPG; The BGI IP Project will apply relevant best practices and lessons learned from the WB Project and related to the Nature-based Adaptation planning and implementation
GCF/UNDP Integrated Flood Management to Enhance Climate Resilience of the Vaisigano River Catchment in Samoa 2017-25	The project is piloting NbS and PES to catchment protection and flood management including use of NbS and green engineering approaches and reforestation of upper catchment. The project is looking to develop a carbon finance project linked to reforestation and catchment management activities.	The project was reviewed to avoid duplication with the BGI IP project during PPG; The BGI IP Project will apply relevant best practices and lessons learned from the GCF Project, especially on application of NbS and PES
ADB Project “Promoting Climate-Resilient and Sustainable Blue Economies (regional), 2023-2026	Aims to enhance investments in ocean health and climate-resilient, sustainable blue economies among its 14 Pacific Developing Member Countries (DMCs). This initiative is set against the backdrop of these nations facing significant environmental challenges, including the impacts of climate change on their marine ecosystems and economies.	The project was reviewed to avoid duplication with the BGI IP project during PPG; The BGI IP Project will apply relevant best practices and lessons learned from the GCF Project, especially on application of NbS and PES; The BGI IP project will coordinate its work plans with ADB project to avoid potential duplication in implementation and develop strong collaboration Potentially, ADB Project can provide in-kind co-financing for some Outputs of BGI IP Project
ADB Project “Promoting Climate-Resilient and Sustainable Blue Economies (regional), 2023-2026	Aims to enhance investments in ocean health and climate-resilient, sustainable blue economies among its 14 Pacific Developing Member Countries (DMCs). This initiative is set against the backdrop of these nations facing significant environmental challenges, including the impacts of climate change on their marine ecosystems and economies.	The project was reviewed to avoid duplication with the BGI IP project during PPG; The BGI IP Project will apply relevant best practices and lessons learned from the GCF Project, especially on application of NbS and PES; The BGI IP project will coordinate its work plans with ADB project to avoid potential duplication in implementation and develop strong collaboration; Potentially, ADB Project can provide in-kind co-financing for some Outputs of BGI IP Project

Kiwa Initiative (regional), on-going	The Kiwa Initiative is a multi-donor program that aims to strengthen the climate change resilience of Pacific Island ecosystems, communities and economies through Nature-Based Solutions (NbS), that is to say by protecting, sustainably managing and restoring biodiversity. It is founded on an easier access to climate change adaptation and NbS funding for national and local authorities, civil society, international and local NGOs and regional organizations in Pacific Island Countries and territories, including the three French overseas territories.	The Kiwa Initiative was taken in account to avoid duplication with the BGI IP project during PPG; BGI IP Project will use the recommendations and best practices of Kiwi Initiative; The BGI IP project will coordinate it work plans with Kiwi Initiative to avoid potential duplication in implementation and develop strong collaboration; Potentially, Kiwi Initiative can provide in-kind co-financing for some Outputs of BGI IP Project
The Samoa-New Zealand Climate Finance Partnership Agreement, 2023-2030	NZ Assistance to Samoa Government to build climate resilient Samoa through collaboration with focus on NbS adaptation and local community climate resilience.	The Partnership was taken in account to avoid duplication with the BGI IP project during PPG; BGI IP Project will use the recommendations and best practices of the Partnership on the NbS for coastal resilience, sustainable agriculture, and community capacity building; The BGI IP project will coordinate it work plans with the Partnership to avoid potential duplication in implementation and develop strong collaboration; Potentially, the Partnership can provide in-kind co-financing for some Outputs of BGI IP Project

Project Risks:

During the PPG process and SESP assessment, a set of key project risks was identified (see Table 6 below and Annex 6. UNDP Risk Register). As per standard UNDP requirements, the project will monitor risks quarterly and report on the status of risks to the UNDP Country Office. The UNDP Country Office will record progress in the UNDP risk register. Risks will be reported as critical when the impact and probability are high (i.e., when impact is rated as 5, and when impact is rated as 4 and probability is rated at 3 or higher)⁵². Management responses to critical risks will also be reported to the GEF in the annual PIR.

Table 6. Project Risks and Risk Management along the GEF Risk Categories

GEF RISK CATEGORIES	Linkage to UNDP ERM Risk Categories	Risk RATINGS	ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES
CONTEXT			
Climate	Social and Environmental	Moderate	Climate risks can impact the effectiveness, sustainability, and scalability of the project's efforts, including the sea level rise, ocean acidification, and increasing frequency and severity of cyclones, floods, and other extreme weather events pose a significant risk to project activities, especially those related to ecosystem restoration and infrastructure development. Such events can cause direct damage to project sites restored ecosystems and target communities, delay implementation timelines, and increase project costs. Mitigation Strategies: Implementing a flexible project management approach that allows for adjustments based on ongoing climate risk assessments and monitoring; Employing a diverse set of NbS and conservation practices to enhance ecosystem resilience against a range of climate change impacts; Strengthening local capacities and raising awareness about climate change risks and adaptation strategies among communities, stakeholders, and institutions; Developing and integrating early warning systems and disaster preparedness plans to reduce vulnerability to extreme weather events through co-financing. See details in the Annex 21. Climate and Disaster Risk Screening
Environment and Social	Social and Environmental	Moderate	The project SESP has identified eight social and environmental risks: (1) The Project may not provide equitable opportunities or benefits to women, (2) The Project may not provide equitable opportunities of benefits to vulnerable or marginalised groups, (3) Impacts to traditional rights or access to some land and resources, (4) Risk of NbS interventions being ineffective if vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, (5) Risk of developing governance frameworks or plans for PES funds or International Visitor Levy which do not respond to the SES, (6) Risk to successful implementation and sustainability of Project from implementing parties, (7) Risks of impact to tangible or intangible cultural heritage from NbS approaches, (8) Impacts on habitats or ecosystems from poorly planned project activities. To mitigate these risks , the project ESMF incorporates adaptive management strategies, site specific SES assessment processes, rigorous monitoring and evaluation, community engagement and awareness programs, and contingency planning. The ESMF provides measures for site specific screening, community engagement including FPIC processes, and a scoped SESA all of which are essential to identify, assess, and address potential social and environmental risks. See details in the Annex 5. SESP and Annex 9. ESMF.
Political and Governance	Political	Low	Samoa is a stable parliamentary democracy with a constitution and political system take substantial account of Samoan traditions and culture. The GoS has set out priorities with regard to environmental

⁵² UNDP 2016. Environmental and Social Screening Procedure

			governance that are in line with the existing and previous governments strategies. As such the overall policy and political environment is seen as stable and likely to continue to be aligned with project goals. An election due in 2026 may however present some risk of mis-alignment of project or challenges in terms of project operations in the run up to elections or delays linked to changes in political decision makers and the need to rebuild relationships with new actors. Mitigating these risks involves developing strong partnerships with all levels of government, ensuring alignment with national and local policies, building institutional capacity, and fostering transparency and accountability. Regular stakeholder engagement, adaptive management practices, and proactive policy advocacy are also critical for navigating and mitigating political and governance risks.
INNOVATION			
Institutional and Policy	Operational	Moderate	The existing project is fully aligned with the existing policies of the GoS. There remains a risk of a limited willingness to invest resources in the maintenance of environmental accounting systems or limited political will to adopt additional fees or taxes or allow for the development of PES schemes as these require a relatively long time horizon to see clear political (and physical) benefits. Also, the policy may take quite a long time for approval by the government. Even when supportive policies exist, weak enforcement mechanisms or lack of institutional capacity can hinder the effective implementation of NbS and related climate resilience measures. Mitigating these risks involves active engagement with policy-makers, regulators, and communities throughout the project lifecycle. This includes advocating for supportive policies, participating in policy development processes, ensuring project alignment with existing policies and regulations, and building strong partnerships with all relevant stakeholders.
Technological	Strategic	Low	The project will seek to utilize a number of innovative technologies, like NCA modules and NbS, that have risk of not working as planned or be rejected by stakeholders for implementation. To mitigate the risk the project will conduct thorough pilot tests for technological solutions in the project area to assess effectiveness, adaptability, and scalability before wide-scale implementation; invest in local capacity building and technical training to ensure that communities and project staff can effectively use, maintain, and troubleshoot technological tools and innovations; adopt an adaptive management approach that allows for the modification or replacement of technological solutions based on feedback, performance data, and evolving project needs
Financial and Business Model	Financial	Moderate	There is a risk linked to the development of both the international visitor levy and development of PES schemes. With regard to the visitor levy there is vulnerability in the development of structures and manage and distribute the levy with effective safeguards needing to be developed. With regard to PES schemes there are risks that the potential scale, costs and technical feasibility of operations do not make them financially viable with changing market conditions. To mitigate the risks the project will: perform comprehensive market analysis to understand the demand and supply dynamics for ecosystem services and assess the willingness of potential buyers to pay for these services; perform thorough feasibility studies to assess the economic, social, and environmental impacts of the IVL, evaluate potential revenue generation, implementation costs, and acceptability among tourists and stakeholders.
EXECUTION			
Capacity for Implementation	Operational	Moderate	The GoS has moderate levels of capacity and a relatively successful track record of implementing GEF projects. However, limitations exist in the GEF project management and in the capacity to develop NCA

			modules due to low staff numbers and limited resources on SBS as well as relatively low levels of understanding of approaches in MNRE. Work at the community level faces challenges due to limited capacity at the local level . To address capacity limitations the project will help to enhance capacity as well as long term engagement of consultants within key areas; invest in capacity-building initiatives, training programs, and knowledge exchange platforms to enhance the technical capabilities of institutional staff and stakeholders; secure stable funding sources and optimize resource allocation; foster partnerships with other organizations to leverage additional resources and expertise; Also, the UNDP CO will support MNRE in the project implementation using Supported NIM
Fiduciary	Organizational	Low	MNRE have extensive experience of the implementation of GEF projects and as such have a low level of fiduciary risk. There are some limitations in capacity for timely fiduciary reporting and management and the MNRE have also requested implementation support from UNDP to help address capacity gaps and support implementation. Financial management of the project will be conducted in line with UNDP and GEF standards with regular financial monitoring, audits, and spot checks.
Stakeholder	Strategic	Moderate	There are risks that the project will not fully engage relevant stakeholders presenting risks to effective implementation at all levels. The project has undertaken a stakeholder assessment and developed a stakeholder engagement plan to address these risks. This will be continually updated and assessed during implementation with a gender, safeguards and stakeholder engagement specialist recruited to support this process. Any project partners will also be required to clearly plan and provide information on their levels of engagement.
Overall Risk Rating		Moderate	That means that the project should be monitored quarterly by PMU, MNRE and UNDP during the implementation and practice corrective action in case of one or more risks above tend to turn into a real threat for the project development and implementation.

Potential Project Social and Environmental Impacts

During project development, the project was reviewed using UNDP's social and environmental screening procedure (SESP). The analysis identified a range of potential social and environmental impacts associated with the project activities. The SESP report (Annex 5) details the specific environmental and social risks that apply. Based on the significance of these individual risks, the project has been allocated an overall SESP risk categorization rating of **"Moderate"**, the overall risk category being taken from the highest rating allocated to any individual risk. The SESP identified nine risks for this project that could have potential negative impacts in the absence of safeguards. Six of these risks were rated as **Moderate**, and two risks were rated as **Low**. The screenings indicate that ten of the social and environmental principles and standards have been triggered due to these risks. A summary of the risk significance under each SES principle and standard, and the project-level safeguard standards triggered by each project is shown in Table 7 below. The individual risks are described in the Table 8.

Table 7: Summary of safeguards triggered based on screening conducted during project preparation

Principle/Standard	Applicable	Associate Risks	Risk Rating
Principles			
Human Rights	✓	1, 2, 3, 6	Moderate
Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	✓	1	Moderate
Sustainability and Resilience	✓	8	Low
Accountability	✓	2, 3, 5	Moderate
Project-level Standards			
Standard 1: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management	✓	8,7	Moderate
Standard 2: Climate Change and Disaster Risks	✓	4	Moderate
Standard 3: Community Health, Safety and Security	✓	8	Low
Standard 4: Cultural Heritage	✓	7	Low
Standard 5: Displacement and Resettlement	✓	3	Moderate
Standard 6: Indigenous Peoples ⁵³			
Standard 7: Labour and Working Conditions			
Standard 8: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency	✓	8	Low
Number of Risks in each risk rating Category			
High	0		
Substantial	0		
Moderate	7		
Low	2		
Overall Project Risk Category	Moderate		

Table 8. Individual SESP risk and suggested mitigation measures (see details in the Annex 9. ESMF)

Risk	Design Response	ESMF Response
Risk 1: The Project may not provide equitable opportunities or benefits to women	The risk is managed through the project design, which incorporates a Gender Action Plan (GAP), based on a Gender Analysis undertaken during PPG, assessing the position of women in Samoa and the overall different roles of women and men in biodiversity conservation and natural resources management. Recommendations from the GAP will be mainstreamed within the project framework, activity design and project budget, including the incorporation of age and sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics and specific measurable indicators related to gender equality and women's empowerment.	The ESMF requires that the GAP is implementing and mainstreamed across project outputs.

⁵³ Almost all stakeholders in the communities the project will be working with are indigenous people. To manage local community participation a Community Engagement Plan was produced under the ESMF that includes FPIC procedures.

Risk 2: The Project may not provide equitable opportunities of benefits to vulnerable or marginalized groups.	The results of the IUCN SOS MSP and this Projects PPG consultations has informed the iterative project design including the development of key performance indicators (KPIs) specific to vulnerable/ marginalized groups.	A Community Engagement Plan (CEP) is integrated into the ESMF and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) including a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). The EMSF captures the required management measures needed during project implementation to specifically target the needs and concerns of these groups.
Risk 3: Impacts to traditional rights or access to some land and resources.	Integrating an inclusive and participatory planning process into the Output 2.1 will ensure that selected sites and associated restrictive management measures linked to NbS have the broad support of all affected community members. As part of this, the activity design detailed in the ProDoc recognizes that activities and associated management measures will be community driven and only implemented with broad community support.	The community support will be established using FPIC principles (driven by the CEP) and a GEDSI approach (driven by the GAP and SEP). To support the FPIC approach, the CEP within the ESMF further defines measures to ensure that the project is well informed by nominated community representatives throughout all planning and implementation phases.
Risk 4: Risk of NbS interventions being ineffective if vulnerable to the impacts of climate change	Planned project activities will contribute towards the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change impacts on the vulnerability of communities through improved use of nature-based solutions and integration of NCA into decision making and avoid the potential for maladaptive practices. All PPG proposed activities consider climate vulnerability by adopting local and expert advice over areas most at risk as well as communities or livelihoods that could be affected Project design will consider the results of climate assessments and fully integrate climate change mitigation and adaptation measures through NbS design, incorporation of traditional knowledge in the project Outputs	Climate and disaster risks will be further assessed and mitigation measures will be incorporated in the design and implementation of the nature-based solutions (NbS) under Output 4.1.
Risk 5: Risk of developing governance frameworks or plans for PES funds or International Visitor Levy which do not respond to the SES	A scoped Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) will be developed early in the project implementation for all policy or governance outputs of the project.	Detailed guidance for developing the scoped SESA is included in the PPG ESMF. The scoped SESA must address: • All laws and regulations which directly or indirectly relate to PES are identified. • Detailed lessons from the VCP PES pilot project are captured. • Consultation is undertaken with landowners currently implementing the pilot VCP PES and with any communities who may have expressed interest in participating in PES to gauge an understanding of the public perception and opinions on how PES should be managed. • All laws and regulations which directly or indirectly relate to the establishment and subsequent distribution of levies.

		• Mechanisms explored for distributing funds from a tourism levy are equitable in terms of GEDSI. • Lessons from application of tourism levies or similar resource-user pays schemes in other PICs are captured. • The ESMF sets the minimum breadth of scope expected for the scoped SESA in more detail.
Risk 6: Risk to successful implementation and sustainability of Project from implementing parties	A capacity assessment of national stakeholders was be undertaken during PPG to understand current challenges relating to capacity to uphold duties, rights and safeguards. Based on the findings of the capacity assessment, training and capacity building has been integrated into project design in order to support duty bearers so they understand their responsibilities. Budget to address gender/ safeguards issues has been allocated as necessary such that technical support and training on gender and safeguards is provided to the PMU/Board at start of project. A monitoring and evaluation process will monitor the development of capacity within the project team and stakeholder groups.	The ESMF will include an assessment of the project partners implementation models and, if required, make recommendations for UNDP SES training or additional capacity requirements.
Risk 7: Risks of impact to tangible or intangible cultural heritage from NbS approaches		The PPG ESMF will include a chance find procedure. Any intangible cultural heritage will also be identified and addressed during the FPIC process.
Risk 8: Impacts on habitats or ecosystems from poorly planned project activities	The identification and prioritization of NbS under Outputs 2.1-2.3 will be designed to ensure that that there are no unintended negative impacts to natural habitats, ecosystems or species and management methods are not destructive. Known invasive or non-native species will not be used, and any NbS solutions requiring habitat restoration measures will be based wherever possible on simple removal rather than chemical inputs.	Informed by the requirements of the ESMF, a SES screening assessment will take place as part of the site and activity selection process included in Output 4.1 and management of any identified risk will be incorporated into Site Specific Environmental and Social Management Plans.

Stakeholder Consultation on Social and Environmental Risks. The project is built around consultation with stakeholders, and no on-the-ground activities will take place without community agreement. All activities will be developed in conjunction with local communities, through extensive stakeholder consultation, conducted in a culturally-appropriate manner, in accordance with communities' traditional decision-making structures, and with a proactive emphasis on the inclusion of women, the poor, and marginalized groups. It is important to acknowledge the traditional relationship that Samoans have with their customary land, hence Standard 6 is triggered. As no communities are marginalized from mainstream society due to their status as Indigenous People, an Indigenous Peoples' Plan is not required, but the requirements and elements of Standard 6 are incorporated into the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) (Annex 8). SEP is closely aligned with the Community Engagement Plan (CEP) detailed in Section 6 of Annex 9. ESMF. CEP provides detailed guidance on engaging with indigenous Samoan communities. The SEP will utilize the CEP to ensure that all community interactions, including consultations and the Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) processes, are conducted in a manner that respects local customs and enhances community participation. There has not been any form of pressure to engage individuals in project activities nor will there be during later stages of the project. T. Initial consultations have taken place on the project concept during PPG, and a plan for ongoing stakeholder engagement has been developed. Project activities under Outputs 2.1 and 2.3 may not commence until broad community consent is obtained through a process of Free, Prior, Informed Consent, commensurate with Standard 6 requirements. As locations for demonstration activities are

finalized, the plan will be updated and will specifically consider how to equitably and meaningfully engage marginalized and vulnerable populations including specific measures to include women within the project areas. The plans will ensure that islanders' rights (including customary rights, land tenure and traditional use rights) are considered and mainstreamed at all throughout. The plan will also provide terms of reference and modalities for managing stakeholder engagement in project activities at each site and with each community.

Project-Level Grievance Redress Mechanism. The Project will establish and implement a transparent, fair, confidential, and free-to-access project-level Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), consistent with the requirements of UNDP Social and Environmental Standards, approved by stakeholders, which will be put in place at the start of implementation. Interested stakeholders may raise a grievance at any time to the Project Management Unit, the Executing Agency, Implementing Agency (UNDP). The GRM will be managed and regularly monitored by the GRM Sub-Committee of the Project Board. It will comply with the following requirements:

Uptake. The GRM will have multiple uptake locations and channels. PAPs in the project areas will be able to submit complaints or suggestions to assigned members of the Project Board (PB) (GRM Sub-Committee) in person, via mail, email, via a special page of the Project web site and telephone. These channels will be locally appropriate, widely accessible and publicized in written and verbal forms on all project communication materials, and in public locations in the project areas. Since the project will be dealing with local community members, they will be facilitated to communicate their problems directly to the PMU staff, MNRE, project partners, and M&E experts. These entities will be responsible for the functioning as an interface for the grievance redress mechanism. Thus, the PMU will try to resolve the issues before they become actual grievances where possible.

Sort & process. All grievances will be registered by the GRM Sub-Committee and assigned a unique tracking number upon its submission. GRM Sub-Committee will maintain a database with full information on all submitted complaints and responses taken. These data are important to assess trends and patterns of grievances across the Project districts and for monitoring & evaluation purposes.

Investigate & act. Strict complaint resolution procedures will be developed and observed, and a person at the GRM Sub-Committee will be assigned to handle the grievances. GRM Sub-Committee will develop clear and strict grievance redress procedures, and assign responsibilities. Complaints that are beyond the Project scope will be conveyed by PMU to relevant local or regional authorities in the project areas. Difficult situations and conflicts will always be brought to the attention of the Project Board and UNDP CO. A repository of all the grievances received from the different stakeholders will be maintained at the GRM Sub-Committee for monitoring and evaluation purposes and also for learning. This aspect will be facilitated through Outcome 4 relating to communication and knowledge sharing. Further, this information will be used to assess trends and patterns of grievances across current and future PAs and for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Provide feedback. Feedback will be provided in response to all registered grievances. GRM Sub-Committee will provide feedback by contacting the complainant directly (if his/her identity is known), by reporting on actions taken in community consultations and/or by publishing the results of the complaints on the Project web site, local newspapers and as part of project materials. Once some decisions/actions are taken on a complain, the complainant will be informed about that.

Enable appeals. Complainants will be notified of their right to appeal the decision taken by the GRM Sub-Committee. If complainants are not satisfied with GRM Sub-Committee response to their grievance, they will be able to appeal to GRM Sub-Committee again via mail, e-mail or the Project web site. Environmental and social grievances will be reported to the GEF in the annual PIR. The full SESP screening report is included in Annex 5.

Monitoring and evaluation: All information about the grievances and their resolution will be recorded and monitored. This data will be used to conduct in-depth analyses of complaint trends and patterns, identify potential weaknesses in the Project implementation, and consider improvements.

If the GRM cannot resolve the grievance, it will be escalated to the UNDP CO-level **Stakeholder Response Mechanism (SRM)**. The SRM helps project-affected stakeholders, UNDP's partners (governments, NGOs, businesses) and others jointly address grievances or disputes related to the social and/or environmental impacts of UNDP-supported projects.

Another mechanism that can be used in the project framework is the **Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU)**. The SECU investigates alleged non-compliance with UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards and Screening Procedures from project-affected stakeholders and recommends measures to address findings of non-compliance

Affected people have a choice: if an issue cannot be resolved at country level through the SRM, stakeholders can ask the SECU to pursue a compliance review examining UNDP's compliance with UNDP social and environmental commitments or they can ask both for compliance review and for an effort to resolve their concerns.

Stakeholder Engagement

The project has included a wide range of consultations during the PPG development process, including stakeholder workshops, individual consultations and focus groups with local communities in the project areas. A total of 238 stakeholders were consulted (55% females and 45% males), 75% of all stakeholders consulted were local people from the project districts (see details in the Annex 8a. Stakeholder Consultations).

Key objectives of consultative process were the following:

- Inform all group of stakeholders on the project preparation and allow them to participate in the project development and share their concerns about the project proposed implementation;
- Evaluate current level of key threats for key ecosystems, and communities in the project areas and identify obvious barriers on the way to address the threats;
- Collect information on baseline programmes and projects related to the project objective;
- Understand local, cultural and political context in the country and the project areas;
- Assess current capacity of government agencies and local communities to manage NCAs and NBS and manage natural resources sustainably;
- Develop relevant project Outputs based on key national and project area needs;
- Conduct Social and Environmental Screening Procedure and identify key risks for the project implementation;
- Clearly define project area for interventions and collect information on Outcome and Impact Indicators; and
- Identify potential project partnerships (see Partnerships section) and clarify stakeholder roles in the project implementation.

As a result of Stakeholder Analysis, the following groups of stakeholders (Table 8) were identified for project implementation (excluding some of stakeholders already mentioned in the Partnerships section) (see details in Annex 8. Stakeholder Engagement Plan):

Table 9. Project Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Responsibilities / Mandate	Role in the Project and Engagement mechanism
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE): Division of Environment & Conservation (DEC) Forestry Division MNRE Division for Global Environment Facility/ Climate Change (MNRE/GEF CCD)	MNRE is responsible for the effective management of natural landscapes. It is the executing agency for all United Nations Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs), including UNFCCC, UNCBD and UNCCD. All of the following Divisions are relevant to this project: DEC currently focuses its conservation mandate on national parks, waste, chemical and hazardous waste, terrestrial and marine conservation. It is the Focal point for CBD; and Synergy with UNCCD. Forestry Division comprises three sections: Management, Policy & Planning, and Research & Development Services. It is experienced in	Roles in the project: Implementing Partner and the Project Board Chair; supervision of project implementation; direct participation in the delivery of Outputs 1.1-1.3, 2.1-2.3, and 3.1-3.2; project co-financing. Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, Project Board meetings, working meetings, M&E activities

Land Management Division Technical Services Division Water Resources Division (WRD) (Water Sanitation & Hygiene Sector Coordination Division Environment Sector Coordination Division	reforestation and watershed management activities. Land Management is responsible for policy development on sustainable development of land and land-based resources. Technical Services comprises Survey, Survey Quality Assurance and National Mapping sections. Digital satellite and aerial imagery are available from Mapping utilizing LiDAR WRD has Hydrology, Regulatory and Watershed Management sections. MNRE/GEF CCD provides government level oversight and quality assurance of GEF and Climate Change projects that Samoa is a part of. This Division is also responsible for monitoring of Climate Change Policy. WSCD provides a comprehensive institutional framework with the aim of ensuring both water resources and services are provided and managed with increased efficiency and cost effectiveness. ESCD coordinating body for the National Environment Sector Plan which outlines a framework for action in line with the PDS, sector policy and legislative framework	
Ministry of Finance (MOF) Aid Coordination & Debt Management Economic, Policy and Planning (including Cabinet Development Committee and Sector Coordination) Civil Society Support Programme	MOF is the central government agency responsible for fiscal management and provision of financial and economic advice to achieve sustainable, long-term economic outcomes and fiscal viability towards the advancement of the national vision 'to a sound and stable economy. EPPD is responsible for monitoring the progress of the Pathway for the Development of Samoa (PDS) as well as coordination of development of all Sector Plans to ensure performance indicators are linked to the PDS targets and objectives. CDC is the principal advisory body to the Cabinet. Part of its role is to ensure that Government ministries and agencies adopt a common approach to project planning and programming proposals, based on its <i>Manual on Project Planning and Programming</i>. CSSP A program with the Ministry of Finance overseen by a steering committee, composed of key development partners, government and Samoa Civil Society.	Roles in the project: MOF-ACDMD: Member of the Project Board (a mandatory member of PB for all GEF projects in Samoa); key project partner for the Outputs 1.1-1.3, and 3.1-3.2; participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, Project Board meetings, working meetings, M&E activities, Responsible Party Agreement
Samoa Business Hub (SBH)	The Samoa Business Hub focuses on developing and providing various support services that caters for micro and start-up businesses. SBH provides a stepping stone to allow micro and start up business to access finance from financial institutions within the Green Business Support Credit (GBSC) Scheme (\$5,000-\$10,000) and the Business Loan Guarantee Scheme for clients that have graduated out of the GBSC.	Roles in the project: Member of the Project Board; key project partner for the Outputs 2.1 and 2.3 (assistance to the project to involve small business); participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, Project Board meetings, working meetings, M&E activities
Samoa Bureau of Statistics (SBS)	Government agency mandated to regulate and carry out the collection, recording and analysis of statistical and related information as to the economic, social, environment, demographic and other characteristics of Samoa and to give effect to Samoa's international statistical obligations.	Roles in the project: Member of the Project Board; key project partner for the Outputs 1.1-1.3; participation in the M&E

	Responsible for the analysis of national natural capital accounts for compilation for national development planning purposes	Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, Project Board meetings, working meetings, M&E activities
Samoa Tourism Authority (STA)	Supports progressive development in Samoa through sustainable tourism development, marketing and estimations of the economic impact of tourism on the Samoan economy working closely with other government ministries and partners in the private sector. Responsible for the collection of raw data (arrivals & departure) for compilation of migration statistics	Roles in the project: Member of the Project Board; key project partner for the Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 2.1-2.3, and 3.1-3.2 (activities targeting tourism sector); participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, Project Board meetings, working meetings with PMU, M&E activities
Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSO)	The MWCSO has the overall mandate to support local development through local government, and to provide vital links between GoS and vulnerable and marginalized members of the communities.	Roles in the project: Member of the Project Board; key project partner for the Outputs 4.2 and 5.1; participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, Project Board meetings, working meetings with PMU, M&E activities
Ministry of Customs and Revenue (MCR) Inland Revenue Services	Inland Revenue is accountable for collecting the Government's revenue resulting from the legislation and regulations the Ministry implements (e.g., taxation, duties, excise tax etc). It also provides revenue reporting for both internal and external purposes.	Roles in the project: project partner for the Outputs 3.1 and 3.2; participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: working meetings with PMU, M&E activities
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) Crops Division (CD) Fisheries Division (FD)	CD role is to undertake research to improve food production and security and crops sustainability. Its three main sections cover Utility Support, Development and Advisory (outreach, especially farmers). FD is mandated to liaise with international, regional, government agencies and village communities on issues affecting the conservation, development and management of fisheries resources and their ecosystem	Roles in the project: Member of the Project Board; project partner for the Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, and 3.1; participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, Project Board meetings, working meetings with PMU, M&E activities
Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Member Services Division	<i>Promotes the interests, well-being, and growth of Samoa's private sector at the national, regional, and international levels to improve the economic and social well-being of the people of Samoa. Oversees and works in partnership with 4 Private Sector Organizations (PSOs): Women in Business Development Inc. (WIBDI), Businesses of Salafai Association (BoSA), Samoa Association of Manufacturers and Exporters (SAME) and Samoa Hotel and Hospitality Association (SHHA)</i>	Roles in the project: Member of the Project Board; project partner for the Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1 and 3.2; participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, Project Board meetings, working meetings with PMU, participation in the project events, M&E activities
Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure (MWTI) Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA)	Established under the PUMA Act 2004, the Agency is responsible for ensuring sustainable use, development, and management of land in Samoa. The PUMA Act provides the mandate for the approval and consent on all development activities in Samoa.	Roles in the project: Member of the Project Board; project partner for the Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1 and 2.3; participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, Project Board meetings, working meetings with PMU, participation in the project events, M&E activities
National Environment	Inter-sectoral multi-stakeholder body led by MNRE and including Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Samoa Tourism	Roles in the project: inter-sectoral coordination and facilitation of Output delivery under Components 1-3

Sector Steering Committee (NESSC)	Authority (STA), and other government agencies and NGOs. The Committee serves as the primary coordination body for the Environment Sector. Its key mandate includes providing leadership, oversight, and strategic direction for the planning and implementation of environmental policies, projects, and initiatives. The NESSC plays a crucial role in fostering collaboration among various government ministries, private sector entities, civil society organizations, and development partners to ensure integrated management of Samoa's natural resources and environmental sustainability.	Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, Project Board meetings, working meetings with PMU, participation in the project events, M&E activities, separate NECCS coordination meetings in framework of government cofinancing.
Mauga o Salafai and O Le Pupu Pu'e PAs, and Safata District MPA	Preserve critical habitats for a variety of plant and animal species, some of which are endemic or threatened. Safeguard critical marine habitats such as coral reefs, seagrass beds, and mangroves, which are vital for marine biodiversity. Promote sustainable tourism activities that generate income for local communities while preserving natural resources.	Roles in the project: Member of the Project Board; project partner for the Outputs 2.1-2.3; participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, Project Board meetings, working meetings with PMU, participation in the project events, M&E activities
University of the South Pacific (USP)	The USP aims to promote the University's learning, research, innovation, and initiatives for the enhancement of students, staff, researchers, and communities in Samoa. It also aims to facilitate the development of local Pacific Island solutions to the global challenges that are now observed in the region.	Roles in the project: project partner for the Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3; participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, working meetings with PMU, participation in the project events, M&E activities
National University of Samoa (NUS)	The National University of Samoa plays a similar role to USP in promoting learning, research, innovation and initiatives for enhancement of researchers and communities in Samoa.	Roles in the project: project partner for the Outputs 1.3, 4.1 and 4.2; participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, working meetings with PMU, participation in the project events, M&E activities
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)	SPREP is a regional organization established by 25 Governments and Administrations of the Pacific, charged with protecting and managing the environment and natural resources of the Pacific. Its head office is in Apia, Samoa. SPREP is currently implementing a regional project "Kiwa Initiative – Nature-based Solutions for climate resilience" with its core governing principles of 'protecting biodiversity (conservation/restoration) and developing NbS to anticipate, reduce vulnerabilities and strengthen adaptive capacities of PICTs in the face of climate change.	Roles in the project: exchange of the best NbS practices with the project; consultations to the projects on the Outputs 2.1-2.3; participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, working meetings with PMU, participation in the project events, M&E activities
Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organizations (SUNGO)	SUNGO is a network of NGOs and Trusts established in 1997 to provide alternative development options and assistance to community groups in Samoa. It has also provided input for government policy and planning processes on issues impacting quality of life for the people of Samoa.	Roles in the project: Member of the Project Board; project partner for Outputs 1.3, 2.1 and 2.3, and 3.2; participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, PB meetings, working meetings with PMU, participation in the project events, M&E activities
Samoa Conservation Society (SCS)	A local non-governmental organization dedicated to promoting the conservation of Samoa's biological diversity and natural heritage. SCS works collaboratively with communities, the Government and partners to raise awareness on	Roles in the project: Member of the Project Board; project partner for Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 and 2.3, and 3.2; participation in the M&E

	the state of Samoa's environment and the species within. SCS is currently involved in the GCF PES project and will bring complementarity knowledge into the BGI project	Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, PB meetings, working meetings with PMU, participation in the project events, M&E activities
District Development Councils	The Program is a newly implemented initiative by the Government with a tailored approach to the communities and districts for successful implementation of the Program. The Program design has a more precise, coordinated approach to information collection and management that will be agreed upon by the DDC's and the Government via its relevant agencies, and the establishment and use of common project management systems and approaches.	Roles in the project: Member of the Project Board; key project partner for Outputs 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3; participation in the M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, PB meetings, working meetings with PMU, participation in the project events and activities, M&E activities
Village Councils and Committees:	Village Councils and various committees (e.g. Women's Committee) have been closely involved in the development of CIM Plans, which contain both district and community actions.	Roles in the project: key project partner for Outputs 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3; participation in the M&E; implementation of GRM Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshop, working meetings with PMU, participation in the project events and activities, M&E activities
Local Communities in the target districts	Key project stakeholders and beneficiaries on the project areas involved in different economic sectors. Some community members may be negatively affected by the project	Roles in the project: key project stakeholders and beneficiaries; project partners and target audience for Outputs 2.1-2.3, 4.1-4.2; participation in safeguard screening and monitoring of all project activities; users of GRM; participation in the project M&E Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshops in the districts, working meetings with PMU, participation in the project events and activities, M&E activities
Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), large business companies, and investors in the tourist, agriculture, forestry, and fishery sectors	Development and implementation of business projects, PPPs, and investment initiatives in Samoa. Some business entities may be negatively affected by the project.	Roles in the project: project partners for Outputs 1.2, 2.1-2.3, 3.1-3.2; users of GRM; participation in the project M&E; providing co-financing for the project activities Engagement mechanism: Inception Workshops in the districts, working meetings with PMU, participation in the project events and activities, M&E activities
UNDP GEF Small Grant Programme	The UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) in Samoa serves several critical functions aimed at promoting environmental sustainability and community development through small grants for Community-Based Environmental Management, Biodiversity Conservation, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation, and Sustainable Land Management	Roles in the project: support of delivery of Output 2.1 and 2.3 through Low Value Grants mechanism

South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTrC)

South-South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation (TrC) involve collaboration among developing countries and partnerships that include traditional donor countries or international organizations. The current project will contribute to SSC and TrC in the following ways (Component 4):

- Organize online and in-person workshops and training sessions to share knowledge and build capacity on NbS, NCA, and sustainable resource management through a number of regional and global platforms, including the GEF 8 Blue and Green Islands Integrated Program (BGI IP) and Global Coordination Project, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Island Development Forum (PIDF), and ADB Blue Pacific Finance Hub as well as the UN Inter-Agency Consultative Group (IACG) on SIDS, the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), and the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. For example, the project will seek to exchange best practices and lessons learned with other SIDS through the IACG and AOSIS and will support the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway;
- Participate in regional initiatives through exchange visits under the umbrella of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)'s strategic directions, together with dedicated CROP agencies programmes such as SPREP, SPC, SPTO that address biodiversity conservation, climate change, disaster management, coastal fisheries and sustainable tourism;
- Adoption of successful practices and innovations on NCA and NbS from other developing countries, promoting regional and global sustainability. The project will collaborate with foundations active in the Pacific such as the Blue Prosperity Coalition and the Blue Nature Alliance, while interacting with global island knowledge platforms such as the Global Islands Partnership (GLISPA), and the Island Innovation;
- Share technologies and methodologies developed through the project, such as Decision Support Tools for NCA and NbS, and successful NbS and PES models with SIDS thorough UN South-South Galaxy knowledge sharing platform, PANORAMA, and existing projects such as the Mainstreaming Environmental Considerations in Economic and Development Planning Processes in Selected Pacific Developing Member Countries (EU) and the Intra-ACP GCCA+ Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change and Resilience Building (PACRES)(EU), within Samoa as well as engaging with projects within other regional countries such as the Blue Incubation Facility in PNG and Investing in Coral reefs and the Blue Economy in Fiji – supported through the Global Fund for Coral Reef;
- Host regional online or in-person conferences and forums to facilitate dialogue and collaboration among countries in the Pacific region and beyond on NCA and NbS

In addition, to bring the voice of Samoa to global and regional fora, the project will explore opportunities for meaningful participation in specific events where UNDP could support engagement with the global development discourse on NCA and NbS for sustainable economic development, climate adaptation, and biodiversity conservation. The project will provide other regional cooperation opportunities with countries implementing initiatives on the GEF 8 Blue and Green Islands Integrated Program in geopolitical, social and environmental contexts relevant to the proposed project in Samoa.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:

Results of the project Gender Analysis indicate that women in Samoa face the 'triple burden' of unpaid household labor, paid and unpaid livelihood activities, and community work, which remains largely unrecognized in official data. Despite higher educational attainment among women, workforce participation remains unequal, with only 15% of women economically active compared to 28% of men. The majority of unpaid domestic and agricultural work is performed by women, which limits their access to direct income and economic opportunities. Women are underrepresented in governance at both village and national levels. Only 10% of matai (chiefs) are women, and their participation in village councils is even lower. Cultural norms and religious beliefs often position men as primary decision-makers, marginalizing women's voices in community and family affairs. Newly introduced District Committees aim for gender balance, but achieving this remains challenging. Additionally, women have limited access to and control over customary land, which comprises about 80% of Samoa's land area. The Village Fono (council) is predominantly male, which restricts women's participation in land-related decisions. Past initiatives in forestry and environmental projects have largely excluded women, highlighting the need for targeted gender mainstreaming strategies. Samoa has ratified international conventions such as CEDAW, CRC, and CRPD and is committed to SDG 5 (Gender Equality). However, specific national laws and policies to domesticate these commitments are lacking. The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD) plays a key role, but foundational legislation for gender equality needs updating to address current challenges effectively (see details in the Annex 10. Gender Analysis and Mainstreaming Action Plan).

To improve this situation in the context of the UNDP/GEF project, appropriate gender and social measures have been fully considered in the project design, and gender accountability is a cross-cutting issue that will be tracked as part of the project M&E system. This GEF project can be classified as Gender targeted with Gender Marker rating 2 (result focused on the number or equity (50/50) of women, men or marginalized populations that were targeted) with strong gender interventions incorporated in the project design. During the project development, the PPG team tried to involve as many women as possible in the consultation process. Overall women's participation was high (55% of all stakeholders) despite traditional male dominance in natural resource management sphere in Samoa.

To implement gender mainstreaming, the project will develop and implement an effective Gender Mainstreaming Strategy (Output 4.2) as a part of the ESMF and ESMP. The strategy will guide the project implementation to build project partner capacity to mainstream gender and bring along strategies that empower women as agents rather than as victims of ecosystem degradation and climate change. This strategy will also facilitate a multi-stakeholder analysis of the gender issues with a clear set of measurable gender indicators.

The key guidelines for the strategy are outlined below:

- Gender balance will be ensured as much as possible regarding women participation in the Project Board and in the PMU. Project interventions will seek a greater and more even gender representation with the potential for gender mainstreaming-related activities at the national level and in the project area. Furthermore, relevant gender representation will be pursued in the project management. All project staff recruitment shall be specifically undertaken inviting and encouraging women applicants. The TORs for key project staff all incorporate gender mainstreaming related responsibilities;
- The project will incorporate gender considerations in the implementation procedures in a number of different ways:
 - Empower women by involving them in NCA and PES policy planning and development processes, including capacity building activities under Components 1, 2, and 3;
 - Strong focus on rural communities and gender within Component 2 with an emphasis on involving women in development and implementation of NbS and restoration projects in the project areas that have an emphasis on female-led activities;
 - All awareness raising activities will specifically target women and encourage them to take responsibilities including for engagement with the authorities with respect to natural resource management and NbS (Component 4);
 - Women's organizations (associations and clubs) will be involved in project implementation and M&E at national and district levels (Component 5).

The project will adopt the following principles in the day to day management: (i) gender stereotypes will not be perpetuated; (ii) women and other vulnerable groups will be actively and demonstrably included in project activities and management whenever possible, and (iii) derogatory language or behavior will not be tolerated. The project will promote gender mainstreaming and capacity building within its project staff to improve understanding of gender issues, and will appoint a designated focal point for gender issues to support development, implementation, monitoring and strategy on gender mainstreaming internally and externally. This will include facilitating gender equality in capacity development and women's empowerment and participation in the project activities. The project will also work with UNDP experts in gender issues in Samoa to utilize their expertise in gender mainstreaming. These requirements will be monitored by the UNDP Gender Focal Point during project implementation. Additionally, the project will use at least 3 gender disaggregated indicators in the PRF for regular monitoring and evaluation of the project progress and reporting, and will facilitate involvement of women in the M&E and Grievance Redress Mechanism implementation (see Annex 10. Gender Analysis and Mainstreaming Plan).

Knowledge

Generating knowledge and lessons learning is a considerable part of the project: the project has entire Component 4 for the Knowledge Management and dissemination of its lessons and best practices. The following knowledge products will be produced by the project:

- **Knowledge Management Strategy:** will be developed at the project inception phase and updated annually (Output 4.2);

- **Annual Project Reports:** comprehensive reports detailing the progress, achievements, and challenges of the project including case studies, success stories, lessons learned, and impact assessments (Output 4.2);
- **Best Practices Manuals:** guides and manuals on implementing NbS, NCA, and ecosystem restoration, tailored for different sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and tourism (Outputs 1.1 – 1.3);
- **Technical Briefs and Policy Papers:** documents aimed at policymakers and stakeholders, providing insights into the project's methodologies, outcomes, and policy recommendations e.g., for Outputs 1.1, 3.1, and 3.2).
- **Training Programs and Curriculum:** detailed training programs on NCA and NbS for national and district level officials (Output 1.3);
- **NCA Data Repository:** online database containing comprehensive data on natural capital accounting modules (waste, energy, water, mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass, forests). These databases will be accessible to researchers, policymakers, and other stakeholders (Output 1.1);
- **Decision Support Tools (DSTs):** interactive tools integrated with GIS mapping, economic valuation models, and scenario simulation platforms to assist in spatial planning, NbS implementation, and resource management (Output 1.2);
- **Media products:** short documentaries showcasing the project's impact, featuring interviews with local communities, project staff, and stakeholders; visually engaging materials that summarize key project information, outcomes, and benefits of NbS and NCA; regular press releases, success stories, and educational posts shared on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to engage a broader audience and raise awareness (Output 4.1);

The project will create visibility for knowledge and lessons learned using the following tools (see the section *South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTrC)* for more details):

- **Local Workshops and Trainings:** interactive sessions held in target districts to engage local communities, share project progress, and gather feedback, including hands-on training and participatory planning exercises;
- **National and Regional Webinars:** online seminars to disseminate knowledge to a wider audience, including government officials, NGOs, and private sector representatives. Topics will cover NbS implementation, NCA integration, and gender mainstreaming;
- **International Webinars:** sessions aimed at sharing the project's experiences and best practices with global audiences, particularly other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and GBI IP Child Projects;
- **Global Conferences:** participation in international forums such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) conferences, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) meetings, and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) events;
- **Regional Platforms:** engagement with regional bodies like the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) to share knowledge and collaborate on NbS and NCA initiatives;
- **Local and National Conferences:** participating in conferences within Samoa to present project findings and foster collaboration among local stakeholders.

Innovativeness, Potential for Scaling Up, and Sustainability

Innovativeness. The project has relatively high innovation potential for Samoa, SIDS, and many other countries. It introduces several key innovations aimed at improving environmental management, integrating nature-based solutions (NbS), and leveraging financial mechanisms to support sustainable development. The key project innovations are the following:

- **Sector-Specific NCAs and Economic Valuation of Ecosystem Services:** development and integration of new NCA modules for mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass, and forests into national economic planning and budget frameworks, such as the Tourist Satellite Account. Application of economic valuation methods to quantify the monetary value of ecosystem services, providing a robust basis for policy-making and investment decisions (Outputs 1.1-1.3);
- **Decision Support Tools (DSTs):** development of GIS-based and scenario simulation tools based on NCAs to support NbS development and sustainable natural resource management, enabling policymakers to evaluate trade-offs and synergies between economic and environmental priorities (Output 1.2);

- **PES Policy Framework for Tourism and Food Sectors:** creation of a PES policy framework that includes tax breaks, nature-positive subsidies, certification, and public-private partnerships (PPPs) to attract private sector investment in NbS (Output 3.1);
- **IVL Implementation:** establishment of an International Visitor Levy to generate funding for NbS in the tourism sector. Drawing on New Zealand's successful IVL model, Samoa aims to mobilize significant financial resources to support sustainable tourism and ecosystem conservation (Output 3.2);
- **Nature-based Solutions Integration and Implementation in the District Management:** the project integrates innovative NbS into Community Integrated Management Plans (CIMPs), Water Resources Management (WRM) Plans, and Protected Area (PA) Integrated Management Plans. This holistic approach ensures that NbS are systematically incorporated into local governance frameworks and implemented using innovative approaches (Outputs 2.1-2.3).

Also, the project has **high transformative potential** with the proposed innovations (e.g. NCAs, NbS, DSTs, PES policy framework, and IVL mechanism) that will be developed and institutionalized in the project frameworks to ensure their scale up and replication.

Potential for up-scaling. The Samoa project has significant potential for scaling up, both within Samoa and across other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and broader regions. All the innovative models mentioned above can be potentially replicated at different levels, if successful. Here are the key levels of the project scale-up potential through the mechanisms described in the *Knowledge* section:

- **Replication in the project districts:** project trainings, capacity building, and demonstration activities offers a structured and effective approach to scaling up successful project NbS models in the target districts involving more stakeholders in the implementation of the project best practices;
- **Replication in other districts of Samoa:** the project's innovative models can be replicated in other districts within Samoa, expanding the reach and impact of NbS and climate resilience efforts across the nation;
- **Adaptation and Application in other Island Nations:** the project can serve as a model for other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and BGI IP Child projects facing similar environmental threats and climate vulnerabilities. Lessons learned and best practices from Samoa can inform NCAs, NbS, and PES implementation and resilience building in other SIDS, offering a pathway for regional cooperation and knowledge exchange;
- **Influence on Global NCA and NbS Strategies:** by demonstrating the effectiveness of integrated NCA, NbS, and PES for sustainable development and climate adaptation, the project can influence global strategies and policies, advocating for the broader adoption of ecosystem-based approaches and community-centered planning.

Sustainability. Ensuring the long-term sustainability and durability of the project results is critical for achieving lasting impacts. The Samoa project incorporates several mechanisms to embed sustainability into its design, leveraging national systems and developing a comprehensive exit strategy and sustainability plan. The following mechanism will be implemented by the project to ensure sustainability of the results and models:

- **Policy and Regulatory Integration:** embed the project's NCAs, NbS and PES methodologies into national policies, regulations, and development plans. This includes integrating the developed NCA modules into national accounting systems and economic planning frameworks (Outputs 1.1); integration of NbS into CIMPs, WRM Plans, and PA IMPs at district level (Output 2.1-2.2); government endorsement of the PES policy framework and IVL mechanism (Outputs 3.1-3.2);
- **Government Ownership:** ensure active participation and leadership from national and local government agencies (e.g., MNRE, MOF, SBS, District Government) in project implementation, fostering ownership and capacity building within these institutions;
- **Institutionalization of Training Programs:** work with educational institutions (e.g., universities, technical colleges) to integrate NbS and NCA curricula into their programs, ensuring ongoing education and skill development. Continuous comprehensive training programs for government officials, local authorities, and community leaders will build long-term capacity in NbS and NCA practices (Output 1.3);
- **International Visitor Levy (IVL) as a sustainable financial mechanism:** implement and institutionalize the IVL to generate continuous funding for conservation and NbS projects, reducing dependency on external grants (Output 3.2);

- **Leveraging Private Sector Investment and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** establish and strengthen PPPs to co-finance and implement NbS initiatives, ensuring continued investment and involvement of the private sector in sustainable practices. Engage with businesses to integrate NbS into their CSR activities, fostering long-term support and funding for conservation efforts (Outputs 2.1-2.3, 3.1-3.2);
- **Project Exit Strategy:** develop a phased approach to gradually transfer project responsibilities to national and local institutions, ensuring they have the capacity and resources to sustain the project outcomes. Provide ongoing support and mentorship to national and local authorities during the transition period to build their confidence and capability (Outputs 1.3, 4.1, and 4.2).

Digital Solutions

Different digital solutions have been applied during the PPG process and also are incorporated into different project Outputs to ensure efficiency, user-friendliness, and easy replicability of the project successful NCA and NbS models and their maximal value for project stakeholders and beneficiaries, including the following:

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications:** Chat GPT 4o and specially designed GPTs for risk management, social and environmental screening, and gender mainstreaming have been applied for the time-effective project development, including situation analysis, Theory of Change Development, and content production for different sections of the ProDoc and Annexes. The AI tools will be applied by the PMU for effective generation of Quarterly and Annual Reports, analysis of the project risks, and analysis and synthesis of M&E data;
- **Online digital platforms:** Miradi Online and Whimsical Diagrams, a project management and flow chart software, were applied for generation of the project Theory of Change, and will be applied by the PMU for testing and editing of ToC during the project implementation;
- **Excel-Based Tools:** the FAO EX-Ante Carbon-balance Tool (EX-ACT), version 9, was applied for comprehensive calculations of the carbon gains by the project, and will be applied for analysis of actual carbon gains before the project Mid-Term Review and Terminal Evaluation;
- **GIS-based Tools:** like ArcGIS and QGIS and remote sensed data, have been applied for generation of the project maps and initial land cover analysis during PPG, and will be applied by the project team and partners for development of NCA modules (Output 1.1); integration of NbS into CIMPs and WRM Plans of target districts (Output 2.1); development of PA Integrated Management Plans (Output 3.1); and informing of the PES policy framework (Output 3.1);
- **Digital Decision-Support Tools (DSTs):** the project will design and develop digital DST tailored to Samoa's specific needs and NCA structure to apply for NbS and sustainable economic development planning and decision-making (Output 1.2), based on integrated digital solutions, GIS-based and scenario simulation platforms;
- **Digital Learning Management Systems:** will be applied for development and implementation of online training modules on NCAs and NbS for the national and district officers (Output 1.3);
- **Digital Media Platforms:** like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, will be applied by the project for awareness campaign and dissemination of the best project practices (Outputs 4.1 and 4.2).

V. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Cost efficiency and effectiveness

To ensure the project cost efficiency and effectiveness the following measures have been incorporated in the project design and will be implemented after the project start:

- the project was developed using fully participatory approach (238 stakeholders were consulted), was built on the tested models and lessons learned by Samoa and other projects and organizations (see *Strategy* section for details), and has carefully designed Theory of Change, and specific and clear Outputs (project products and services) (see *Expected Results* section). Additionally, the project implementation is based on a set of partnerships with Government, non-Government, multilateral and local organizations and

communities (about 20 organizations were defined as partners for the different project Outputs) to share experience, time, labour, and financial resources to deliver the project Outputs (see the sections *Partnerships* and *Stakeholder Engagement*);

- design of the project Outputs, while based on actual needs, allows flexibility for the PMU and partners to select different options for their delivery based on the current situation, and lessons learned through the project implementation; that will allow effective project adaptive management⁵⁴;
- the project is built on a relatively strong financial foundation: total co-financing for the project is US\$ 35,766,900 with GEF contribution of US\$ 2,346,482, or 6% of the total project budget. Details of the project co-financing are described in the section *Financial Planning and Management*). Additionally, the project has significant level of investments in NCA, NbS, and PES policy and planning framework under Components 1 and 3 (US\$ 752,900 or 32% of the GEF budget) to provide strong political foundation for implementation of Component 2 and long-term sustainability of the project Outputs. At the same time, part of Component 1 (Output 1.3) and Component 2 focuses on building essential capacity for planning and implementation of NCA and NbS activities with significant allocation of the GEF budget of \$1,107,946, or 47%. This funding includes \$560,000 of Component 2 that will be spent to support NbS and ecosystem restoration projects by local communities in cooperation with private sector (Outputs 2.1 and 2.3). These sufficient levels of investment will allow to achieve sustainability in community NbS practices and livelihood in the project districts;
- to deliver the Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, and 2.2 the project will leverage free GIS software like QGIS, GRASS GIS, and gvSIG for mapping, spatial analysis, and data visualization. This reduces costs associated with expensive commercial GIS licenses. also, the project will use freely available remote sensing data from sources like Landsat and Sentinel satellites for ecosystem monitoring and analysis where possible. Additionally, the project will build on existing data, assessments, and studies conducted in Samoa where possible to avoid duplication of efforts and maximize the use of available information. While conducting the trainings, meetings, and events the project will utilize government and community facilities for training sessions, workshops, and meetings, reducing the need for rented venues where it is possible;
- when hiring RPs and contractors, the project will follow a standard recruitment and advertising process to have at least three competitors for each contract. Selection will be based on qualifications, technical experience and financial proposal, to ensure hiring the best consultant (individual or organization) for an optimal price. Economy fares will be applied for necessary air, sea, and road travel, and appropriate lodging facilities will be provided to the project staff that ensures staff safety and cost-effectiveness. Similarly, the project will follow a tendering process for equipment purchase and any printing/publishing that accounts for more than USD 10,000, comparing at least three vendors. In case there is a single vendor only for any activity, appropriate official norms will be followed to obtain approval from UNDP;
- finally, in order to maximize the effectiveness and sustainability of the project results, an exit plan will be developed by the end of year 3, for implementation and tracking during the final year. This will identify a key owner and sustainability mechanism for each of the project's results that also contributes to the project effectiveness.

Project Management

The project will have a Project Management Unit hosted by MNRE in Apia. The PMU will consist of a Project Coordinator, Project Technical Advisor, and Project Finance and Administration Officer. The PMU will be directly supported by the UNDP-Samoa staff. The PMU will hire support consultants to assist in the project management (e.g., on KM, M&E, communication, social and environmental safeguards). The PMU will directly work with the indicated Responsible Party and project partners at national and project area levels to ensure effective and timely delivery of the project Outputs. The PMU will cooperate with other projects implemented at national and regional levels and in the project area directly and via designated partners, including during monitoring and evaluation visits

⁵⁴ Adaptive Management and project ability to proactively adjust to changing situation and uncertainty is of paramount importance in the situation of COVID-19 pandemic, world economic crises, and other issues

and meetings of the Project Board. Other details of the project management arrangements are described in the section *Governance and Management Arrangements*.

VI. PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goal (s): SDG 1, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17; KM GBF Targets 1-3, 9, 10, 20, 21						
National Priority/Goal: By 2025/26 The Government will maintain a safe environment for Samoa and promote sustainable economic use of natural resources. (Pathway for Development of Samoa Strategic Outcome 4 - Secured Environment and Climate Change)						
Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDCF/Country [or Regional] Program Results and Resource Framework: <i>Regional Priority:</i> Pacific people, societies, economies, cultures and natural environments are resilient to changing conditions and extreme events resulting from climate change, climate variability and geological processes, to enhance the well-being of the people and to promote their sustainable development (Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) <i>UN Outcome 1:</i> People and ecosystems in the Pacific are more resilient to the impacts of climate change, climate variability and disasters; and environmental protection is strengthened.						
Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: Signature Solution 4 – Environment: Outcome 4.1 Natural resources <u>protected</u> and <u>managed</u> to enhance sustainable productivity and livelihoods; SP IRRF 4.1.1 Number of people directly benefitting from initiatives to protect nature and promote sustainable use of resources; SP IRRF 4.1.2 Natural resources that are managed under a sustainable use, conservation, access, and benefit-sharing regime						
Project title and Quantum Project Number: Coastal Resilience Samoa ; project # 01002453						
Objective and Outcome Indicators ⁵⁵	Data Source	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Data Collection Methods	Risks/Assumptions
Project Objective:	<i>To ensure nature-positive development and reduce ecosystem degradation in Samoa by valuing nature and applying Nature-based Solutions (NbS) with specific application to food and tourism sectors</i>					
<u>Mandatory Indicator 1:</u> Terrestrial Protected Areas under improved management effectiveness (GEF Core Indicator 1.2), ha: O Le Pupu Pu'e NP (5,019 ha) Mauga o Salafai PA (5, 973 ha)	METT assessment at the Mid-Term and End of the project	0 ha METT for O Le Pupu Pu'e: 60 METT for Mauga o Salafai PA: 30	10,992 ha METT for O Le Pupu Pu'e: 65 METT for Mauga o Salafai PA: 38	10,992 ha METT for O Le Pupu Pu'e: 72 METT for Mauga o Salafai PA: 42	GEF METT assessment through in-person workshop with PA staff	A1. The natural ecosystems in Samoa are resilient enough to respond positively to NbS interventions and climate change impacts; A2. Future climate conditions will not drastically undermine the effectiveness of NbS interventions and results;
<u>Mandatory Indicator 2:</u> Marine Protected Areas under improved management effectiveness (GEF Core Indicator 2.2), ha: Safata District MPA (6,368 ha)	METT assessment at the Mid-Term and End of the project	0 ha METT for Safata District MPA: 21	6,368 ha METT for Safata District MPA: 23	6,368 ha METT for Safata District MPA: 26	GEF METT assessment through in-person workshop with PA staff	A3. The economic environment in Samoa will remain stable enough to support sustainable development initiatives. R1. Unforeseen extreme weather events, sea level rise, and other climate change-related phenomena may adversely affect natural
<u>Mandatory Indicator 3:</u> Area of forest and forest	Reports of restoration activities	0 ha	>=1,000 ha	>=5,000 ha	Analysis of restoration reports; field	

⁵⁵ UNDP publishes its project information (indicators, baselines, targets and results) to meet the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standards. Make sure that indicators are S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound), provide accurate baselines and targets underpinned by reliable evidence and data, and avoid acronyms so that external audience clearly understand the results of the project.

	land under restoration (GEF Core Indicator 3.2), ha	Field validation				measurement during site visits	ecosystems and the effectiveness of NbS interventions;
	<u>Mandatory Indicator 4:</u> Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity outside PAs, ha (GEF Core Indicator 4.3):	District CIMP and WRM Plans with integrated NbS District reports on implementation of the CIMP and WRM Plans	0 ha	20,000 ha under improved management through adoption and implementation of village by-laws and implementation of NbS projects	46,184 ha under improved management through adoption and implementation of village by-laws and implementation of NbS projects	Analysis of District CIMP and WRM Plans with integrated NbS and implementation reports Interviews with local communities	R2. Economic downturns or fluctuations in the global economy could reduce financial resources and investment in NbS projects, impacting sustainability; R3. Political change through elections may lead to changed priorities and interest of government away from NbS and action on environment
	<u>Mandatory Indicator 5:</u> Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity outside PAs (GEF Core Indicator 5.4)	District CIMP and WRM Plans with integrated NbS District reports on implementation of the CIMP and WRM Plans	0 ha	10,000 ha under improved management through adoption and implementation of village by-laws and implementation of NbS projects	25,000 ha under improved management through adoption and implementation of village by-laws and implementation of NbS projects	Analysis of District CIMP and WRM Plans with integrated NbS and implementation reports Interviews with local communities	
	<u>Mandatory Indicator 6:</u> Mitigated Greenhouse Gas Emissions, metric tons of CO ₂ e (20 years of accounting) (GEF Core Indicator 6)	District CIMP and WRM Plans with integrated NbS District reports on implementation of the CIMP and WRM Plans Field validation of restored activities and NbS projects	0 metric tons of CO ₂ e	>=1,500,000 metric tons of CO ₂ e over the 20 years	>= 4,060,984 metric tons of CO ₂ e over the 20 years (see Annex 26. FAO EX-ACT Assessment of carbon gains by the project)	Calculations with FAO Ex-Act Tool based on the district implementation reports and field validation	
	<u>Mandatory Indicator 7:</u> Number of direct project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (individual people) (GEF Core Indicator 11)	Lists of stakeholders in the project activity reports Interview with local communities	0	>= 5,000 (48% are women)	>= 14,941 (48% are women)	Analysis of lists of stakeholders; Analysis of community surveys; M&E reports, Mid-Term Evaluation, Terminal Evaluation Report Analysis	
Component 1	Integration of nature in key economic sectors through targeted economic, governance and financial interventions						
Outcome 1. Value of ecosystem services better	Indicator 8: Number of NCA modules and Decision Support Tools (DST) embedded within national	National fiscal policies/ economic accounts	3 NCA accounts developed, but not embedded into the fiscal	7 NCA accounts developed, but not embedded into the fiscal	7 NCA accounts embedded into the fiscal policies/economic	Analysis of the national fiscal policies/ economic accounts and implementation	A1. The NCA modules provide accurate and reliable data that is reflective of the true economic value of ecosystem services;

integrated into planning and budgeting allocations	fiscal policies/ economic accounts and implemented (BGI IP Indicator 1.1.2 - Multi-stakeholder Dialogues)	Implementation reports on the policies/accounts	policies/economic accounts 0 DSTs to apply NCA modules in the district NbS planning	policies/economic accounts ≥ 2 DSTs to apply NCA modules in the district NbS planning developed	accounts and implemented ≥ 2 DSTs to apply NCA modules in the district NbS planning implemented	reports on the policies/accounts	A2. Relevant authorities and stakeholders are willing to accept and utilize the NCA data in their planning and budgeting processes; A.3. Decision Support Tools are user-friendly, accessible, and effectively tailored to the needs of policymakers at both national and local levels; A4. Authorities actively apply the knowledge and skills gained from training in their planning and budgeting processes. R1. The NCA modules might provide data that is inaccurate, incomplete, or not reflective of the true economic value of ecosystem services R.2. Relevant authorities and stakeholders may be unwilling or hesitant to accept and utilize NCA data in their planning and budgeting processes R3. SESP Risk 6: Risk to successful implementation and sustainability of Project from implementing parties
	Indicator 9. Number of districts using NCA based approaches to value ecosystem services as part of their planning processes	District government decisions and CIMP implementation reports	0	≥ 4 districts	≥ 9 districts	Analysis of district government decisions and CIMP implementation reports	
Outputs under Outcome 1	Output 1.1. Three existing NCA modules in Samoa (waste, energy and water) are completed and four additional ecosystem NCA modules (mangrove, coral reefs, forest and sea-grass) are developed and integrated into the Tourist Satellite Account and other national planning and budget frameworks; Output 1.2. National and local level Decision Support Tools are developed to integrate NCA modules into decision-making on NbS and economic development; Output 1.3. Key national and local level authorities are trained on application of NCA for sustainable natural resource management and NbS planning						
Component 2	Implement landscape and seascape level nature-based solutions in key ecosystems supporting the food (agriculture and fisheries) and tourism sectors						
Outcome 2. Enhanced systemic and institutional capacity to implement NbS in key ecosystems at	Indicator 10. Number of 'replication-ready' pipeline NbS projects with measurable outcomes and targets to conserve biodiversity and preserve ecosystem health and ecosystem services	Project Activity Reports Field Validation Interviews with local communities	0 projects	≥ 5 projects	≥ 15 projects	Analysis of Project Activity Reports, Field Validation reports, and interviews with local communities	A1. NbS priorities are effectively integrated into CIMPS and WRM plans, reflecting the true value of ecosystem services; A2. There is an active participation and collaboration from the private sector and local communities,

seascape and landscape levels, mainstreaming gender concerns and involving youth and vulnerable communities	developed and implemented in the target districts (BGI IP Indicator 2.1.1 - Governance and Policies)						including youth and vulnerable groups, in developing and implementing management plans and restoration efforts;
	Indicator 11. % of beneficiaries and partners surveyed that report increased capacity to execute innovative NbS at seascape and landscape levels, disaggregated by gender, sector, youth, IP, vulnerable groups (BGI IP Indicator 2.2.1 - Multi-stakeholder Dialogues)	Interviews and surveys with partners and beneficiaries in the target districts	0%	>=50% of beneficiaries and partners (among them at least 48% women). The project will provide the information disaggregated by sector, youth, IP, and vulnerable groups.	>= 80% of beneficiaries and partners (among them at least 48% women). The project will provide the information disaggregated by sector, youth, IP, and vulnerable groups.	Analysis of Interviews and surveys with partners and beneficiaries in the target districts with data disaggregated by sector, youth, IP, and vulnerable groups.	A3. Sufficient co-financing, technical support, and capacity-building are provided to ensure the success of NbS initiatives. R1. Lack of active participation and collaboration from the private sector and local communities, including youth and vulnerable groups, in developing and implementing management plans and restoration efforts. R2. SESP Risk 1: The Project may not provide equitable opportunities or benefits to women. R3. SESP Risk 3: Impacts to traditional rights or access to some land and resources. R4. SESP Risk 4: Risk of NbS interventions being ineffective if vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. R5. SESP Risk 7: Risks of impact to tangible or intangible cultural heritage from NbS approaches R6. SESP Risk 8: Impacts on habitats or ecosystems from poorly planned project activities
Outputs under Outcome 2	Output 2.1. NbS priorities based on NCA modules (Output 1.1) are integrated in the CIMPS and WRM Plans and implemented to improve management of forest, coastal and marine ecosystems in partnership with private sector (food production and tourism); Output 2.2. Integrated Management Plans for Mauga o Salafai and O Le Pupu Pu'e PAs, and Safata District MPA are developed and implemented to mainstream NbS practices into the PA management; Output 2.3. Key forest ecosystems of high conservation, economic, and adaptation value restored through Community NbS Action and partnership with private sector						
Component 3	Unlocking private sector capital and finance for action in SIDS						
	Indicator 12: Number of strategic policy/planning	Government endorsement of PES	0	PES policy framework is	PES policy framework	Review of the Government	A1. The economic incentives provided through the PES

Outcome 3: Increased financial flows to NbS from private sector	frameworks endorsed to integrate NbS into food production and tourist sector (BGI IP Indicator 1.2.1 - Governance and Policies /Financial Leverage)	policy framework for tourism and food sectors		developed, discussed with stakeholders, and submitted to GoS for endorsement	endorsed by GoS to integrate NbS into food production and tourist sector	endorsement of PES policy framework for tourism and food sectors	framework are attractive enough to motivate private sector investment in NbS; A2. there is adequate institutional support to implement, monitor, and manage the PES schemes and IVL effectively; A3. Revenue from the IVL is transparently managed and efficiently allocated to NbS projects, ensuring accountability and trust.
	<u>Indicator 13.</u> Amount of financing for NbS mobilized in tourism sector, US\$ (BGI IP Indicator 1.3.1 - Financial Leverage)	GoS IVL reports	US\$ 0	US\$ 0, IVL mechanism is developed	US\$ 500,000, IVL mechanism is tested and endorsed by GoS	Analysis of the GoS IVL reports	R1.The economic incentives provided through the PES framework may not be attractive enough to motivate significant private sector investment in NbS. R2. SESP Risk 6: Risk to successful implementation and sustainability of Project from implementing parties R3. SESP Risk 5: Risk of developing governance frameworks or plans for PES funds or International Visitor Levy which do not respond to the SES
Outputs under Outcome 3	Output 3.1. Key policy framework is developed for Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) in the tourism and food sectors of Samoa using tax breaks, nature-positive subsidies, certification, and public-private partnerships; Output 3.2. International Visitor Levy (IVL) for Samoa is developed and implemented as a mechanism to mobilize tourism sector finance for NbS.						
Component 4	Knowledge management, awareness, collaborative and gender-inclusive engagement to capture, utilize and share knowledge in relation to nature-based solutions and natural capital						
Outcome 4: Lessons and best practices of the project on NbS, NCA, ecosystem valuation, and gender	<u>Indicator 14:</u> % of stakeholders in the target districts aware of the benefits of application of NCAs and NbS (BGI IP Indicator 3.2.1 - Multi-stakeholder Dialogues)	KAP Survey in the target districts	Baseline surveys will be completed on the Year 1	At least 40% (of which at least 48% women) of sampled stakeholders aware of NCA and NbS benefits	At least 60% of which at least 48% women) of sampled stakeholders aware of NCA and NbS benefits	Analysis of KAP Survey in the target districts	A1. The awareness campaign and sharing of lessons are effectively communicated, reaching a wide and relevant audience; A2. There is strong engagement and willingness among stakeholders to

mainstreaming are applied by other districts in Samoa and abroad	<u>Indicator 15:</u> Number of good practices and gender sensitive lessons learned, documented and disseminated by the child project (BGI IP Indicator 3.2.3 – Innovation and Learning)	Project reports and lessons learning and best practice documents	0	>= 3	>= 6	Analysis of project reports and lessons learning and best practice documents	learn from and apply the lessons and best practices R1. Lessons and best practices from the project may not be fully applicable or easily adaptable to other districts or regions due to cultural or contextual differences R2. SESP Risk 1: The Project may not provide equitable opportunities or benefits to women R3. SESP Risk 2: The Project may not provide equitable opportunities of benefits to vulnerable or marginalized groups
Outputs under Outcome 4	Output 4.1. Awareness campaign among local communities, decision makers, and private sector of Samoa on NCA, NbS, and key values of ecosystems for sustainable development; Output 4.2. Gender-inclusive lessons and best practices of the project are shared with other districts of Samoa and abroad through BGI IP/GCP Knowledge Management and Learning for replication and scale up of NCA approaches and NbS activities in Pacific						
Component 5:	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) to ensure effective project management						
Outcome 5: Effective Adaptive Management of the project based on robust M&E framework	<u>Indicator 16:</u> Number of project milestones (PIRs, MTR, TE, and TR) achieved as per the established M&E plan, demonstrating alignment with management and coordination standards (BGI IP Indicator 3.2.2 – Innovation and Learning)	PIRs, MTR Report TE Report Terminal Report	0	3	6	Analysis of PIRs, MTR Report, TE Report, and Terminal Report	A1. The M&E system effectively engages a wide range of stakeholders, ensuring that diverse voices and perspectives are included; A2. the data collected through the M&E system is accurate, reliable, and comprehensive, providing a true reflection of the project's progress and impacts; A3. project team has the capacity and willingness to utilize M&E data to make adjustments and improvements to the project. R1. The M&E system might not effectively engage a wide range of stakeholders, including women and other marginalized groups, leading to incomplete or biased data

Outputs under Outcome 5	Output 5.1. <i>Participatory and gender-inclusive M&E system is implemented to measure the project effectiveness and tests the project Theory of Change</i>
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VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E) PLAN

Project-level monitoring and evaluation will be undertaken in compliance with UNDP requirements as outlined in the UNDP POPP (including guidance on GEF project revisions) and UNDP Evaluation Policy. The UNDP Country Office is responsible for ensuring full compliance with all UNDP project M&E requirements including project monitoring, UNDP quality assurance requirements, quarterly risk management, and evaluation requirements.

Additional mandatory GEF-specific M&E requirements will be undertaken in accordance with the [GEF Monitoring Policy](#) and the [GEF Evaluation Policy](#) and other [relevant GEF policies](#)⁵⁶. The costed M&E plan included below, and the Monitoring plan, will guide the GEF-specific M&E activities to be undertaken by this project.

In addition to these mandatory UNDP and GEF M&E requirements, other M&E activities deemed necessary to support project-level adaptive management will be agreed during the Project Inception Workshop and will be detailed in the Inception Report.

Minimum project monitoring and reporting requirements as required by the GEF:

Inception Workshop and Report: A project inception workshop will be held within 2 months from the First disbursement date, with the aim to:

- a. Familiarize key stakeholders with the detailed project strategy and discuss any changes that may have taken place in the overall context since the project idea was initially conceptualized that may influence its strategy and implementation.
- b. Discuss the roles and responsibilities of the project team, including reporting lines, stakeholder engagement strategies and conflict resolution mechanisms.
- c. Review the results framework and monitoring plan.
- d. Discuss reporting, monitoring and evaluation roles and responsibilities and finalize the M&E budget; identify national/regional institutes to be involved in project-level M&E; discuss the role of the GEF OFP and other stakeholders in project-level M&E.
- e. Update and review responsibilities for monitoring project strategies, including the risk log; SESP report, Social and Environmental Management Framework and other safeguard requirements; project grievance mechanisms; gender strategy; knowledge management strategy, and other relevant management strategies.
- f. Review financial reporting procedures and budget monitoring and other mandatory requirements and agree on the arrangements for the annual audit.
- g. Plan and schedule Project Board meetings and finalize the first-year annual work plan.
- h. Deliver and agree on the final TOR of the Project Board that describes clearly the function, the obligations, and the rights of each member entity or representative according to UNDP and GEF rules, regulations, and procedures;
- i. Formally launch the Project.

GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR): The annual GEF PIR covering the reporting period July (previous year) to June (current year) will be completed for each year of project implementation. Any environmental and social risks and related management plans will be monitored regularly, and progress will be reported in the PIR. The PIR submitted to the GEF will be shared with the Project Board. The quality rating of the previous year's PIR will be used to inform the preparation of the subsequent PIR.

GEF Core Indicators: The GEF Core indicators included as Annex 11 will be used to monitor global environmental benefits and will be updated for reporting to the GEF prior to MTR and TE. Note that the project team is responsible for updating the indicator status. The updated monitoring data should be shared with MTR/TE consultants prior to required evaluation missions, so these can be used for subsequent ground-truthing. The methodologies to be used in data collection have been defined by the GEF and are available on the GEF [website](#). The required Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METTs) have been prepared and the scores included in the GEF Core Indicators.

⁵⁶ See https://www.thegef.org/gef/policies_guidelines

Independent Mid-term Review (MTR): An independent mid-term review (MTR) will be completed by the mid-point of the project. The terms of reference, the review process and the final MTR report will follow the standard templates and guidance for GEF-financed projects available on the [UNDP Evaluation Resource Center \(ERC\)](#). The MTR must be submitted to the GEF by the mid-point of the project but no later than 48 months after CEO Endorsement. To meet the submission deadline, final MTR reports must be completed and submitted to BPPS NCE team no later than 2 months in advance of the submission deadline to allow sufficient time for internal review/clearance that is required prior to submission.

Provisions must be taken to complete and submit the MTR within the submission deadline. Therefore, the MTR process must start no later than 8 months before the expected date of submission of the MTR.

The evaluation will be ‘independent, impartial and rigorous’. The evaluators that will be hired to undertake the assignment will be independent from organizations that were involved in designing, executing or advising on the project to be evaluated. Equally, the evaluators should not be in a position where there may be the possibility of future contracts regarding the project under review. The GEF Operational Focal Point and other stakeholders will be actively involved and consulted during the evaluation process. Additional quality assurance support is available from the BPPS/NCE. The final MTR report and MTR TOR will be publicly available in English and will be posted on the UNDP ERC by **Aug. 2027**. A management response to MTR recommendations will be posted in the ERC within six weeks of the MTR report’s completion.

Terminal Evaluation (TE): An independent terminal evaluation (TE) will take place upon completion of all major project outputs and activities. The terms of reference, the evaluation process and the final TE report will follow the standard templates and TE guidance for UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects available on the [UNDP Evaluation Resource Center](#). TE must be submitted to the GEF no later than 6 months after the Completion Date. This is a hard deadline that, if not met, can only be extended through a formal extension request. To meet the submission deadline, final TE reports must be completed and submitted to BPPS NCE team no later than 2 months in advance of the deadline to allow sufficient time for internal review/clearance that is required prior to submission.

Provisions must be taken to complete and submit the TE within the submission deadline. Therefore, TE must start no later than 8 months before the expected date of submission of the TE (or 11 months prior to the estimated operational closure date).

The evaluation will be ‘independent, impartial and rigorous’. The evaluator(s) that UNDP will hire to undertake the assignment will be independent from organizations that were involved in designing, executing or advising on the project to be evaluated. Equally, the evaluators should not be in a position where there may be the possibility of future contracts regarding the project being evaluated.

The GEF Operational Focal Point and other stakeholders will be actively involved and consulted during the terminal evaluation process. Additional quality assurance support is available from BPPS NCE.

The final TE report will be publicly available in English and posted on the UNDP ERC by **May. 2029**. A management response to the TE recommendations will be posted to the ERC within six weeks of the TE report submission to the GEF.

Per the GEF Terminal Evaluation requirements, for cancelled full-sized projects, Terminal Evaluations are required if the GEF grant expenditure exceeds more than US\$ 2 million.

Final Report: The project’s terminal GEF PIR along with the terminal evaluation (TE) report and corresponding management response will serve as the final project report package. The final project report package shall be discussed with the Project Board during an end-of-project review meeting to discuss lessons learned and opportunities for scaling up.

In accordance with UNDP's programming policies and procedures, the project will be monitored through the monitoring and evaluation plans (see the sections *Monitoring Plan* and *Evaluation Plan*).

Monitoring Plan

The project results, corresponding indicators and mid-term and end-of-project targets in the Project Results Framework will be monitored by the Project Management Unit annually, and will be reported in the GEF PIR every year, and will be evaluated periodically during project implementation. The baseline data for one PRF indicator (Indicator 14) will be collected during the first year of project implementation. Project risks, as outlined in the risk register, will be monitored quarterly.

Monitoring Activity: track results progress					
Indicators	Targets	Description of indicators and targets	Frequency	Responsible for data collection	Means of verification
Project Objective: <i>To ensure nature-positive development and reduce ecosystem degradation in Samoa by valuing nature and applying Nature-based Solutions (NbS) with specific application to food and tourism sectors</i>					
<u>Mandatory Indicator 1:</u> Terrestrial Protected Areas under improved management effectiveness (GEF Core Indicator 1.2), ha: O Le Pupu Pu'e NP (5,019 ha) Mauga o Salafai PA (5, 973 ha)	MTR: 10,992 ha METT for O Le Pupu Pu'e: 65 METT for Mauga o Salafai PA: 38 EoP: 10,992 ha METT for O Le Pupu Pu'e: 72 METT for Mauga o Salafai PA: 42	The project targets to improve management of the O Le Pupu Pu'e NP (5,019 ha) and Mauga o Salafai PA (5, 973 ha) by at least 20% of the baseline METT score	Mid-term and Project closure	PMU and RP for the Output 2.2	GEF METT assessment through in-person workshop with PA staff; METT assessment report
<u>Mandatory Indicator 2:</u> Marine Protected Areas under improved management effectiveness (GEF Core Indicator 2.2), ha: Safata District MPA (6,368 ha)	MTR: 6,368 ha METT for Safata District MPA: 23 EoP: 6,368 ha METT for Safata District MPA: 26	The project targets to improve management of the Safata District MPA (6,368 ha) by at least 20% of the baseline METT score	Mid-term and Project closure	PMU and RP for the Output 2.2	GEF METT assessment through in-person workshop with PA staff; METT assessment report
<u>Mandatory Indicator 3:</u> Area of forest and forest land under restoration (GEF Core Indicator 3.2), ha	MTR: >=1,000 ha EoP: >=5,000 ha	The project targets to restore at least 5,000 ha of degraded forest ecosystems by the EoP. The indicator will measure the actual area covered by forest restoration	Annually	PMU and RP for the Output 2.3	Analysis of restoration reports; field measurement during site visits
<u>Mandatory Indicator 4:</u> Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity outside PAs, ha (GEF Core Indicator 4.3):	MTR: 20,000 ha EoP: 46,184 ha	The project targets to put 46,481 ha of the landscapes in the project districts under improved management through adoption and implementation of village by-laws and implementation of NbS initiatives by local communities	Annually	PMU and RP for the Output 2.1	Analysis of District CIMPs and WRM Plans with integrated NbS and implementation reports; Interviews with local communities; Project site visits
<u>Mandatory Indicator 5:</u> Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity outside PAs (GEF Core Indicator 5.4)	MTR: 10,000 ha EoP: 25,000 ha	The project targets to put 25,000 ha of the seascapes adjacent to the project districts under improved management through adoption and implementation of village by-laws and implementation of NbS initiatives by local communities	Annually	PMU and RP for the Output 2.1	Analysis of District CIMPs and WRM Plans with integrated NbS and implementation reports; Interviews with local communities; Project site visits

Mandatory Indicator 6: Mitigated Greenhouse Gas Emissions, metric tons of CO ₂ e (20 years of accounting) (GEF Core Indicator 6)	MTR: >=1,500,000 EoP: >= 4,060,984	The project targets to mitigate >= 4,060,984 metric tons of CO ₂ e (20 years of accounting) through sustainable management of landscapes and seascape, improving PA management, and forest restoration (Outputs 2.1-2.3). See details in the Annex 25. FAO EX-ACT Assessment of carbon gains by the project	Mid-term and Project closure	PMU and hired Consultant for carbon gained calculations using FAO Ex-Act Tool	Calculations with FAO Ex-Act Tool based on the district implementation reports (CIMPs and WRM Plans) and project activities reports and field validation of restored area and NbS projects
Mandatory Indicator 7: Number of direct project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (individual people) (GEF Core Indicator 11)	MTR: >= 5,000 (48% are women) EoP: >= 14,941 (48% are women)	The number of target project direct beneficiaries is calculated as 50% of the project district population that is expected to benefit from direct participation in the project or through environmental services provided by the project	Annually	PMU	Analysis of lists of stakeholders of the project activities; Analysis of community surveys; M&E reports, Mid-Term Evaluation, Terminal Evaluation Report Analysis
Outcome 1. Value of ecosystem services better integrated into planning and budgeting allocations					
Indicator 8: Number of NCA modules and Decision Support Tools (DST) embedded within national fiscal policies/ economic accounts and implemented (BGI IP Indicator 1.1.2 - Multi-stakeholder Dialogues)	MTR: 7 NCA modules developed, but not embedded into the fiscal policies/economic accounts; >= 2 DSTs to apply NCA in the district NbS planning developed EoP: 7 NCA modules embedded into the fiscal policies/economic accounts and implemented; >= 2 DSTs to apply NCA in the district NbS planning implemented	Under Outputs 1.1 the project targets to fully develop and integrate 7 NCA modules in the fiscal policies/economic accounts of Samoa; under Output 1.2 the project plans to produce and integrate 2 DSTs for NbS decision making into government practice.	Annually	PMU	Analysis of the national fiscal policies/ economic accounts, and approve DSTs and implementation reports on the policies/accounts/DSTs
Indicator 9: Number of districts using NCA based approaches to value ecosystem services as part of their planning processes	MTR: >=4 districts EoP: >=9 districts	This indicator will measure number of districts that have NCAs and NbS integrated into CIMPs and WRM Plans and implemented. It is expected that all 9 project districts will have this kind of progress by EoP.	Annually	PMU	Analysis of district government decisions, CIMPs, and WRM Plans, and implementation reports
Outcome 2. Enhanced systemic and institutional capacity to implement NbS in key ecosystems at seascape and landscape levels, mainstreaming gender concerns and involving youth and vulnerable communities					
Indicator 10. Number of 'replication-ready' pipeline NbS projects with measurable outcomes and targets to conserve biodiversity and preserve ecosystem health and ecosystem services developed and	MTR: >= 5 projects EoP: >= 15 projects	Under Outputs 2.1 and 2.3 the project targets to develop and test at least 15 innovative NbS and ecosystem restoration projects that can be replicated by other districts	Annually	PMU and RPs for Outputs 2.1 and 2.3	Analysis of Project Activity Reports, Field Validation reports, and interviews with local communities

implemented in the target districts (BGI IP Indicator 2.1.1 - Governance and Policies)					
Indicator 11. % of beneficiaries and partners surveyed that report increased capacity to execute innovative NbS at seascape and landscape levels, disaggregated by gender, sector, youth, IP, vulnerable groups (BGI IP Indicator 2.2.1 - Multi-stakeholder Dialogues)	MTR: >=50% of beneficiaries and partners (among them at least 48% women) EoP: >= 80% of beneficiaries and partners (among them at least 48% women)	This indicator will measure perception of the level of capacity of the district partners and stakeholders to implement NbS (Outputs 2.1-2.3). It is expected that by EoP at least 80% of the key stakeholders and partners will report NbS capacity improvement. The project will provide the information disaggregated by sector, youth, IP, and vulnerable groups	Annually	PMU and Consultants to conduct a survey among the project participants	Analysis of Interviews and surveys with partners and beneficiaries in the target districts disaggregated by sector, youth, IP, and vulnerable groups
Outcome 3: Increased financial flows to NbS from private sector					
Indicator 12: Number of strategic policy/planning frameworks endorsed to integrate NbS into food production and tourist sector (BGI IP Indicator 1.2.1 - Governance and Policies /Financial Leverage)	MTR: PES policy framework is developed, discussed with stakeholders, and submitted to GoS for endorsement; EoP: PES policy framework endorsed by GoS to integrate NbS into food production and tourist sector	This simple indicator will monitor presence/absence of the endorsed by GoS PES policy framework (Output 3.1). The target is to have one PES policy framework for tourism and food sectors endorsed by GoS.	Annually	PMU	Review of the Government endorsement of PES policy framework for tourism and food sectors
Indicator 13. Amount of financing for NbS mobilized in tourism sector, US\$ (BGI IP Indicator 1.3.1 - Financial Leverage)	MTR: US\$ 0 IVL mechanism is developed EoP: US\$ 500,000 IVL mechanism is tested and endorsed by GoS	This indicator will measure actual financing mobilized through IVL mechanism (Output 3.2)	Annually	PMU	Analysis of the GoS IVL reports
Outcome 4: Lessons and best practices of the project on NbS, NCA, ecosystem valuation, and gender mainstreaming are applied by other districts in Samoa and abroad					
Indicator 14: % of stakeholders in the target districts aware of the benefits of application of NCAs and NbS (BGI IP Indicator 3.2.1 - Multi-stakeholder Dialogues)	MTR: At least 40% (of which at least 48% women) of sampled stakeholders aware of NCA and NbS benefits EoP: At least 60% (of which at least 48% women) of sampled stakeholders aware of NCA and NbS benefits	This indicator will measure effectiveness of the project awareness campaign (Output 4.1) and knowledge management (Output 4.2) with expected target of 60% of the district stakeholders that are aware about the benefits.	Annually	PMU and Consultant to conduct the survey	Analysis of KAP Survey in the target districts

Indicator 15: Number of good practices and gender sensitive lessons learned, documented and disseminated by the project (BGI IP Indicator 3.2.2 – Innovation and Learning)	MTR: >= 3 EoP: >= 6	Under the Output 4.2 the project targets to develop and share at least 6 best practices on NCA and NbS	Annually	PMU	Analysis of project reports and lessons learning and best practice documents
Outcome 5: Effective Adaptive Management of the project based on robust M&E framework					
Indicator 16: Number of project milestones (PIRs, MTR, TE, and TR) achieved as per the established M&E plan, demonstrating alignment with management and coordination standards	MTR: 3 EoP: 6	This simple indicator will monitor number of required reports provided by the project	Annually	PMU and MTR and TE Consultants	Analysis of <u>PIRs</u> , MTR Report, TE Report, and Terminal Report

Monitoring Activity: all M&E activities			
Activities	Frequency/Timeframe	Expected Action	Partners (if joint)
Inception Workshop and Report	Inception Workshop within 2 months of the 1st Disbursement	As per above description: review of the project PRF and M&E plan	NA
Track results progress (see above table for details)	Annually and at mid-point and closure	Slower than expected progress will be addressed by project management.	NA
Monitor and Manage Risk	Quarterly	Risks are identified by project management and actions are taken to manage risk. The risk log is actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.	NA
Monitor SESP, ESMF, Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Gender Action Plan, Climate and Disaster Risk Screening	ongoing	The documents will be updated if required by changing situation with the project	NA
Supervision Missions	Annually	Will be organized by PMU and UNDP CO	NA
Learning and Learning Missions	As needed	Relevant lessons are captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions. Ideally it should be done on quarterly basis, or at least once every 6 months	NA
Annual Project Quality Assurance	Annually	Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by UNDP CO and project management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance	NA
Review and Make Course Corrections	At least annually	Performance data, risks, lessons, and quality will be discussed by the project board and used to make course corrections reflected in the Annual Workplans	NA
Annual GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR)	Annually typically between June-September	Mandatory contribution by Project Team, CO and RTA. Strengths and weaknesses will be reviewed by project management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance	NA

Project Review (Project Board)	Annually, or on demand from the PMU	Any quality concerns or slower than expected progress should be discussed by the project board and management actions agreed to address the issues identified.	NA
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Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Title	Partners (if joint)	Related Strategic Plan Output	UNSDCF/CPD Outcome	Planned Completion Date	Key Evaluation Stakeholders
Independent Mid-Term Review (MTR)	NA	Signature Solution 4 – Environment: Outcome 4.1 Natural resources <u>protected</u> and <u>managed</u> to enhance sustainable productivity and livelihoods	UN Outcome 1: People and ecosystems in the Pacific are more resilient to the impacts of climate change, climate variability and disasters; and environmental protection is strengthened	August 2027	MNRE, SBS, MOF, MAF, STA, Village Fono (Traditional Village Councils), District Development Committees, environmental NGOs, GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), Samoa Civil Society Programme (CSSP), local farmers and fishers, local SMEs in tourism, agriculture, and fishery sectors, UNDP CO
Independent Terminal Evaluation (TE)	NA	Signature Solution 4 – Environment: Outcome 4.1 Natural resources <u>protected</u> and <u>managed</u> to enhance sustainable productivity and livelihoods	UN Outcome 1: People and ecosystems in the Pacific are more resilient to the impacts of climate change, climate variability and disasters; and environmental protection is strengthened	May 2029	MNRE, SBS, MOF, MAF, STA, Village Fono (Traditional Village Councils), District Development Committees, environmental NGOs, GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), Samoa Civil Society Programme (CSSP), local farmers and fishers, local SMEs in tourism, agriculture, and fishery sectors, UNDP CO

Monitoring and Evaluation Budget for project execution:	
GEF M&E requirements to be undertaken by Project Management Unit (PMU)	Indicative costs (US\$)
Inception Workshop and Report	5,000
M&E required to report on progress made in reaching GEF core indicators and project results included in the project results framework (budget for consultants required to assess and calculate some of the PRF indicators)	6,000
Preparation of the annual GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR)	0
Monitoring of SESP, GRM, Gender mainstreaming Strategy, and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (travel)	7,000
Supervision missions by the PMU to the project sites (travel)	7,000
Learning missions by the PMU to the project sites (travel)	7,000
Independent Mid-Term Review (MTR): costs associated with conducting the independent review/evaluation to be commissioned by UNDP not the Implementing Partner or PMU.	31,550
Independent Terminal Evaluation (TE): costs associated with conducting the independent evaluation to be commissioned by UNDP not the Implementing Partner or the PMU	32,687

Monitoring and Evaluation Budget for project execution:	
GEF M&E requirements to be undertaken by Project Management Unit (PMU)	Indicative costs (US\$)
TOTAL indicative Cost:	96,237 (4.1% of the GEF budget)

VIII. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Section 1: Roles and Responsibilities of the Project's Governance Mechanism:

Implementing Partner: The Implementing Partner for this project is the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE). An overall risk rating of Low was concluded in the Annex 19. HACT Micro Assessment of MNRE.

The Implementing Partner is the entity to which the UNDP Administrator has entrusted the implementation of UNDP assistance specified in this signed project document along with the assumption of full responsibility and accountability for the effective use of UNDP resources and the delivery of outputs, as set forth in this document (see Annex 19. HACT Micro-Assessment for MNRE and Annex 19a. Partners Capacity Assessment Tool (PCAT) for MNRE).

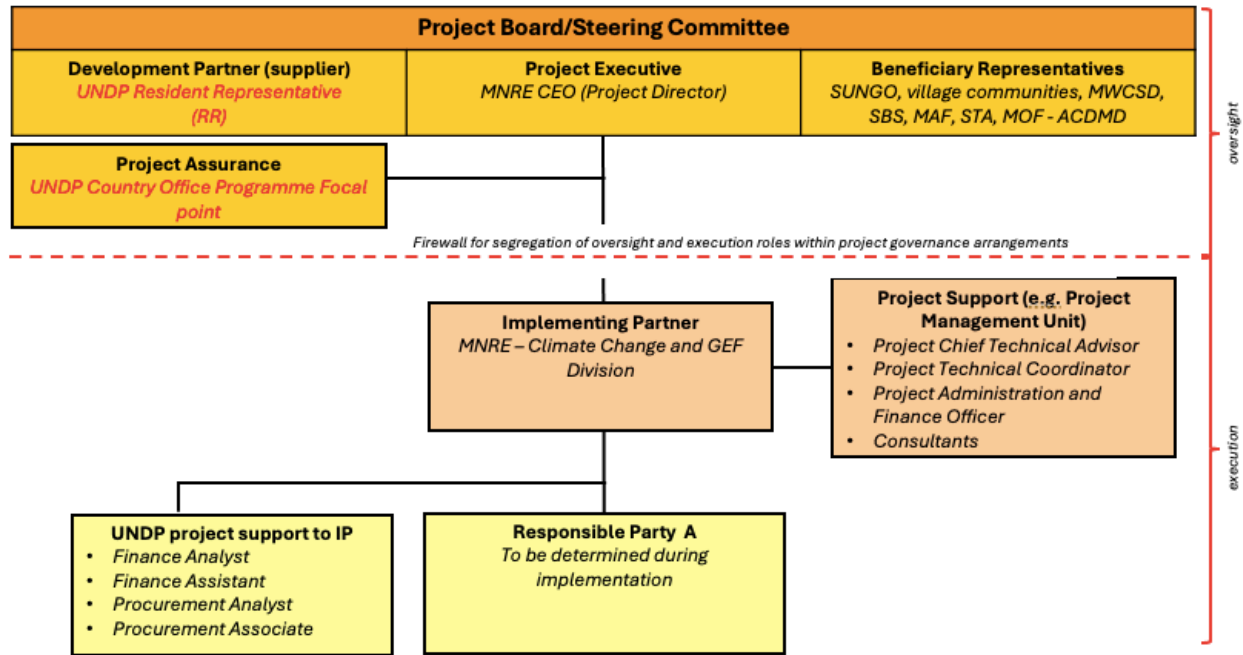
The Implementing Partner is responsible for executing this project. Specific tasks include:

- Project planning, coordination, management, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting. This includes providing all required information and data necessary for timely, comprehensive, and evidence-based project reporting, including results and financial data, as necessary. The Implementing Partner will strive to ensure project-level M&E is undertaken by national institutes and is aligned with national systems so that the data used and generated by the project supports national systems.
- Overseeing the management of project risks as included in this project document and new risks that may emerge during project implementation.
- Procurement of goods and services, including human resources.
- Financial management, including overseeing financial expenditures against project budgets.
- Approving and signing the multi-year workplan.
- Approving and signing the combined delivery report at the end of the year; and,
- Signing the financial report or the funding authorization and certificate of expenditures

UNDP: UNDP is accountable to the GEF for the implementation of this project. This includes overseeing project execution undertaken by the Implementing Partner to ensure that the project is being carried out in accordance with UNDP and GEF policies and procedures and the standards and provisions outlined in the Delegation of Authority (DOA) letter for this project. **The UNDP GEF Executive Coordinator, in consultation with UNDP Bureaus and the Implementing Partner, retains the right to revoke the project DOA, suspend or cancel this GEF project.** UNDP is responsible for the Project Assurance function in the project governance structure and presents to the Project Board and attends Project Board meetings as a non-voting member.

A firewall will be maintained between the delivery of project oversight and quality assurance performed by UNDP and charged to the GEF Fee and any support to project execution performed by UNDP (as requested by and agreed to by both the Implementing Partner and GEF) and may be charged to the GEF project management costs (only if approved by GEF). The segregation of functions and firewall provisions for UNDP in this case is described in the next section

Section 2: Project Governance Structure:



First line of defence: Person providing oversight of execution support (Country Office Support) cannot report to UNDP staff providing project assurance or providing programmatic oversight support to the Resident Representative.

Second line of defence: Regional Bureau oversees Resident Representative and function of UNDP compliance in project assurance. BPPS RTA oversees functions of technical oversight and GEF compliance in project assurance. BPPS NCE PTA oversees RTA functions. UNDP GEF Executive Coordinator and Regional Bureau Deputy Director can revoke DOA/cancel/suspend project or provide enhanced oversight.

The UNDP Resident Representative assumes full responsibility and accountability for oversight and quality assurance of this Project and ensures its timely implementation in compliance with the GEF-specific requirements and UNDP’s Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP), its Financial Regulations and Rules and Internal Control Framework. A representative of the UNDP Country Office will assume the assurance role and will present assurance findings to the Project Board, and therefore attends Project Board meetings as a non-voting member.

UNDP project support: The Implementing Partner and GEF OFP have requested UNDP to provide support services in the amount of USD\$ 25,851 for the full duration of the project, and the GEF has agreed for UNDP to provide such execution support services. The cost of these services will be absorbed by UNDP as in-kind co-financing. These services are outlined in the Letter of Agreement (LOA), which is attached as Annex 13 to this project document.

To ensure the strict independence required by the GEF and in accordance with the UNDP Internal Control Framework, these execution services will be delivered independent from the GEF-specific oversight and quality assurance services.

Section 3: Segregation of Duties and Firewalls vis-à-vis UNDP Representation on the Project Board:

As noted in the [Minimum Fiduciary Standards for GEF Partner Agencies](#), in cases where a GEF Partner Agency (i.e. UNDP) carries out both implementation oversight and execution of a project, the GEF Partner Agency (i.e. UNDP) must separate its project implementation oversight and execution duties, and describe in the relevant project

document a: 1) Satisfactory institutional arrangement for the separation of implementation oversight and executing functions in different departments of the GEF Partner Agency; and 2) Clear lines of responsibility, reporting and accountability within the GEF Partner Agency between the project implementation oversight and Section 4 execution functions.

In this case, UNDP's implementation oversight role in the project – as represented in the project board and via the project assurance function – is performed by UNDP Resident Representative. UNDP's execution role in the project (as requested by the implementing partner and approved by the GEF) is performed by Finance Analyst, Finance Assistant, Procurement Analyst, and Procurement Assistant who will report to Operations Manager.

Section 4: Roles and Responsibilities of the Project Organization Structure

Project Board: All UNDP projects must be governed by a multi-stakeholder board or committee established to review performance based on monitoring and evaluation, and implementation issues to ensure quality delivery of results. The Project Board (also called the Project Steering Committee) is the most senior, dedicated oversight body for a project (see full ToR for the project Board in the Annex 16. Terms of Reference for Project Board and Project Team)

The two main (mandatory) roles of the project board are as follows:

- 1) **High-level oversight of the execution of the project by the Implementing Partner** (as explained in the [“Provide Oversight”](#) section of the POPP). This is the primary function of the project board and includes annual (and as-needed) assessments of any major risks to the project, and decisions/agreements on any management actions or remedial measures to address them effectively. The Project Board reviews evidence of project performance based on monitoring, evaluation and reporting, including progress reports, evaluations, risk logs and the combined delivery report. The Project Board is responsible for taking corrective action as needed to ensure the project achieves the desired results.
- 2) **Approval of strategic project execution decisions of the Implementing Partner** with a view to assess and manage risks, monitor and ensure the overall achievement of projected results and impacts and ensure long term sustainability of project execution decisions of the Implementing Partner (as explained in the [“Manage Change”](#) section of the POPP).

Requirements to serve on the Project Board:

- ✓ Agree to the Terms of Reference of the Board and the rules on protocols, quorum and minuting.
- ✓ Meet annually; at least once.
- ✓ Disclose any conflict of interest in performing the functions of a Project Board member and take all measures to avoid any real or perceived conflicts of interest. This disclosure must be documented and kept on record by UNDP.
- ✓ Discharge the functions of the Project Board in accordance with UNDP policies and procedures.
- ✓ Ensure highest levels of transparency and ensure Project Board meeting minutes are recorded and shared with project stakeholders.

Responsibilities of the Project Board:

- ✓ Consensus decision making:
 - The project board provides overall guidance and direction to the project, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints, and providing overall oversight of the project implementation.
 - Review project performance based on monitoring, evaluation and reporting, including progress reports, risk logs and the combined delivery report;
 - The project board is responsible for making management decisions by consensus.
 - In order to ensure UNDP's ultimate accountability, Project Board decisions should be made in accordance with standards that shall ensure management for development results, best value money, fairness, integrity, transparency and effective international competition.

- In case consensus cannot be reached within the Board, the UNDP representative on the board will mediate to find consensus and, if this cannot be found, will take the final decision to ensure project implementation is not unduly delayed.
- ✓ **Oversee project execution:**
 - Agree on project coordinator's tolerances as required, within the parameters outlined in the project document, and provide direction and advice for exceptional situations when the project coordinator's tolerances are exceeded.
 - Appraise annual work plans prepared by the Implementing Partner for the Project; review combined delivery reports prior to certification by the implementing partner.
 - Address any high-level project issues as raised by the project coordinator and project assurance;
 - Advise on major and minor amendments to the project within the parameters set by UNDP and the donor and refer such proposed major and minor amendments to the UNDP BPPS Nature, Climate and Energy Executive Coordinator (and the GEF, as required by GEF policies);
 - Provide high-level direction and recommendations to the project management unit to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily and according to plans.
 - Track and monitor co-financed activities and realization of co-financing amounts of this project.
 - Approve the Inception Report, GEF annual project implementation reports, mid-term review and terminal evaluation reports.
 - Ensure commitment of human resources to support project implementation, arbitrating any issues within the project.
- ✓ **Risk Management:**
 - Provide guidance on evolving or materialized project risks and agree on possible mitigation and management actions to address specific risks.
 - Review and update the project risk register and associated management plans based on the information prepared by the Implementing Partner. This includes risks related that can be directly managed by this project, as well as contextual risks that may affect project delivery or continued UNDP compliance and reputation but are outside of the control of the project. For example, social and environmental risks associated with co-financed activities or activities taking place in the project's area of influence that have implications for the project.
 - Address project-level grievances.
- ✓ **Coordination:**
 - Ensure coordination between various donor and government-funded projects and programs.
 - Ensure coordination with various government agencies and their participation in project activities.

156. **Composition of the Project Board:** The composition of the Project Board must include individuals assigned to the following three roles:

1. **Project Executive:** This is an individual who represents ownership of the project and chairs (or co-chairs) the Project Board. The Executive usually is the senior national counterpart for nationally implemented projects (typically from the same entity as the Implementing Partner), and it must be UNDP for projects that are direct implementation (DIM). In exceptional cases, two individuals from different entities can co-share this role and/or co-chair the Project Board. If the project executive co-chairs the project board with representatives of another category, it typically does so with a development partner representative. The Project Executive is the **Project Director, MNRE**.
2. **Beneficiary Representative(s):** Individuals or groups representing the interests of those groups of stakeholders who will ultimately benefit from the project. Their primary function within the board is to ensure the realization of project results from the perspective of project beneficiaries. Often representatives from civil society, industry associations, or other government entities benefiting from the project can fulfill this role. There can be multiple beneficiary representatives in a Project Board. The Beneficiary representatives are the **Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organisations (SUNGO), Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF), Samoa Tourism Authority (STA), Samoa Bureau of Statistics (SBS), Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development**

(MWCSO), Aid Coordination and Debt Management Division (ACDMD) of the Ministry of Finance (MOF)⁵⁷, and village communities.

3. **Development Partner(s):** Individuals or groups representing the interests of the parties concerned that provide funding, strategic guidance and/or technical expertise to the project. The Development Partner is **UNDP Resident Representative**.

- a) **Project Assurance:** Project assurance is the responsibility of each Project Board member; however, UNDP has a distinct assurance role for all UNDP projects in carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. UNDP performs quality assurance and supports the Project Board (and Project Management Unit) by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions, including compliance with the risk management and social and environmental standards of UNDP. The Project Board cannot delegate any of its quality assurance responsibilities to the Project Coordinator. Project assurance is totally independent of project execution.

A designated representative of UNDP playing the project assurance role is expected to attend all board meetings and support board processes as a non-voting representative. It should be noted that while in certain cases UNDP's project assurance role across the project may encompass activities happening at several levels (e.g., global, regional), at least one UNDP representative playing that function must, as part of their duties, specifically attend board meeting and provide board members with the required documentation required to perform their duties. The UNDP representative playing the main project assurance function is the **UNDP CO Programme Officer**.

Project Management – Execution of the Project: The Project Coordinator is the senior most representative of the Project Management Unit (PMU). The **Project Coordinator (PC)** is responsible for the overall day-to-day management of the project on behalf of the Implementing Partner, including the mobilization of all project inputs, supervision over project staff, responsible parties, consultants, and sub-contractors. The project coordinator typically presents key deliverables and documents to the board for their review and approval, including progress reports, annual work plans, adjustments to tolerance levels and risk registers. The PMU will also include **Chief Technical Advisor**, and **Project Finance and Administration Officer**. Three consultants will support the PMU: **M&E Consultant**, **KM and Communication Consultant**, and **Safeguards and Gender Consultant**. The Project Coordinator will be a designated representative of the PMU who is expected to attend all board meetings and support board processes as a non-voting representative. The primary PMU representative attending board meetings is the **Project Coordinator**. Additionally, the Project Coordinator will be involved in delivery of the project Outputs for Components 1-3. To ensure the seamless integration and alignment of Outputs across Components 1-3, the Project Coordinator must play a hands-on role in aligning activities and outputs across each Component. This is particularly crucial for maintaining coherence in project delivery, aligning strategies, and avoiding overlaps or gaps in the implementation process.

ToRs of the PMU staff are described in the Annex 16. Terms of Reference for Project Board and Project Team.

⁵⁷ MoF has no role in project implementation, but Treasury manages all payments and financial reporting of the government of Samoa including for the MNRE. In addition, MoF is represented on the project as oversight of government on all Aid projects

IX. FINANCIAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

The total cost of the project is US\$ 38,113,382. This is financed through a GEF grant of US\$ 2,346,482 to be administered by UNDP, and additional co-financing support of US\$ 35,766,900 (see Table 9 for details). UNDP, as the GEF Implementing Agency, is responsible for the oversight of the GEF resources and the cash co-financing transferred to UNDP bank account only.

Confirmed Co-financing: The actual realization of project co-financing amounts will be monitored by the UNDP Country Office and the PMU on an annual basis in the GEF PIR and will be reported to the GEF during the mid-term review and terminal evaluation process as follows:

Table 9. Co-financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (\$)
Government	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment	Grant (Water Sector Resilience and Climate Adaptation Support Programme)	Investment mobilized	14,625,000
		In-kind (MNRE staff time, PMU office, and other support related to the project)	Recurrent expenditures	1,796,549
Government	Ministry of Finance	Grant (NZ Climate Finance Partnership Program)	Investment mobilized	9,019,500
		Grant (ADB Pacific Disaster Resilience Program Phase 4)	Investment mobilized	10,000,000
		In-kind (MoF staff time in relation to the project implementation) ⁵⁸	Recurrent expenditures	300,000
GEF Agency	UNDP	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	25,851
Total Co-financing				35,766,900

Budget Revision and Tolerance: As per UNDP POPP, the project board may agree with the project coordinator on a tolerance level for each detailed plan under the overall multi-year workplan. The agreed tolerance should be written in the project document or approved project board meeting minutes. It should normally not exceed 10 percent of the agreed annual budget at the activity level, but within the overall approved multi-year workplan at the activity level. Within the agreed tolerances, the project coordinator can operate without intervention from the project board. Restrictions apply as follows:

Should the following deviations occur, the Project Coordinator/IP through UNDP Country Office will seek the approval of the BPPS/NCE-VF team to ensure accurate reporting to the GEF. It is **strongly encouraged** to maintain expenditure within the approved budget at the budgetary account and at the component level:

⁵⁸ MoF has no role in project implementation, but Treasury manages all payments and financial reporting of the government of Samoa including for the MNRE. In addition, MoF is represented on the project as oversight of government on all Aid projects

- a) Budget reallocations must prove that the suggested changes in the budget will not lead to material changes in the results to be achieved by the project. A strong justification is required and will be approved on an exceptional basis. Budget re-allocations among the components (including PMC) of the approved Total Budget and Work Plans (TBWP) that represent a value greater than 10% of the total GEF grant.
- b) Introduction of new outputs/activities (i.e., budget items) that were not part of the agreed project document and TBWP that represent a value greater than 5% of the total GEF grant. The new budget items must be eligible as per the [GEF and UNDP policies](#).
- c) Project management cost (PMC): budget under PMC component is capped and cannot be increased.

UNDP is not in a position to increase the total budget above the amount approved by the donor, therefore any over-expenditure would have to be absorbed from non-GEF resources by the Implementing Partner (GEF Executing Entity).

Project extensions: The UNDP-BPPS-NCE team Executive Coordinator must approve all requests for extension of the Project Completion Date and for other milestone extensions with hard deadlines. All extensions impose additional time and cost burdens at all levels and the GEF project budget cannot be increased beyond its originally approved amount. A single extension may be granted on an exceptional basis and subject to the conditions and maximum durations set out in the UNDP POPP; the project management costs during the extension period must remain within the originally approved amount, and any increase in PMC costs will be covered by non-GEF resources; the additional UNDP oversight costs during the extension period must be covered by non-GEF resources, in accordance with UNDP's guidance set out in UNDP POPP.

For any extension request, UNDP CO and IP will consult and jointly present a clear plan indicating how and from which specific sources the additional oversight costs that will be incurred by UNDP will be covered during the extended period. The BPPS-NCE Executive Coordinator will consult the Regional Bureaux (RBX) and may reject the extension request if no (external co-financing by the IP or internal UNDP CO resources) can be identified.

All extension requests, along with all supporting documentation, shall be submitted by the IP to the UNDP CO in line with the requirements and within the deadlines set out in the UNDP SOPs and policies in UNDP POPP.

Audit: The project will be audited as per UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules and applicable audit policies. Audit cycle and process must be discussed during the Inception workshop. If the Implementing Partner is an UN Agency, the project will be audited according to that Agencies applicable audit policies.

Transfer or disposal of assets: In consultation with the Implementing Partner and other parties of the project, UNDP is responsible for deciding on the transfer or other disposal of assets. Transfer or disposal of assets is recommended to be reviewed and endorsed by the project board following UNDP rules and regulations. Assets may be transferred to the government for project activities managed by a national institution at any time during the life of a project, however **must be done before the operational closure date**. In all cases of transfer, a transfer document must be prepared and kept on file⁵⁹. The transfer should be done before Project Management Unit complete their assignments.

Completion Date: The project completion date is the date of Project Document Signature plus project duration. This date can only be extended through a formal extension request. Prior to completion date, all UNDP-financed inputs must be provided and related activities for the Project completed. No activities, except for the final clearance of the Terminal Evaluation Report and the corresponding management response and the end-of-project review Project Board Meeting should take place after the Completion Date.

Project Closure: Project closure will be conducted as per UNDP requirements outlined in the UNDP POPP. All costs incurred to close the project must be included in the project closure budget and reported as final project commitments presented to the Project Board during the final project review. The only costs a project may incur following the final project review are those included in the project closure budget.

⁵⁹ See <https://popp.undp.org/> <https://popp-prod.acquia.undp.org/policy-page/close-and-transition>.

- **Operational Closure:** Operational closure must happen within 9 months from project completion date. Prior to operational closure, the Terminal Evaluation must have been submitted and the corresponding TE management response and the end-of-project review Project Board meeting must have been completed. The Implementing Partner through a Project Board decision will notify the UNDP Country Office when operational closure has been completed. Before Operational Closure, the project must have completed the transfer or disposal of any equipment that is still the property of UNDP.
- **Financial Closure:** Financial closure must happen within 6 months of operational closure or after the date of cancellation. The project will be financially closed when the following conditions have been met: a) the project is operationally completed or has been cancelled; b) the Implementing Partner has reported all financial transactions to UNDP; c) UNDP has closed the accounts for the project; d) UNDP and the Implementing Partner have certified a final Combined Delivery Report (which serves as final budget revision).
Between operational and financial closure, the implementing partner will identify and settle all financial obligations and prepare a final expenditure report. The UNDP Country Office will send the final signed closure documents including confirmation of final cumulative expenditure and unspent balance to BPPS/NCE for confirmation before the project will be financially closed in Quantum by the UNDP Country Office.

Cancellation and Suspension: All projects considering going through cancellation or suspension must follow UNDP and GEF requirements. Guidance can be found in the UNDP POPP ([SOPs for management actions of Vertical Fund projects escalated to the Executive Coordinator](#) and [Guidance for GEF project revisions](#)).

Refund to GEF: Should a refund of unspent funds to the GEF be necessary, this will be managed directly by the BPPS/NCE team Directorate in New York. No action is required by the UNDP Country Office on the actual refund from UNDP project to the GEF. Unspent project balance is not permitted to be transferred to any other projects.

X. TOTAL BUDGET AND WORK PLAN

Total Budget and Work Plan			
Quantum Business Unit	UNDP-WSM		
Quantum Project ID:	01002453	Quantum Project Title:	<i>Coastal Resilience Samoa</i>
Quantum Award ID:	1281883	Quantum Award Title:	<i>Coastal Resilience Samoa</i>
UNDP-GEF PIMS No.	9620		
Implementing Partner	<i>Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment</i>		

Quantum Outcome (GEF Component)	Quantum Output (GEF Outcome)	Quantum Activity (GEF Output)	Quantum Responsible Party	Quantum Fund ID	Quantum Donor ID	Quantum Budgetary Account Code	Quantum Budget Account Description	Amount Year 2025 (USD)	Amount Year 2026 (USD)	Amount Year 2027 (USD)	Amount Year 2028 (USD)	Total (USD)	See Budget Note:
Component 1: Integration of nature in key economic sectors through targeted economic, governance and financial interventions	Outcome 1. Value of ecosystem services better integrated into planning and budgeting allocations	MNRE		62000	10003	75700	Trainings, workshops & conferences	4,000	7,960	8,080	7,960	28,000	1,5
						72100	Contractual Services - Companies	-	29,700	29,700	30,600	90,000	9
		UNDP				71400	Contractual Services - Individuals	20,925	20,925	20,925	20,925	83,700	2,6,10
						71600	Travel	-	6,609	6,611	-	13,220	3,7
						72100	Contractual Services - Companies	108,000	108,000	-	-	216,000	4,8
		Total MNRE						4,000	37,660	37,780	38,560	118,000	
		Total UNDP						128,925	135,534	27,536	20,925	312,920	
		Total Component 1								132,925	173,194	65,316	59,485

Component 2: Implement landscape and seascape level nature-based solutions in key ecosystems supporting the food (agriculture and fisheries) and tourism sectors	Outcome 2: Enhanced systemic and institutional capacity to implement NbS in key ecosystems at seascape and landscape levels, mainstreaming gender concerns and involving youth and vulnerable communities	MNRE	62000	10003	72100	Contractual Services - Companies	99,500	111,500	71500	47500	330,000	11,15,17	
		UNDP			71400	Contractual Services - Individuals	27,225	27,225	27,225	27,225	108,900	12,16,18	
					71600	Travel	-	-	-	6,932	6,932	13	
					72600	Grants	-	145,478	260,190	145,478	551,146	14,19	
		Total MNRE						99,500	111,500	71,500	47,500	330,000	
		Total UNDP						27,225	172,703	287,415	179,635	666,978	
Total Component 2							126,725	284,203	358,915	227,135	996,978		
Component 3: Unlocking private sector capital and finance for action in SIDS	Outcome 3: Increased financial flows to NbS from private sector	MNRE	62000	10003	75700	Trainings, workshops & conferences	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	40,000	20,25	
					72100	Contractual Services - Companies	60,000	67,500	60,000	-	187,500	24,23	
		UNDP			71200	International Consultants	32,500	--	-	-	32,500	21,26	
					71400	Contractual Services - Individuals	16,050	16,050	16,050	16,050	64,200	22,27	
		Total MNRE						70,000	77,500	70,000	10,000	227,500	
		Total UNDP						48,550	16,050	16,050	16,050	96,700	
Total Component 3							118,550	93,550	86,050	26,050	324,200		
Component 4: Knowledge management, awareness, collaborative and gender-inclusive engagement to capture, utilize and share knowledge in relation to nature-based solutions and natural capital	Outcome 4: Lessons and best practices of the project on NbS, NCA, ecosystem valuation, and gender mainstreaming are applied by other districts in Samoa and abroad	MNRE	62000	10003	71300	Local Consultants	35,700	35,700	35,700	35,700	142,800	28,32	
					71600	Travel	5,000	11,000	22,000	22,000	60,000	29,33	
					72100	Contractual Services - Companies	10,000	20,000	40,000	30,000	100,000	30,34	
					75700	Trainings, workshops & conferences	15,500	20,500	20,500	20,500	77,000	31,35	

		UNDP			71600	Travel	6,610				6,610	36	
		Total MNRE						66,200	87,200	118,200	108,200	379,800	
		Total UNDP						6,610	--	--	--	6,610	
Total Component 4							72,810	87,200	118,200	108,200	386,410		
Component 5: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) to ensure effective project management	M&E	UNDP	62000	10003	71200	International Consultants	-	20,400	-	20,400	40,800	37	
					71300	Local Consultants	-	10,000	-	10,000	20,000	38	
					71600	Travel	5,000	9,750	5,000	10,687	30,437	39	
					75700	Trainings, workshops & conferences	5,000	-	-	-	5,000	40	
Total Component 5							10,000	40,150	5,000	41,087	96,237		
Project Management Cost (PMC)	PMC	UNDP	62000	10003	71400	Contractual Services - Individuals	15,624	15,624	15,624	15,624	62,496	41	
					72200	Equipment & Furniture	4,000	-	-	-	4,000	42	
					74100	Professional Services	8,300	8,300	8,300	8,341	33,241	43	
					72500	Supplies	1500	1500	1500	1500	6,000	44	
					72800	Information Technology Equipment	6,000	-	-	-	6,000	45	
		Total PMC						35,424	25,424	25,424	25,465	111,737	
Total Project Grant							496,434	703,721	658,905	487,422	2,346,482		

Budget notes:

Budget note number	Description
COMPONENT 1:	

1	Trainings, Workshops and Conferences: meetings with relevant government agencies to discuss the NCA modules and facilitate their integration in to the national policies and economic accounts: \$4,000/year for Years 1-4. Total : \$16,000 (Output 1.1)
2	"Contractual Services - Individuals (71400): a. Project Coordinator's direct technical input to the Output 1.1: 4 months *\$2,100/month = \$8,400 for Years 1-4 (NPSA10) b. Project Chief Technical Advisor's technical input to the Output 1.1: 30 days (out of 250 total) *\$650/day = \$19,500 for Years 1-4 (IPSA11 part-time) , Total : \$27,900
3	Travel (71600): Travel expenses for 3 under 1.1 out 8 in-country missions for CTA @ 1 return ticket at @\$2,500 (\$7,500); 15 days DSA per mission at @161 per day = \$2,415. Total: \$9,915 (Output 1.1)
4	Contractual Services - Companies: Contract with selected organization to complete existing NCA modules (waste, energy, water) and develop new NCA modules (mangrove, coral reefs, sea-grass, forest) (Output 1.1): \$116,000 for Years 1 and 2
5	Trainings, Workshops and Conferences: meeting with the key government agencies to discuss the DSTs and integrate them into the government policies and frameworks (Output 1.2): \$ 4,000/year for Years 2-4. Total: \$12,000
6	Contractual Services - Individuals: a. Project Coordinator's direct technical input to the Output 1.2: 4 months *\$2,100/month = \$8,400 for Years 1-4 (NPSA10) b. Project Technical Advisor's technical input to the Output 1.2: 30 days (out of 250 total) *\$650/day = \$19,500 for Years 1-4 (IPSA11 part-time) Total: \$27,900
7	Travel (71600): Travel expenses for (1 under 1.2) out 8 in-country missions for CTA at 1return ticket at @\$2,500 (\$2,500); 5 days DSA per mission at @161 per day (\$805). Total: \$3,305 (Output 1.2)
8	Contractual Services - Companies: Contract with selected organization to develop and test NCA and NbS Decision Support Tools (Output 1.2): \$100,000 for Years 1 and 2
9	Contractual Services - Companies: Contract with selected organization to develop and deliver tailored training programs that address NCA, NbS, PES capacity gaps (Output 1.3) Years 2-4. Total: \$90,000
10	Contractual Services - Individuals: a. Project Coordinator's direct technical input to the Output 1.3: 4 months *\$2,100/month = \$8,400 for Years 1-4 (NPSA10) b. International Consultants: Project Technical Advisor's technical input to the Output 1.3: 30 days (out of 250 total) *\$650/day = \$19,500 for Years 1-4 (IPSA11 part-time) Total: \$27,900
COMPONENT 2:	
11	Contractual Services Companies: Contract with selected organization(s) to integrate NCAs and NbS into the 7 districts planning (Output 2.1): \$80,000 for years 1 and 2

12	Contractual Services - Individuals: a. Project Coordinator's direct technical input to the Output 2.1: 8 months *\$2,100/month = \$16,800 for Years 1-4 (NPSA10) b. International Consultants: Project Technical Advisor's technical input to the Output 2.1: 30 days (out of 250 total) *\$650/day = \$19,500 for Years 1-4 (IPSA11 part-time) Total: \$36,300
13	Travel: Travel expenses for 2 (under 2.1) out 8 in-country missions for CTA 2-return ticket at @\$2,500 (\$5,000) and 12 days DSA per mission at @161 per day (\$1,932)- Total: \$6,932
14	Grants: UNDP to administer LVG through the GEF SGP mechanism to local communities for NbS implementation under Output 2.1: \$280,000 for Years 2-4
15	Contractual Services - companies: Contract(s) with selected organization(s) to develop and support implementation of the Integrated Management Plans for Plans for Mauga o Salafai and O Le Pupu Pu'e PAs, and Safata District MPA (Output 2.2): \$190,000 for Years 1-3
16	Contractual Services - Individuals: a. Project Coordinator's direct technical input to the Output 2.2: 8 months *\$2,100/month = \$16,800 for Years 1-4 (NPSA10) b. Project Chief Technical Advisor's technical input to the Output 2.2: 30 days (out of 250 total) *\$650/day = \$19,500 for Years 1-4 (IPSA11 part-time). Total: \$36,300
17	Contractual Services - companies: Contract with selected organization to identify priorities for forest restoration the target districts and build required capacity among local communities (Output 2.3): \$60,000 for Years 1-3;
18	Contractual Services - Individuals: a. Project Coordinator's direct technical input to the Output 2.3: 8 months *\$2,100/month = \$16,800 for Years 1-4 (NPSA10) b. Project Chief Technical Advisor's technical input to the Output 2.3: 30 days (out of 250 total) *\$650/day = \$19,500 for Years 1-4 (IPSA11 part-time). Total: \$36,300
19	Grants: as per #12 Output 2.3: \$271,146 for Years 2-4. The use of grant shall follow UNDP Low Value Grant policies
COMPONENT 3:	
20	Trainings, Workshops and Conferences: technical and awareness meetings with key partners and stakeholders to discuss the development, approval and implementation of policy framework for Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) in the tourism and food sectors of Samoa: \$5,000 * 4 years = \$20,000 (Output 3.1)
21	International Consultants: Contract to conduct SESA under Output 3.1; 25 days (out of 50 days total) *\$650/day = \$16,250.
22	Contractual Services - Individuals: a. Project Coordinator's direct technical input to the Output 3.1: 8 months *\$2,100/month = \$16,800 for Years 1-4 (NPSA10) b. Project Technical Advisor's technical input to the Output 3.1: 30 days (out of 250 total) *\$650/day = \$19,500 for Years 1-4 (IPSA11). Total: \$36,300
23	Contractual Services - Companies: Contract with selected organization to develop the key policy framework for Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) in the tourism and food sectors of Samoa (Output 3.1): \$93,750 for Years 1-3

24	Contractual Services - Companies: Contract with selected organization to develop and test a mechanism for implementation of International Visitor Levy (IVL) in Samoa: \$93,750 for Years 1-3 (Output 3.2)
25	Trainings, Workshops and Conferences: technical and awareness meetings with key partners and stakeholders to discuss the development, testing and implementation of IVL: \$5,000 * 4 years = \$20,000 (Output 3.2)
26	International Consultants: Contract to conduct SESA under Output 3.2; 25 days (out of 50 days total) *\$650/day = \$16,250.
27	Contractual Services - Individuals: a. Project Coordinator's direct technical input to the Output 3.2: 4 months *\$2,100/month = \$8,400 for Years 1-4 (NPSA10) b. Project Chief Technical Advisor's technical input to the Output 3.2: 30 days (out of 250 total) *\$650/day = \$19,500 for Years 1-4 (IPSA11). Total: \$27,900
COMPONENT 4:	
28	National Consultants: M&E (\$1,000/month) and KM and Communication (\$625/month) Consultants: 48 months *50% = \$39,000 (other 50% of the Consultant are budgeted under Output 4.2); IT support consultant (project website): \$400/day * 50 days = \$20,000 over Years 1-4. Total: \$59,000(Output 4.1)
29	Travel (71600): Travel expenses for the PMU to organize awareness events in the project districts: \$5,000/year for Year 1 Year 2 and \$10,000/year for Years 3-4. Total: \$30,000 (Output 4.1)
30	Contractual Services - Companies: Contracts with a selected organization(s) to produce materials for the awareness campaign and project events, including videos, booklets, posters, etc. Total budget: \$50,000 for Years 1-4 (Output 4.1)
31	Trainings, Workshops and Conferences: project events in the target districts in framework of the awareness campaign: \$5,000 for Year 1, and \$10,000/year for Years 2-4. Total: \$35,000 (Output 4.1)
32	National Consultants: M&E (\$1,000/month) and KM and Communication (\$625/month) Consultants: 48 months *50% = \$39,000 (other 50% of the Consultant are budgeted under Output 4.1); Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming Consultant: \$1,400/month * 32 months = \$44,800. Total: \$83,800 (Output 4.2)
33	Travel (71600): Travel for PMU and project partners to participate in the knowledge exchange events organized by BGI IP and other international projects and programs: \$10,000 * 3 years = \$30,000 (Output 4.2) for Years 2-4
34	Contractual Services - Organizations: Contract with a selected organization(s) to produce knowledge products, including publications, manuals, guidelines, online content, etc. to describe the project best practices and lessons learned. Total: \$50,000 for Years 2-3 (Output 4.2.)
35	Workshops: Annual Project Board meetings: \$1,000 * 4 years = \$4,000; project lessons learning and knowledge exchange events, workshops and conferences: \$9,500/ year for Years 1-4 Total: \$42,000 (Output 4.2)
36	a. Travel: Travel expenses for 2 (under 4.2) out 8 in-country missions for CTA in Year 1 at (2 return tickets at @\$2,500 (\$5,000) and 2 * 5 days for mission DSA per mission @161 per day (\$1,610). Total: \$6,610
COMPONENT 5:	
37	International Consultants: MTR (\$600/day *28 days = \$16,800, Year 2); TE (\$600/day *30 days = \$18,000 (Year 4); International FAO Ex-Act Tool Consultant MTR (\$600 * 4 days = \$2,400, Year 2); and International FAO Ex-Act Tool Consultant TE (\$600 * 6 days = \$3,600, Year 4). Total: \$40,800 (Output 5.1)

38	National Consultants for MTR (\$400/day * 25 days = \$10,000, Year 2) and TE (\$400/day * 25 days = \$10,000, Year 4). Total: \$20,000 (Output 5.1)
39	Travel (71600): a. Travel expenses for PMU for monitoring of SESP, GRM, Gender mainstreaming Strategy, and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (\$7,000); supervision missions by the PMU to the project sites (\$7,000); and learning missions by the PMU to the project sites (\$7,000). Total: \$21,000 for Years 1-4 (Output 5.1) b. Travel expenses for the MTR - 1 return ticket @\$2,500 and DSA @\$2,250 in Year 2 and TE - 1 return ticket @\$2,500 and DSA @\$2,187 in Year 4. Total: \$9,437 (Output 5.1)
40	Budget for the Inception Workshop: \$5,000 for Year 1 (Output 5.1)
PROJECT MANAGEMENT:	
41	Contractual Services – Individual: Project Finance and Admin Officer (NPSA7): USD1,302/month for 48 months. Total: \$ 62,496 for Years 1-4
42	Furniture for the PMU Office (desks and chairs): \$4,000 for Year 1
43	Professional services: annual audit ((\$8,300 for Years 1-3 and 8,341 for year 4) and spot checks of RPs and other contracting organizations. Total: \$ \$33,241 for Years 1-4
44	Supplies for the PMU Office: paper, cartridges for printer, etc., total - \$6,000 for Years 1-4
45	IT equipment for PMU (2 computer packages and printer for 1. Project Coordinator , 2. Project Finance Assistant), total budget - \$6,000 for Year 1

XI. LEGAL CONTEXT

This project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of Samoa and UNDP, signed on September 5th, 2008. All references in the SBAA to “Executing Agency” shall be deemed to refer to “Implementing Partner.”

This project will be implemented by Ministry of Natural Resource & Environment (MNRE) (“Implementing Partner”) in accordance with its financial regulations, rules, practices and procedures only to the extent that they do not contravene the principles of the Financial Regulations and Rules of UNDP. Where the financial governance of an Implementing Partner does not provide the required guidance to ensure best value for money, fairness, integrity, transparency, and effective international competition, the financial governance of UNDP shall apply.

XII. RISK MANAGEMENT

1. Consistent with the Article III of the SBAA, the responsibility for the safety and security of the Implementing Partner and its personnel and property, and of UNDP’s property in the Implementing Partner’s custody, rests with the Implementing Partner. To this end, the Implementing Partner shall:
 - a) put in place an appropriate security plan and maintain the security plan, taking into account the security situation in the country where the project is being carried;
 - b) assume all risks and liabilities related to the Implementing Partner’s security, and the full implementation of the security plan.
2. UNDP reserves the right to verify whether such a plan is in place, and to suggest modifications to the plan when necessary. Failure to maintain and implement an appropriate security plan as required hereunder shall be deemed a breach of the Implementing Partner’s obligations under this Project Document.
3. The Implementing Partner agrees to undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that no UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism and that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNDP hereunder do not appear on the United Nations Security Council Consolidated Sanctions List, and that no UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document are used for money laundering activities. The United Nations Security Council Consolidated Sanctions List can be accessed via <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/un-sc-consolidated-list>.
4. The Implementing Partner acknowledges and agrees that UNDP will not tolerate sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse of anyone by the Implementing Partner, and each of its responsible parties, their respective sub-recipients and other entities involved in Project implementation, either as contractors or subcontractors and their personnel, and any individuals performing services for them under the Project Document.

(a) In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, the Implementing Partner, and each of its sub-parties referred to above, shall comply with the standards of conduct set forth in the Secretary General’s Bulletin ST/SGB/2003/13 of 9 October 2003, concerning “Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse” (“SEA”).

(b) Moreover, and without limitation to the application of other regulations, rules, policies and procedures bearing upon the performance of the activities under this Project Document, in the implementation of activities, the Implementing Partner, and each of its sub-parties referred to above, shall not engage in any form of sexual harassment (“SH”). SH is defined as any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. SH may occur in the workplace or in connection with work. While typically involving a pattern of conduct, SH may take the form of a single incident. In

assessing the reasonableness of expectations or perceptions, the perspective of the person who is the target of the conduct shall be considered.

5. a) In the performance of the activities under this Project Document, the Implementing Partner shall (with respect to its own activities), and shall require from its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4 (with respect to their activities) that they, have minimum standards and procedures in place, or a plan to develop and/or improve such standards and procedures in order to be able to take effective preventive and investigative action. These should include: policies on sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse; policies on whistleblowing/protection against retaliation; and complaints, disciplinary and investigative mechanisms. In line with this, the Implementing Partner will and will require that such sub-parties will take all appropriate measures to:
 - i. Prevent its employees, agents or any other persons engaged to perform any services under this Project Document, from engaging in SH or SEA;
 - ii. Offer employees and associated personnel training on prevention and response to SH and SEA, where the Implementing Partner and its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4 have not put in place its own training regarding the prevention of SH and SEA, the Implementing Partner and its sub-parties may use the training material available at UNDP;
 - iii. Report and monitor allegations of SH and SEA of which the Implementing Partner and its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4 have been informed or have otherwise become aware, and status thereof;
 - iv. Refer victims/survivors of SH and SEA to safe and confidential victim assistance; and
 - v. Promptly and confidentially, record and investigate any allegations credible enough to warrant an investigation of SH or SEA. The Implementing Partner shall advise UNDP of any such allegations received and investigations being conducted by itself or any of its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4 with respect to their activities under the Project Document, and shall keep UNDP informed during the investigation by it or any of such sub-parties, to the extent that such notification (i) does not jeopardize the conduct of the investigation, including but not limited to the safety or security of persons, and/or (ii) is not in contravention of any laws applicable to it. Following the investigation, the Implementing Partner shall advise UNDP of any actions taken by it or any of the other entities further to the investigation.
- b) The Implementing Partner shall establish that it has complied with the foregoing, to the satisfaction of UNDP, when requested by UNDP or any party acting on its behalf to provide such confirmation. Failure of the Implementing Partner, and each of its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4, to comply of the foregoing, as determined by UNDP, shall be considered grounds for suspension or termination of the Project.
6. Social and environmental sustainability will be enhanced through application of the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (<http://www.undp.org/ses>) and related Accountability Mechanism (<http://www.undp.org/secu-srm>).
7. The Implementing Partner shall: (a) conduct project and programme-related activities in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards, (b) implement any management or mitigation plan prepared for the project or programme to comply with such standards, and (c) engage in a constructive and timely manner to address any concerns and complaints raised through the Accountability Mechanism. UNDP will seek to ensure that communities and other project stakeholders are informed of and have access to the Accountability Mechanism.
8. All signatories to the Project Document shall cooperate in good faith with any exercise to evaluate any programme or project-related commitments or compliance with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards. This includes providing access to project sites, relevant personnel, information, and documentation.
9. The Implementing Partner will take appropriate steps to prevent misuse of funds, fraud or corruption, by its officials, consultants, responsible parties, subcontractors and sub-recipients in implementing the project or using UNDP funds.
10. In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, UNDP places reasonable reliance upon the Implementing Partner for it to apply its laws, regulations and processes, and applicable international laws

regarding anti money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism, to ensure consistency with the principles of then in force the UNDP Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Policy.

11. The Implementing Partner will ensure that its financial management, anti-corruption, anti-fraud and anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism policies are in place and enforced for all funding received from or through UNDP.
12. The requirements of the following documents, then in force at the time of signature of the Project Document, apply to the Implementing Partner: (a) UNDP Policy on Fraud and other Corrupt Practices and (b) UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations Investigation Guidelines. The Implementing Partner agrees to the requirements of the above documents, which are an integral part of this Project Document and are available online at www.undp.org.
13. In the event that an investigation is required, UNDP has the obligation to conduct investigations relating to any aspect of UNDP projects and programmes in accordance with UNDP's regulations, rules, policies and procedures. The Implementing Partner shall provide its full cooperation, including making available personnel, relevant documentation, and granting access to the Implementing Partner's (and its consultants', responsible parties', subcontractors' and sub-recipients') premises, for such purposes at reasonable times and on reasonable conditions as may be required for the purpose of an investigation. Should there be a limitation in meeting this obligation, UNDP shall consult with the Implementing Partner to find a solution.
14. The signatories to this Project Document will promptly inform one another in case of any incidence of inappropriate use of funds, or credible allegation of fraud or corruption with due confidentiality.

Where the Implementing Partner becomes aware that a UNDP project or activity, in whole or in part, is the focus of investigation for alleged fraud/corruption, the Implementing Partner will inform the UNDP Resident Representative/Head of Office, who will promptly inform UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI). The Implementing Partner shall provide regular updates to the head of UNDP in the country and OAI of the status of, and actions relating to, such investigation.

15. UNDP shall be entitled to a refund from the Implementing Partner of any funds provided that have been used inappropriately, including through fraud, corruption or other financial irregularity, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document. Such amount may be deducted by UNDP from any payment due to the Implementing Partner under this or any other agreement. Recovery of such amount by UNDP shall not diminish or curtail the Implementing Partner's obligations under this Project Document.

Where such funds have not been refunded to UNDP, the Implementing Partner agrees that donors to UNDP (including the Government) whose funding is the source, in whole or in part, of the funds for the activities under this Project Document, may seek recourse to the Implementing Partner for the recovery of any funds determined by UNDP to have been used inappropriately, including through fraud, corruption or other financial irregularity, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document.

Note: The term "Project Document" as used in this clause shall be deemed to include any relevant subsidiary agreement further to the Project Document, including those with responsible parties, subcontractors and sub-recipients.

16. Each contract issued by the Implementing Partner in connection with this Project Document shall include a provision representing that no fees, gratuities, rebates, gifts, commissions or other payments, other than those shown in the proposal, have been given, received, or promised in connection with the selection process or in contract execution, and that the recipient of funds from the Implementing Partner shall cooperate with any and all investigations and post-payment audits.

17. Should UNDP refer to the relevant national authorities for appropriate legal action any alleged wrongdoing relating to the project, the Government will ensure that the relevant national authorities shall actively investigate the same and take appropriate legal action against all individuals found to have participated in the wrongdoing, recover and return any recovered funds to UNDP.
18. The Implementing Partner shall ensure that all of its obligations set forth under this section entitled “Risk Management” are passed on to each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient and that all the clauses under this section entitled “Risk Management Standard Clauses” are included, mutatis mutandis, in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into further to this Project Document.

XIII. MANDATORY ANNEXES

1. GEF Budget
2. GEF OFP Letter
3. Project Map and Project Sites Coordinates
4. Multi-Year Work Plan
5. Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP)
6. UNDP Project Risk Register
7. Overview of technical consultancies/subcontracts – incorporated in this document as requested please see below
8. Stakeholder Engagement Plan
- 8a. Stakeholder Consultation Report
9. Environmental Social Management Framework (ESMF)
10. Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan
11. Procurement Plan
12. Co-Financing Letters
13. Draft LOA between UNDP and IP requesting UNDP Support Services
14. GEF CEO Endorsement Form
15. Low Value Grant Mechanism— To be confirmed
16. Terms of Reference for Project Board and Project Team
17. GEF Core Indicator Worksheet
18. GEF 8 Taxonomy
19. HACT Micro-Assessment for MNRE
- 19a. Partners Capacity Assessment Tool (PCAT) for MNRE
20. Quality Assurance Report
21. Climate and Disaster Risk Screening
22. Nature Capital Accounting
23. Nature-based Solutions in Samoa

24. Profiles of the project sites
25. METT Baseline Assessments for target PAs
26. FAO EX-ACT Assessment of carbon gains by the project

ANNEX 7: Overview of technical consultancies/subcontracts

ANNEX 7. Summary of project consultancies and contractual services

Consultant/Organization	Time Input	Tasks, Inputs and Outputs
For Project Management		
Local / National contracting		
Project Coordinator Rate: \$2,100/month	48 months / over 4 years	The Project Coordinator (PC) will be responsible for the day-to-day management of project activities and the delivery of its outputs, under the supervision of the Project Director (50% of worktime). The PC will support and coordinate the activities of all partners, staff, and consultants as they relate to the implementation of the project. This will entail working closely with staff of the MAF, MoF and local administrations to guide the implementation of project activities at the landscape level. Additionally, the Project Coordinator will provide critical technical input for the delivery of the Outputs 1.1-1.3, 2.1-2.3, and 3.1-3.2 (50% of work time) <u>Duties and Responsibilities</u> <u>Project Management (50% of total work time)</u> • Plan the activities of the project and monitor progress against the approved work-plan; • Supervise and coordinate the production of project outputs by project partners, as per the project document in a timely and high quality fashion; • Coordinate all project inputs and ensure that they adhere to UNDP procedures for nationally executed projects; • Supervise and coordinate the work of all project staff, project partners, consultants and sub-contractors ensuring timing and quality of outputs; • Coordinate the recruitment and selection of project personnel, consultants and sub-contracts, including drafting terms of reference and work specifications and overseeing all contractors' work; • Manage requests for the provision of financial resources by UNDP, through advance of funds, direct payments, or reimbursement using the UNDP provided format; • Monitor actual delivery of the project co-financing; • Prepare, revise and submit project work and financial plans, as required by Project Board and UNDP; • Monitor financial resources and accounting to ensure accuracy and reliability of financial reports, submitted on a quarterly basis; • Manage and monitor the project risks initially identified and submit new risks to the project board for consideration and decision on possible actions if required; update the status of these risks by maintaining the project risks log; • Liaise with UNDP, Project Board, relevant government agencies, and all project partners, including donor organisations and CSOs for effective coordination of all project activities; • Facilitate administrative support to project partners, subcontractors and training activities supported by the Project;

Consultant/Organization	Time Input	Tasks, Inputs and Outputs
		- Oversee and ensure timely submission of the Inception Report, Project Implementation Report, Technical reports, quarterly financial reports, and other reports as may be required by UNDP, GEF and other oversight agencies; - Disseminate project reports and respond to queries from concerned stakeholders; - Report progress of project to the steering committees, and ensure the fulfilment of PB directives; - Oversee the exchange and sharing of experiences and lessons learned with relevant community based integrated conservation and development projects nationally and internationally; - Assist community groups, municipalities, CSOs, staff, students and others with development of essential skills through training workshops and on the job training thereby increasing their institutional capabilities; - Encourage staff, partners and consultants such that strategic, intentional and demonstrable efforts are made to actively include women in the project, including activity design and planning, budgeting, staff and consultant hiring, subcontracting, purchasing, formal community governance and advocacy, outreach to social organizations, training, participation in meetings; and access to program benefits; - Carry regular, announced and unannounced inspections of all sites and the activities. <i>Technical input to the Outputs 1.1-1.3 (12.5% of worktime), 2.1-2.3 (25% of worktime), and 3.1-3.2 (12.5% of worktime).</i> - Supervise the integration process to ensure that methodologies and approaches used for NCA module development align with national priorities and stakeholder needs; - Review and consolidate feedback from various sectors (agriculture, fisheries, tourism) to ensure that the developed NCA modules are not only technically sound but also relevant and useful for decision-makers; - Facilitate integration of NCA data into existing governance structures, ensuring that DSTs are accessible and easy to use by non-technical stakeholders such as policy makers and local leaders; - Review and provide input on the user-friendly design and functionality of DSTs developed by consultants, ensuring they meet stakeholder expectations and national planning needs; - Provide strategic and technical input and expertise to the design of training programs developed by consultants, ensuring alignment with national and district-level priorities, and monitor the quality and inclusiveness of training materials; - Provide technical input to and coordinate training workshops on NCA modules, DSTs, and NbS, ensuring they align with national priorities and cater to specific decision-making roles; - Lead on development of NbS based on NCA modules for each project district and ensure that NbS priorities are aligned with district-level governance and community needs; - Provide technical input and expertise on the application of ecological and socio-economic modeling techniques to update and validate CIMPs with NbS, ensuring government and community endorsement; - Employ data-driven approaches and collaborative software to align NbS priorities across ministries (e.g., MNRE, MAF) and with private-sector investments; - Lead on application of geographic information systems (GIS) and ecosystem service valuation tools for development of Protected Area Integrated Management Plans (IMP); - Coordinate the integration of input from various stakeholders (communities, private sector, government agencies) into the IMPs;

Consultant/Organization	Time Input	Tasks, Inputs and Outputs
		• Provide input to and oversee ecological restoration activities using data-driven techniques and tools, ensuring alignment with biodiversity conservation and community objectives; • Coordinate partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, and community groups to ensure broad-based support and resources for ecosystem restoration activities; • Take the technical lead on consultations with policymakers and the private sector to ensure that the PES policy framework reflects stakeholder needs and national policy priorities; • Provide input and lead on financial modeling tools to develop consensus-driven strategies for implementing IVL in collaboration with government agencies, tourism operators and stakeholders
Project Finance and Administration Officer Rate: \$1,302/month	48 months / over 4 years	The Project Finance and Administration Officer will be responsible for the financial and administrative management of the project activities and assists in the preparation of quarterly and annual work plans and progress/financial reports for review and monitoring by the Project Coordinator and UNDP. Under the guidance and supervision of the Project Coordinator, the officer will provide support to administrative and management services ensuring high quality of work, ensures accurate, timely, and properly recorded/documented service delivery. The Officer ensures effective delivery of project by entering and managing data and supporting project implementation consistent with UNDP rules and regulations. The PA works in close collaboration with UNDP CO, RPs, and various consultants. The position requires a high level of initiative and learning motivation. <u>Duties and Responsibilities</u> • Responsible for providing general financial support to the project; • Take own initiative and perform daily work in compliance with annual work schedules; • Assist project management in performing budget cycle: planning, preparation, revisions, and budget execution; • Provide assistance to partner agencies involved in project activities, performing and monitoring financial aspects to ensure compliance with budgeted costs in line with UNDP policies and procedures; • Monitor project expenditures, ensuring that no expenditure is incurred before it has been authorized; • Assist the Project Coordinator in monitoring of the project co-financing; • Assist project team in drafting quarterly and yearly project progress reports concerning financial issues; • Ensure that UNDP procurement rules are followed during procurement activities that are carried out by the project and maintain responsibility for the inventory of the project assets; • Perform preparatory work for mandatory and general budget revisions, annual physical inventory and auditing, and assist external evaluators in fulfilling their mission; • Prepare all outputs in accordance with the UNDP administrative and financial office guidance; • Ensure the project utilizes the available financial resources in an efficient and transparent manner; • Ensure that all project financial activities are carried out on schedule and within budget to achieve the project outputs;

Consultant/Organization	Time Input	Tasks, Inputs and Outputs
		Perform all other financial and administrative related duties, upon request
International Consultants		
Project Technical Advisor Rate: \$650/day	240 days/ over 4 years	The Project Technical Advisor's (PTA) role is to provide technical support for all components of the project and ensuring coherence and integration across the different project Components and Outputs. He/She will also play a critical role in engagement with government in particular supporting processes for changes in government approaches and ensuring buy-in to key strategies and frameworks produced by the project. PTA will also work to ensure and provide oversight of the quality and appropriateness of other technical support elements as well as broader project activities and the delivery of its outputs. The PTA will support and coordinate the activities of all partners, staff, and consultants as they relate to the implementation of the project. <u>The PTA will be responsible for the following specific tasks:</u> - Manage the overall coordination and guidance of the technical aspects of the project - Oversee and coordination of the technical inputs from the international and national consultants - Assist the PMU in developing of RP agreements and ToRs/contracts for project consultants; - Oversee and support a capacity building and training programs for all relevant national and local agencies, special interest groups and local communities - Support/oversee and guide the conduct of technical consultations and workshops - Support and guide the development and organization of awareness and publicity programs and materials - Support plans and protocols for inter-agency coordination - Monitor events as determined in the project monitoring plan, and facilitate updating of the plan as required. - Perform regular progress reporting to the project board as agreed with the board, including measures to address challenges and opportunities. - Oversee progress related to project risks – including social and environmental risks; - Capture lessons learned during project implementation. - Facilitate preparation of revisions to the multi-year work plan, as needed, as well as annual and quarterly plans if required. - Assess major and minor amendments to the project within the parameters set by UNDP-GEF; - Monitor implementation plans including the gender action plan, stakeholder engagement plan, and any environmental and social management plans; - Monitor and track progress against the GEF Core indicators. - Support the MTR and Terminal Evaluation process
Component 1		

Consultant/Organization	Time Input	Tasks, Inputs and Outputs
Contractual Services		
Contract with selected organization to complete existing NCA modules (waste, energy, water) and develop new NCA modules (mangrove, coral reefs, sea-grass, forest) (Output 1.1) Estimated budget: \$120,000	12 months over Years 1 and 2	To complete existing NCA modules (waste, energy, water) and develop new NCA modules (mangrove, coral reefs, sea-grass, forest) and support NCA integration into the government policy and accounting frameworks. Responsibilities: - Review and assess existing NCA modules (waste, energy, water) for inconsistencies and data gaps; - Update the existing NCA modules with the input of the target agencies; - Develop four new NCA modules for mangrove, coral reefs, sea-grass, and forest; - Provide technical assistance in the integration of NCA modules into national economic accounts and planning frameworks. - Oversee the harmonization of data with international standards, particularly the SEEA framework. - Coordinate with national consultants and project partners (MNRE, SBS, STA) to ensure effective implementation of activities. - Develop protocols for continuous monitoring and updating of NCA modules.
Contract with selected organization to develop and test NCA and NbS Decision Support Tools (Output 1.2) Estimated budget: \$100,000	12 months over the Year 1 and Year 2	To develop and integrate National and Local Level Decision Support Tools (DSTs) that leverage Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) modules for decision-making on Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and economic development in Samoa (Output 1.2) Responsibilities: - Conduct a comprehensive analysis of global NCA and NbS Decision Support Tools. - Identify and select tools that are suitable for Samoa's context. - Design and develop a digital DSTs tailored to Samoa's specific needs and NCA structure; - Validate the functionality and effectiveness of the developed DSTs; - Create manuals and guidelines for application of DSTs by relevant agencies; - Drfat policies that mandate the use of DSTs in planning and budgeting processes;
Contract with selected organization to develop and deliver tailored training programs that address NCA, NbS, PES capacity gaps (Output 1.3) Estimated budget: \$90,000	12 months over the Years 2 - 4	To train key national and local level authorities in Samoa on the application of Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) for sustainable natural resource management and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) planning, ensuring effective use of Decision Support Tools (DSTs) developed under Output 1.2.(Output 1.3) Responsibilities: - Identify the specific training needs and capacity gaps of national and local authorities regarding NCA and NbS; - Develop tailored training programs that address the identified needs and capacity gaps, including specific programs for agriculture, forestry, fishery, and tourism sectors; - Produce manuals, guides, presentations, and online resources to support the training programs; - Conduct a series of workshops and seminars in the capital and project districts to ensure wide participation and buy in on the NCAs and DSTs;

Consultant/Organization	Time Input	Tasks, Inputs and Outputs
		Set up training centers within existing institutions such as universities or government agencies and institutionalize the NCA, NbS, and DST capacity building programs for continuous implementation.
Component 2		
Contractual Services		
Contract with selected organization(s) to integrate NCAs and NbS into the 7 districts planning (Output 2.1) Estimated budget: \$80,000	12 months over the Years 1 and 2	To create guidelines, conduct training, and facilitate the integration of Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) into district planning for improved management of forest, coastal, and marine ecosystems in Samoa (Output 2.1) Responsibilities: - Create comprehensive guidelines for integrating Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) into district planning; - Organize and conduct training workshops for stakeholders in the 9 target districts on the National Guidelines; - Engage communities in participatory planning sessions to integrate NCA and NbS into the district CIMPs and WRM Plans; - Assist target districts in developing village by-laws to implement CIMPs and WRM Plans based on Samoa's customary governance systems under the Village Fono Act (1990);
Agreement with UNDP GEF Small Grant Programme to administer LVG to local communities for NbS implementation under Output 2.1 Estimated budget: \$280,000	12 months over the Years 2, 3, and 4	To support the implementation of NbS activities through community projects, collaboration with private sector partners, and establishment of a monitoring framework. Responsibilities: - Identify and select community projects to implement NbS activities, focusing on gender-positive actions and community priorities; - Collaborate with the Samoa Civil Society Programme (CSSP) and the GEF Small Grants Programme to disburse low-value grants (USD 5,000-18,000) to support selected community projects; - Set up a monitoring framework to track the progress and effectiveness of NbS initiatives.
Contract with selected organization(s) to develop and implement Integrated Management Plans for Plans for Mauga o Salafai and O Le Pupu Pu'e PAs, and Safata District MPA	24 months over Years 1-4	To develop and support implementation of the Integrated Management Plans (IMPs) for Mauga o Salafai and O Le Pupu Pu'e PAs, and Safata District MPA, mainstreaming Nature-based Solutions (NbS) into Protected Area (PA) management and ensuring their integration into district economic and NbS models (Output 2,2) Responsibilities: - Perform comprehensive baseline assessments of the PAs to gather data on biodiversity, ecosystem services, and socio-economic conditions, including developed NCAs (Output 1.1) and relevant district CIMPs and WRM Plans for adjacent areas; - Develop IMPs for the target PAs in fully participatory and inclusive approach, integrating data from baseline assessments, NCAs produced under Output 1.1, and updated CIMPs and WRM Plans (Output 2.1);

Consultant/Organization	Time Input	Tasks, Inputs and Outputs
Estimated budget: \$190,000		- Provide required training, equipment, and tools to PAs staff for IMPs implementation and NbS; - Support selected NbS initiatives by the Target PAs; - Conduct a feasibility study to identify economically viable and innovative funding sources for the PAs; - Develop and integrate feasible financing models (e.g., ecotourism, carbon credits, Payment for Ecosystem Services, CSR programs, PPPs) into the PA management.
Contract with selected organization to identify priorities for forest restoration the target districts and build required capacity among local communities Estimated budget: \$60,000	12 months over Years 1-3	To identify forest restoration priorities, build capacity among local communities, and develop restoration projects in cooperation with local stakeholders, ensuring alignment with district planning and protected area management plans (Output 2.3) Responsibilities: - Identify priorities for forest restoration activities based on CIMP, WRM Plans, and PA IMPs; - Conduct workshops to build capacity among local communities on forest restoration techniques; - Develop the restoration projects in cooperation with local communities, PAs, and private sector for funding via the low value grants (LVG)
Agreement with UNDP GEF Small Grant Programme to administer LVG to local communities for ecosystem restoration under Output 2.3 Estimated budget: \$271,146	12 months over Years 2-4	To administer low-value grants (LVG) for local communities to support forest restoration and set up a monitoring framework to track the progress and effectiveness of restoration initiatives (Output 2.3) Responsibilities: - Administer the low value grants (LVG) for local communities for forest restoration; - Set up and implement a monitoring framework to track the progress and effectiveness of restoration initiatives. - Conduct regular monitoring visits and provide adaptive management support to ensure the restoration project success.
Component 3		
International Consultants		
International Consultant to conduct strategic environmental and social assessment	50 days over the Year 1	The primary objective of this consultancy is to conduct a Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) to support the development of the PES policy framework and the IVL mechanism. The consultant will ensure that these frameworks are environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive. Responsibilities:

Consultant/Organization	Time Input	Tasks, Inputs and Outputs
(SESA) for Outputs 3.1 and 3.2 Rate: \$650/day \$32,500		- Analyze existing policies, regulations, and legislative frameworks related to ecosystem services, tourism, agriculture, and fisheries in Samoa; - Identify entry points for integrating PES based on developed Natural Capital Accounts (NCA) (Output 1.1); - Conduct a SESA process to understand the environmental and social implications of the PES framework; - Conduct a comprehensive feasibility study to assess the economic, social, and environmental impacts of introducing an IVL; - Conduct a SESA process to understand the environmental and social implications of the IVL mechanism; - Develop a SESA Report for Outputs 3.1 and 3.2
Contractual Services		
Contract with selected organization to develop the key policy framework for Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) in the tourism and food sectors of Samoa (Output 3.1) Estimated budget: \$110,000	12 months over Years 1-3	To develop a comprehensive policy framework for Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) in the tourism and food sectors of Samoa, incorporating tax breaks, nature-positive subsidies, certification, and public-private partnerships to encourage private sector investment in Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for disaster impact mitigation, climate adaptation, and ecosystem protection. Responsibilities: - Review existing policies, regulations, and legislative frameworks related to ecosystem services, tourism, agriculture, and fishery in Samoa to identify the entry points for the PES integration based on developed NCAs (Output 1.1); - Review and analysis of experience of PES schemes of the GCF project in Vaisigano catchment project as well as lessons from the work by the SCS in O le Pupu Pue (OLPP) National Park; - Develop a comprehensive PES policy framework (a roadmap) tailored to the tourism and food sectors, incorporating tax breaks, subsidies, certification, and PPPs; - Organize consultations with key stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector representatives, NGOs, and local communities, to gather input and build consensus on the PES framework; - Facilitate official approval of the PES framework policy (roadmap) by the Government of Samoa through consultation meetings with lawmakers.
Contract with selected organization to develop a mechanism for implementation of International Visitor Levy (IVL) in Samoa (Output 3.2) Estimated budget: \$110,000	12 months over Years 1-3	To develop and test an International Visitor Levy (IVL) for Samoa as a mechanism to mobilize tourism sector finance for Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and to provide an emergency fund for tourism sector recovery. Responsibilities: - Conduct a comprehensive feasibility study to assess the economic, social, and environmental impacts of introducing an IVL. This study should evaluate the potential revenue generation, the cost of implementation, and the acceptability among tourists and stakeholders; - Develop the necessary legislative and regulatory framework through consultations with government and tourist sector to support the implementation of the IVL. This will include drafting and enacting a law that define the levy structure, collection mechanisms, and the specific use of funds;

Consultant/Organization	Time Input	Tasks, Inputs and Outputs
		- Establish (or identify) the administrative structures required to manage the IVL. This involves setting up systems for levy collection, financial management, and monitoring. Coordination between different government departments, such as tourism and finance, is crucial here; - Assist the government to implement the pilot phase to test the IVL system and make necessary adjustments based on feedback.
Component 4		
National Consultants		
M&E Consultant Rate: \$1,000/month	48 months over 4 years	Will coordinate and partially implement the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities under Outputs 4.2 and 5.1, ensuring effective project implementation, and adaptive management Responsibilities: - Organize quarterly monitoring calls with RPs, partners and consultants, and collect monitoring data for project quarterly and annual reports; - Assist the PMU in organization and management of the project Mid-Term Review and Terminal Evaluation; - Produce quarterly and annual project reports to reflect project progress along Output and Outcome Indicators; - Quarterly monitoring and update of the project risks in the UNDP Risk Log
KM and Communication Consultant Rate: \$625/month	48 months over 4 years	Will coordinate and partially implement the knowledge management (KM), and communication activities under Outputs 4.1 and 4.2 ensuring effective project implementation, stakeholder engagement, and dissemination of project best practices. Responsibilities: - Produce and update annually project Communication Strategy; - Produce and update annually project KM Strategy; - Organize semi-annual lessons learning sessions with project partners and stakeholders, document and disseminate best practices, lessons learned, and success stories; - Coordinate organization of the project communication events in collaboration with other PMU members; - Develop ToRs and monitor implementation of contract agreements with selected organizations to produce awareness campaign materials and knowledge products; - Present and communicate project results and impacts through regular Project Board Meetings and media such as websites and social media
Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming Consultant Rate: \$1,400/month	32 months over 4 years	Will coordinate and implement the safeguards and gender mainstreaming activities for all project Components, ensuring that gender equality and social inclusion are integrated into all aspects of the project. Responsibilities:

Consultant/Organization	Time Input	Tasks, Inputs and Outputs
		- Conduct a detailed gender analysis to identify the different needs, roles, vulnerabilities, and strengths of women, men, and other gender groups in the context of the project area; - Develop and update annually a comprehensive Gender Mainstreaming Strategy to ensure gender equality is integrated into all project outputs; - Conduct training sessions for project staff, partners, and stakeholders on gender mainstreaming practices; - Conduct environmental and social screening of the project activities at the inception phase and develop a ESMP for the project if required; - Establish a simple Grievance Redress Mechanism for the project and coordinate its implementation with responsible members of the Project Board; - Quarterly monitor social and environmental risks associated with the project implementation;
IT support consultant (project website) Rate: \$400/day	50 days over 4 years	Will provide IT support for the development, maintenance, and enhancement of the project website, ensuring it effectively supports the awareness campaign (Output 4.1) and knowledge dissemination (Output 4.2) activities. Responsibilities: - Design and develop a user-friendly project website to serve as a central platform for information dissemination. - Ensure the website includes sections for awareness campaign materials, knowledge products, project updates, and interactive features. - Regularly update the website with new content, including articles, blogs, videos, infographics, publications, manuals, and guidelines. Ensure content is accessible, well-organized, and searchable - Provide ongoing technical support to ensure the website functions smoothly and efficiently.
Contractual Services		
Contract with a selected organization(s) to produce materials for the awareness campaign and project events, including videos, booklets, posters, etc. (Output 4.1) Estimated budget: \$50,000	6 months over 4 years	To produce high-quality materials for the awareness campaign and project events to educate and engage local communities, decision-makers, and private sector stakeholders on Natural Capital Accounting (NCA), Nature-based Solutions (NbS), and the key values of ecosystems for sustainable development in Samoa. Responsibilities: - Create informative and engaging materials such as brochures, posters, videos, and infographics that explain NCAs and NbS for biodiversity conservation, economic development, climate resilience, and adaptation. Ensure materials are accessible and understandable to a non-technical audience and available in the local language. - Design and print brochures and booklets explaining the concepts of NCA and NbS, their importance, and practical applications. - Design and produce posters and banners for use in workshops, seminars, and community events. - Develop and produce educational videos and short documentaries highlighting the importance of ecosystem conservation and successful NbS initiatives.

Consultant/Organization	Time Input	Tasks, Inputs and Outputs
		Create infographics and visual aids that simplify complex information about NCAs and NbS for the general public.
Contract with a selected organization(s) to produce knowledge products, including publications, manuals, guidelines, online content, etc. to describe the project best practices and lessons learned (Output 4.2) Estimated budget: \$50,000	6 months over years 2-4	To produce high-quality knowledge products that document the best practices and lessons learned from the project on Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for biodiversity conservation, sustainable economic development, climate resilience, and adaptation. Responsibilities: - Develop publications, manuals, and guidelines that detail the project's best practices and lessons learned. - Produce online content, including articles, blogs, and multimedia materials, to share project knowledge widely. Ensure all materials are user-friendly, visually appealing, and available in the local language.
Component 5		
International Consultants		
International Consultant for MTR (Output 5.1) Rate: \$650/day + \$3,000 for travel	30 days/ Year 2	- Mid-Term Review of the project according UNDP/GEF requirements (UNDP 2021) according following criteria: Project Design, Progress towards Results, Implementation and Adaptive Management, and Risks to Sustainability; - Development of specific recommendations for the project implementation
International Consultant for TE (Output 5.1) Rate: \$650/day + \$3,000 for travel	30 days/ Year 4	- Terminal Evaluation of the project according UNDP/GEF requirements (UNDP 2021) according following criteria: Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, and Sustainability; - Extraction of lessons learned by the project and recommendations for other UNDP/GEF projects in the country
International Consultant to calculate actual carbon gains by the project by the MT and TE	10 days/ Year 2 10 days/ Year 4	To calculate the actual carbon gains achieved by the project under Outputs 2.1 to 2.3 using the FAO Ex-Ante Carbon-balance Tool (Ex-Act) for the Mid-Term Review (MTR) and Terminal Evaluation (TE). Responsibilities: Collect and review relevant data on project activities related to forest restoration, NbS implementation, and ecosystem management.

Consultant/Organization	Time Input	Tasks, Inputs and Outputs
Rate: \$650/day		- Gather baseline data on carbon stocks and emissions in the project areas prior to intervention. - Utilize the FAO Ex-Act Tool to calculate carbon gains from project activities. Input project-specific data into the Ex-Act Tool, including land use changes, forest restoration activities, and NbS practices. Analyze the results to determine the actual carbon gains achieved by the project. - Prepare a comprehensive report detailing the methodology, data sources, calculations, and results of the carbon gains analysis. - Provide clear and concise explanations of the carbon balance calculations and the impact of project activities on carbon sequestration and emissions reduction. - Highlight key findings and provide recommendations for maximizing carbon gains in future project activities.
National Consultants		
National Consultant for MTR (Output 5.1) Rate: \$400/day	20 days/ Year 2	- Assist International MTR Consultant in the Mid-Term Review of the project according UNDP/GEF requirements (UNDP 2021) including data collection, interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders; - Assist International MTR Consultant in the development of specific recommendations for the project implementation
National Consultant for TE (Output 5.1) Rate: \$400/day	20 days/ Year 4	- Assist International TE Consultant in the Terminal Evaluation of the project according UNDP/GEF requirements (UNDP 2021) including data collection, interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders; - Assist International TE Consultant in the extraction of lessons learned by the project and recommendations for other UNDP/GEF projects in the country